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SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL FACTORS AS MOTIVATION FOR RITUAL KILLINGS IN ILORIN-NIGERIA

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Abstract

The act of ritual killing is increasing at an alarming rate with its attendant effects on both individuals and the nation at large. The waves of ritual killing in the country have swum across the shores of humanity. It is believed that several socio-economic factors drive people to commit ritual killings. Reasons (such as power, defence, solving household problems and longevity) submitted in literatures seem not to be enough to explain the recent and sudden increase in the activities of ritual killers in Ilorin metropolitan. The reasons explained in most literatures are not empirically established. Therefore, this research explores the socio-economic and political factors that motivate people to engage in ritual killings in Ilorin. The research is guided by Agnew's General Strain Theory. Qualitative method (in-depth interview) is used to generate information from twelve (12) respondents purposively selected from Taiwo-Oke, Challenge, Old Government Reserved Areas (OGRA) and Tanke-Oke-odo. Findings reveal fear of poverty by the wealthy class, underemployment, unemployment, political power and position and the economic lifestyles of youths as major factors to ritual killings. Thus, the research establishes a cultural re-orientation of people to belief in the power of science and technology as well as skills acquisition as basics for development and sustainability. Youths should be trained in science-based skills that will enable them get full employment and/or profitable engagement.

Key words: *Ilorin; Practice; Political Factors; Ritual killings; Socio-economic Factors*

1. Introduction

Ritual killing is the abduction, killing, maiming, butchering of humans and severing their body parts for the purpose of seeking wealth, magical/political power, longevity, and other self-centered reasons. From time immemorial, when humanity suffers from the cold hands of ignorance and superstitions, human beings are sacrificed for religious/spiritual purpose on the excuse of seeking solutions to problems affecting households or community or of appeasing the gods. More recently, people are not just killed and sacrificed but are butchered for even worst reasons outside the realm of humanity. This is something nastiest than ignorance and superstition but akin to psychosis and reminds the brain of 'universal end'. Unfortunately, this unpleasant situation has become almost a regular practice in Nigeria that is not limited to age and gender (Gale, 2005; Munthali, 2006; Obineke, 2008).

The meaning of ritual killing extends to killing humans and severing their body parts 'for food and for sale' and either eaten in raw, boiled, smoked, or cooked forms. Victims may be assaulted or raped before they are killed for rituals. The practice of ritual killing has assumed worrisome dimension. It is no more regarded as a bizarre phenomenon as it has come to be recognized amongst people making everyone aware of its reality (Obineke, 2008). In Nigeria, ritual killing



had risen immensely and is assuming a disturbing velocity (Obineke, 2008; Mcadiroh, 2017). The rise in the menace has majorly been attributed to the get-rich-quick syndrome attitude of youths and subsequent display of prosperity (Patrick, 2017).

In ancient times, ritual killings were alien to some regions of Nigeria, except those carried out to appease the gods. This is attributed to people offering their dear ones; however, the practice has become extensive and grown worse to using strangers, innocent people and even young ones for rituals (Obineke, 2008; Patrick, 2017). The practice is majorly attributed to the acquisition of power, wealth and prestige. As quest for position and power increases, so is the belief that success requires spiritual defense to avoid assassination or conquest by opponents. As a result, some politicians have resulted to consulting herbalists. It is not surprising that Nigerians in their various fields of endeavours are involved in the practice (Evelyn, 2017; Isaac, 2017).

Right from the birth of humanity, desires for gains over pains have been born in simultaneity. These desires, according to psychologists can only be constrained by a strong ego, well-developed superego, and healthy personality provided that the desire would lead the 'desirer' to commit crimes. It is correct to say that every sane man would desire for power and wealth, but only the greedily insane would want the acquisitions of such at all cost even if lives should be sacrificed. Thus, according to Obineke (2008), ritual killing stems from people's endless hunt for wealth. But industrialization had made man's greediness for power worse. Isaac (2017) observed that the menace ritual killing become a big modern business and human parts are sold across the country. Ritual killings have recently been included among the foremost security challenges in Nigeria. Ritual killers mostly abduct, butcher and sever human body for the purpose of money. Aside being a grave felony, ritual killings constitutes a failure on the part of the government to uphold the fundamental rights of its citizens, with respect to life and dignity of human persons. Right from the onset, many lives have been lost. Countless victims have become mentally disordered while families of victims have suffered from effects of psychosomatic trauma. Many children have been orphaned; scores of parents have become 'parentless'; and a number of spouses have turned to widows and widowers. More regrettably, the shock and anguish that accompanies the loss of loved ones have sent many to taste the sharpness of death and relax on the roots of dark trenches. And while others are contracting with suicide, only a few are made to dance with insanity. The lucky ones are forced to embrace the cold feelings that ooze out from the loss of their loved ones which, most times, graduate to illness that occasionally claims lives (Igwe, 2004; Ugonabo, 2008; Obineke, 2008).

The most recent crime statistics released in 2018 by the Force Criminal Investigation Department of the Nigeria Police revealed that the incidence of ritual killings is multiplying. No state in the country can boast of complete immunity from ritual killings and freedom from their perpetrators (Romoke, 2018). The operations of ritual killers are not confined to certain towns or villages; neither are they restricted to specific tribes or ethnic groups nor are they known with any gender or socio-economic class. Even media, newspapers, and crime reports have never excused any geo-political zones from ritual killings (Adegbamigbe, 2008; Patrick, 2017). With reference to Ilorin, Kwara State, the act never seemed to exempt the state from the stains of ritual killings. The state's famous bond with harmony, religiosity and sacredness failed to save it from the charge of rituals (Adegbamigbe, 2008). For instance, a Cleric and a Nurse were arrested in Ilorin on 6th November, 2018 over the sale of placenta. This was reported in Daily Trust Newspaper by Ronke Ahmad on



November 7th, 2018 (Romoke, 2018). However, this was not the only case of ritual killings arrested by the Police in Ilorin within the year, 2018. Another gang of ritual killers including a woman were arrested with human skulls on 17th October, 2018 and confessed and admitted to have sold 31 human heads to some personalities in Ilorin and other towns in Kwara State as well as other contiguous states to Kwara State (Ejike, 2018).

More unfortunately, the menace of ritual killings reached its climax following the onset of a cannibalistic terrifying dimension where humans murder and eat their fellows. We have heard series of cases where victims are not only murdered but butchered with their body parts used to prepare potages gulped down with mountains of swallow foods. There was a case of a kidnapper suspect 'Roland Peter' who was arrested together with his accomplices when he was on the verge of eating yam porridges and pepper soup prepared with the intestines of his victims (Evelyn, 2017; Mcadiroh, 2017). It may sound disgusting and horrifying, but that is just 'worse'. We now have vampires in the midst of the humans who not only drink human blood but eat their raw flesh.

The cruelty of ritual killers is enough to ask the brain if they are truly human with a heart and flowing blood or maybe their victims are just animals. It is unimaginable how a sane human can manage to hold a weapon to kill and butcher his fellow into slices and still go ahead to sell them, worst still, prepares them with soup (Evelyn, 2017; Mcadiroh, 2017). This is just completely ridiculous and outside humanity. Nevertheless, what can we really impose as the motivating factors behind ritual killings in the country? According to Oyewole (2016), poverty has pushed many people to indulge in money rituals or assist ritualists with kidnapping. About 84% of the Nigerian population is living below the International Poverty Line (IPL) of US. \$2 per day.

Empirical studies about ritual killings include the research works of Nwankwo *et al.* (2016), Oyewole (2016) and Abdulkabir (2017). Nwankwo *et al.* (2016) revealed that ritual murder produced 18 deaths each in Lagos and Ogun State in 2014. Oyewole (2016) explained that the motivations of ritual-motivated kidnapping under two categories namely faith and materialism in Nigeria. Abdulkabir (2017) found that ritual killing as one of the security threats and revealed the practice as a form of and reason for kidnapping in Nigeria.

The gap identified in the above practical studies is that there were no empirical literatures that explain socio-economic and political factors that motivate ritual killings in Ilorin to the best of my knowledge. This research is expected to be useful to the government, Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies in the investigation and detection of ritual killings as well as apprehension of the perpetrators. The objective of the study is to explore the socio-economic and political factors that motivate people to engage in ritual killings in Ilorin-Nigeria.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

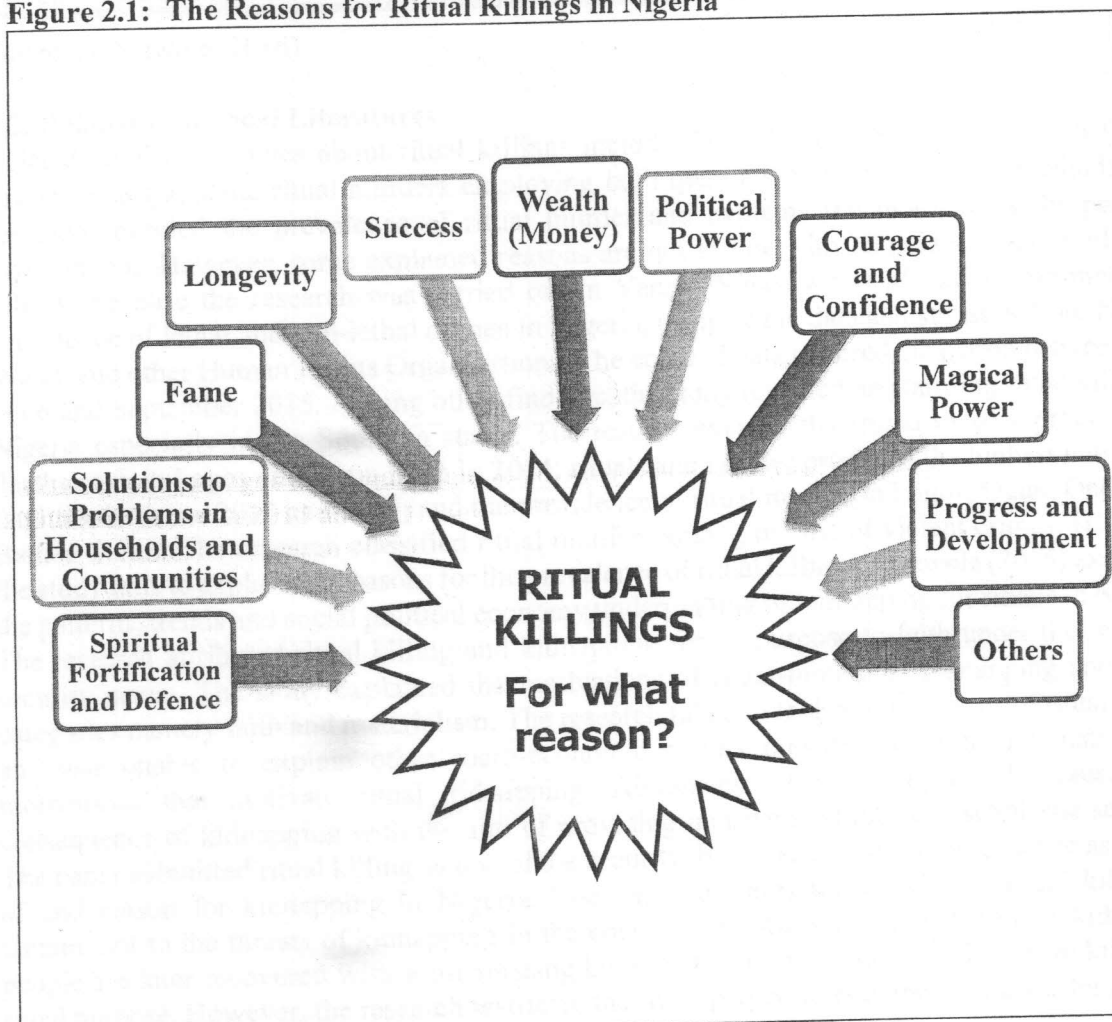
2.1 Motivation for Ritual Killings

Several scholars put forward factors that motivates ritual killings. According to Igwe (2004), Nigerians are motivated by poverty, ignorance, desperation, gullibility, and irrationalism, and as such, kill their fellows for rituals. Munthali (2006) states that motivation of ritual killing varies from personal, cultural, economic, religion and lust of power. Smith (2001) and Nwolise (2013) observe that ritual killing has been regarded as one of the several means to attain, retain and maintain powerful positions in several African nations. Igwe (2004) and Pandey (2015) affirm that



the belief in ghosts, juju, charms, and witchcraft is common in Nigeria. Nigerians still believe that charms and powerful concoctions prepared with human heads, tongues, eyes, female breasts and sexual organs have the potentials of boosting fortunes. They believe that juju, charms, and amulets are capable of guarding them against business failures, sickness, etc. and as such, kill people to accomplish them. Isaac (2017) opines that ritual killings are done to give room for power, fame, success and wealth and some Nigerians are ready to kill and are killing to accomplish it. Mcadiroh (2017) asserts that some politicians and government officers have been accused of using people for rituals to sustain their affluence and power. Evelyn (2017) and Patrick (2017) say that the lust for money, power, success, courage, long life, spiritual defence and fortification also drives people into killing for rituals. Among all, killing for money rituals is the most common. Dr. Ekhomu, the President of Association of Industrial Security and Safety Operators of Nigeria (AISSON) stated that impunity also motivates ritual killers because they believe they cannot be apprehended (Evelyn, 2017). The motivation of reasons for ritual killings and kidnapping for rituals in Nigeria are shown in Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 respectively.

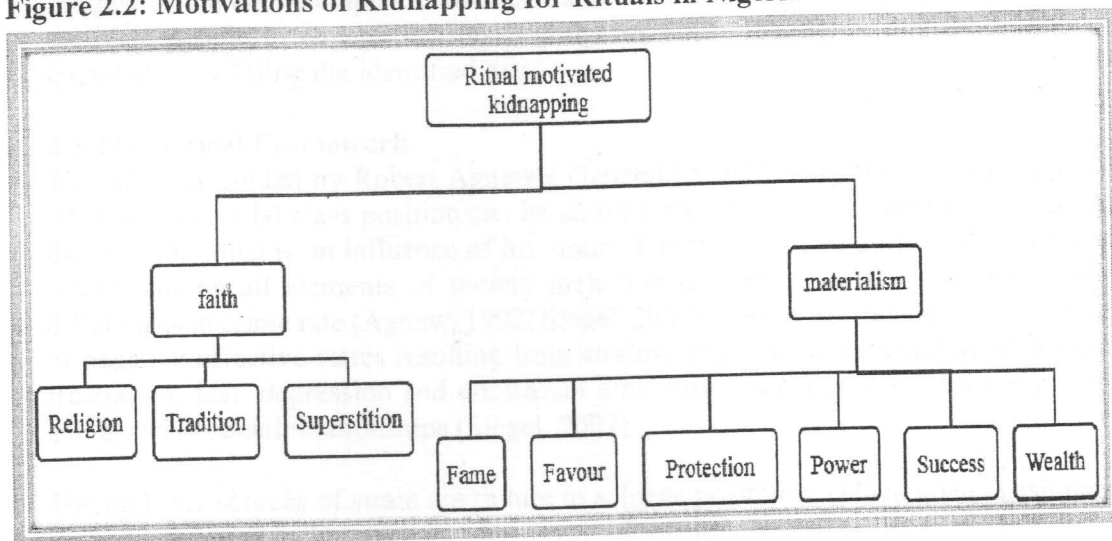
Figure 2.1: The Reasons for Ritual Killings in Nigeria



Source: Researcher illustration, 2018



Figure 2.2: Motivations of Kidnapping for Rituals in Nigeria



Source: (Oyewole, 2016)

2.2. Related Empirical Literatures

Related empirical studies about ritual killings include the followings studies. Munthali (2006) investigated traumatic ritual murders employing both qualitative and quantitative methods. The research revealed the prevalence of ritual murder and explains the motivations for peoples' involvement. However, some explained reasons are not in line with Nigeria's situation of ritual killings because the research was carried out in Venda. Nwankwo *et al.* (2016) examined the prevalence of lethal and non-lethal crimes in Nigeria, using crime data and statistics from Nigeria Watch and other Human Rights Organizations. The collated data covered the period between June 2006 and September 2015. Among other findings, the study revealed an alarming ritual killing in Nigeria especially in the Southern states. The results revealed that ritual murder produced 18 deaths each in Lagos and Ogun State in 2014; rituals and murder produced the highest number of fatalities between 2013 and 2015; and the prevalence of ritual murder in Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, and Bauchi States. The research classified ritual murders among the list of violent crimes. However, the study fails to explain the reasons for the prevalence of ritual killings. Oyewole (2016) examined the patterns, trends and social political economy underpinning of kidnapping for rituals in Nigeria. The research attributed ritual killing and kidnapping for its purpose to faith under the religion-security nexus. The study explained the motivations of ritual-motivated kidnapping under two categories namely faith and materialism. The research failed to look at other forms of ritual killing and was unable to explain other socio-economic factors outside the faith and materialism motivations that motivate ritual kidnapping. Abdulkabir (2017) analyzed the causes and consequence of kidnapping with the aim of providing incisive solution with scholastic scrutiny. The paper submitted ritual killing as one of the security threats and revealed the practice as a form of and reason for kidnapping in Nigeria. The paper declares the activity of ritual killers as tantamount to the threats of kidnapping in the country. The study explains that many kidnapped people are later recovered with some missing body parts; an indication that they were killed for ritual purpose. However, the research restricted the ritual perpetrators to the politicians for money, fame, favour, success, protection, political appointment, and power.



In view of the above empirical studies, there is no study concerning socio-economic factors that motivate people to engage in ritual killings in Ilorin. Thus, this study intent to contribute to knowledge by filling the identified gap.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

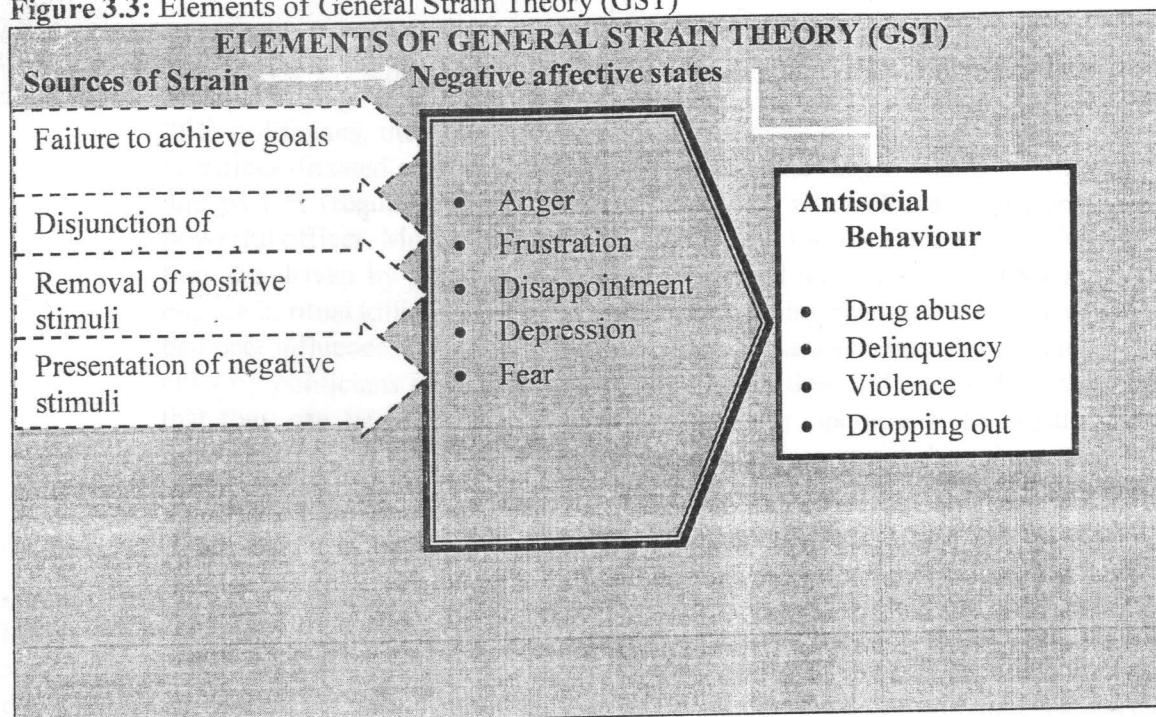
This study is guided by Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory (GST). The theory incorporates the idea that social class position can be an important source of strain (Siegel, 2007). It assumes that an individual is an influence of his strain. The theory offers a more 'general' explanation of crimes among all elements of society including the upper social class. It explains individual differences in crime rate (Agnew, 1992; Siegel, 2007). Agnew posited that crime is the direct result of negative affective states resulting from strains. These negative affective states include anger, frustration, fear, depression and unpleasant emotions that materialize in the wake of destructive and abortive social relationships (Siegel, 2007).

The multiple sources of strain are failure to achieve positively valued goals; Disjunction between expectations and achievements; Removal of positively valued stimuli and Presentation of negative/noxious stimuli as showed in Figure 2.3.

- a. Failure to achieve positively valued goals: This type of strain occurs when a youth aspires for wealth and fame but lacks the resources to achieve them. Such youth will be compelled to believe that the goals are impossible to achieve (Siegel, 2007).
- b. Disjunction between expectations and achievements: Here, the feeling of strains is registered when people compare themselves with peers and/or relatives who are doing much better than them financially or otherwise. Perceptions of inequity may result from such feelings and force out many adverse reactions (Siegel, 2007).
- c. Removal of positively valued stimuli: Strain may occur because of the actual or anticipated removal/loss of a positively valued stimulus from the individual (Videon, 2002). This loss may lead to or increase the chances of crimes, as the adolescent tries to prevent the loss, retrieve what has been lost, obtain substitutes, or seek vengeance against people responsible for the loss (Rebellon, 2002; Siegel, 2007).
- d. Presentation of negative/noxious stimuli: Strain may also be caused by negative stimuli such as child abuse, parental neglect, family problems and other encounters with stressful life events ranging from verbal threats to pollution (Simons, et al, 2003; Siegel, 2007).



Figure 3.3: Elements of General Strain Theory (GST)



Source: (Siegel, 2007)

3. Research strategies

This research is conducted in Tanke Oke-odo, Old Government Reserved Areas (OGRA), Challenge and Taiwo-Oke, Ilorin, Kwara state. These areas are *purposively* selected partly because of the multi-cultural feature of their settlements and because of the recent cases of ritual killings recorded in the areas. Twelve (12) respondents (both men and women), three (3) from each area are selected conveniently for an In-depth Interview (IDI). Audio recorder and hand-written reports are used in recording data with the help of two (2) Research Assistants. Data generated are analysed and interpreted using Open Content Analysis.

3. Findings and Discussions

The factors responsible for ritual killings are a definition of socio-economic and political class distinctions. The reasons why the poor engage in ritual killing is, if not entirely but significantly, different from the reasons why politicians and influential individuals indulge in ritual killings. This assertion is easily comprehensible from statements and arguments of several respondents that distinguished the motivations of the poor from the rich with respect to their engagement in ritual killings. For instance, a male respondent explains that the major reason why people indulge in ritual killings is to sustain their wealth and remain in positions of power, but this only describes the reasons for the involvement of politicians and the rich. He expounds:

“...majorly, the reason for the engagement of rich politicians and wealthy people in ritual killings is to attain, retain, sustain and maintain their wealth, success and power. They actually commit ritual killings to keep their heads higher and increase their wealth and political influence. Most politicians indulge in the act because of power and because they want to win election



for a particular political post or retain their power. So, they sacrifice people in order to emerge winners. In fact, I believe that there is no political leader that does not engage in killing people for rituals" (IDI/Male/Tanke-Oke-Odo/Nov/2018).

In addition to the above submission, another respondent distinguishes the difference in social class 'motivations' for ritual killings as follows:

"For politicians, they commit ritual killings mostly for sacrifices as most sacrifices dictated and demanded by herbalists, fake 'alfas' Islamic clerics and pastors (require human lives and bloods) to win political posts, and powerful offices. Most influential individuals do it for more money because they are driven by greed. But the poor, wretched and unemployed youth engage in ritual killings because of poverty, unemployment, frustration, and bad peer influence. Sometimes they are hired and paid as political thugs and cults by politicians and other rich people to help them kill and kidnap so that they can be used for rituals. So, when their operations are mostly unsuccessful and hindered, they are encouraged to commit the crimes of ritual killings for themselves for quick money, spiritual powers and defence" (IDI/Female/Tanke-Oke-Odo/2018).

Generally, people involve in ritual killings for numerous reasons depicted by class/social status. Whether rich or poor, there is an overwhelming opinion that most ritual killings are committed for money. Furthermore, motivation of ritual killing varies from personal, cultural, economic, religion and lust of power (Munthali, 2006). Ritual killing is done to accomplish power, fame, success and wealth (Isaac, 2017). The above result also agrees with the submission of Mcadiroh (2017) that some politicians and public officials have been accused of killing people for rituals in order to sustain their affluence as well as remain in powerful positions. To Agnew (1992), these people engage in ritual killings because of the disjoint between their aspirations and expectations and the strain that emerges from the disjunction between their expectations and achievements.

The rich commits the grievous crime to acquire more wealth while the poor indulge in ritual killings for sudden wealth. A respondent argues:

"...for the most part, ritual killings are done for money. People complain of poverty in Ilorin than in any part of the country. Maybe this may be one of the major reasons for increase in ritual cases in the town. Unfortunately, only few people have the legal means, for most, the moral means are either absent, not available, or the available means are not giving them their desired wealth. So, they try looking for other means to satisfy their desired goals. Most of these means are illegal of which ritual killing is one of them. Imagine an average person that has a wife and 'seven' kids and needs to cater for the demands of all of them with his small earnings, how will he do it? So when these family demands are becoming a strain to him, then, he looks for an alternative means of solving them. This is why you see many poor people involving the act." (IDI/Female/OGRA/2018)



The above submission supports the arguments of Agnew (1992)'s GST that failure to achieve positively valued goals which is a disjoint between aspirations and expectations occurs when a youth aspires for wealth and fame but, lacks the financial and educational resources to achieve. Such youth will be compelled to believe that such goals are impossible to achieve. Also when people compare themselves to peers and/or relatives who seem to be doing much better than them financially or otherwise, perceptions of inequity may result from such feelings and force out many adverse reactions (Rebillion, 2002; Simons, Chen, & Stewart, 2003; Siegel, 2007). This finding also supports the assertion of Abdulkabir (2017) that politicians are ritual perpetrators that indulge in ritual killings for money, fame, favour, success, protection, political appointment, and power. Conversely, the finding added that the poor also commit the crime of ritual killing.

Concerning the general reasons for people's engagement in ritual killings, another respondent, during an interview session, submits:

"...I'll select poverty as the number one reason. People are dying of thirst and hunger almost on daily basis because there is no money except in the hands of politicians and few rich individuals. The resulting frustration and the need to survive have pushed many into crimes. The greed for stupendous and sudden wealth being a result of poverty explains why poor people commit ritual killings. In a nutshell, I will say people kill their fellow for ritual because of poverty, peer influence, acquisition of power at all cost, and the lack of fear of God" (IDI/Female/Taiwo-oke/2018)

In response to the above submissions, a respondent declares that ritual killings are deadly and inhumane and the reasons upon which they are committed are unfounded and lack justifications. He argues against poverty being a major reason for people's involvement in rituals saying:

"...truth be told, some use the excuse of poverty but I would rather say it is greed to quick money, lack of regards for human lives, stupidity and malicious intent, laziness, wickedness, and so on. Now let's look at it this way, if truly people are dying of hunger, the highest humanely crime they can commit is theft (without taking lives) but when they start killing people to survive hunger, it is no more poverty but disregards for human lives. Killing people for money rituals is therefore, extreme and explain greediness as the major reason, not poverty" (IDI/Male/Tanke-Oke-Odo/2018)

From the above, we can say that poverty and unemployment should be seen as the last resort to explain ritual killing since the act itself is inhumane and committed outside humanity. Also, there are other reasons for the increase in the menace such as breakdown of social control, corruption, increased insecurity, corrupt justice systems, increased criminality, police inefficiency, etc and as such, should be seen as motivations for the involvement in ritual killings in the country. This argument affirms the position of Evelyn (2017) and Mcadiroh (2017) that the rise in ritual killings is attributed to a breakdown in cultural, religious and moral values, ignorance, superstition, undue quest for sudden wealth and a poor system of punishment.

More importantly, a respondent states that the reasons for ritual killings should be differentiated from the factors that encourage them. He maintains that "*the factors that explain the desire for*



money, for instance, are greed, poverty, or whatever. But the reasons for people's engagement would include money, success, power (political and spiritual), positions, fame, peer acceptance, vengeance, and so on. So, to me, the factors that encourage ritual killings include greed, poverty, unemployment, desperation, frustration, obsession to rule, pressure (family/peer), ignorance, etc. The politicians especially commit ritual killings for fetish purposes such as winning an election, gaining people's support, adding to their wealth, and so forth." (IDI/Male/Oke-Odo/2018)

All things considered, the above explanations for ritual killings among the rich politicians have been acknowledged by the assumptions of General Strain theory. Reflecting Agnew's GST, ritual killing among rich politicians, entrepreneurs and businessmen is an expression of their failure or desperation to achieve positions, power, administrative offices, profitable contracts and electoral/business success, fame, financial progress and business growth. Thus, ritual killings may be committed when there is a disjunction between their aspirations and expectations and consequently, their expectations and achievements.

Considering the above quotations, it is enough to say that there are several factors that encourage ritual killings but they sincerely need to be curtailed. However, clarifications are needed whether the motives for ritual killings are achieved or not. According to a respondent, the motivations of ritual killers are thrilling to them, but the supposed benefits are mostly short-term except for a few including those that commit ritual killings for longevity. He explains:

"...although, the reasons for which ritual killings are done may be achieved, they are mostly for a short-term. I don't believe ritual killings provide solutions to people's successes, instead they add to their problems since they are mostly short-lived. So, if it does add to people's successes, it is for a short period. Based on Yoruba movies and reality, ritual killers enjoy the supposed benefits for a while before they meet their doom, its repercussions or that the span of the ritual benefits expires and they die or go back to their square one as the case may be (IDI/Male/Challenge/2018)

Conversely, a respondent reacted to ritual killings arguing that the purpose for which they are committed are not mostly achieved. The act is a devilish practice and a criminal act being committed continuously by those that attach preference to the act and this is why ritual killings remain on the increase. However, another respondent presents:

"Technically, I will agree that ritual killing has aided a lot of people in terms of attaining or sustaining power or wealth based on those seen to have committed the act. At the same time, the rewards gotten from this practice do not last for a lifetime before they go back to their former position. I also believe that it is after the act that the rewards are seen, after all, it is done to 'appease the gods'. People sell human parts and they become rich, politicians shed blood and they win elections. So, the motive for which they commit ritual killings are truly achieved just that it is just for a short-term unless they renew and continue their ritual sacrifice. The renewal and continuation of these sacrifices are one of the several reasons why ritual killings still remain on the increase in Nigeria" (IDI/Male/Tanke-oke-Odo/2018).



Further, the renewal of modern ritual sacrifices shares the same attribute with pre-independence human sacrifices. Conversely, while most pre-independence human sacrifices are conducted for the benefits of the society, contemporary ritual sacrifices are rather committed for self-aggrandizement and personal benefits. This argument, according to a respondent, differentiates the motivations of pre-independence human sacrifices from today's ritual killings. She contends:

“...although, it is the past belief systems and human sacrifices that gave birth to the present ritual killings in the country, the past human sacrifices is fairer than today's ritual killings. While the olden days' ritual sacrifices are committed to provide solutions to problems in households, villages, and towns, contemporary ritual sacrifices are committed to solve personal, unending, selfish and greedy desires and to seek worldly material comforts”
(IDI/Female/Taiwo-Oke/Nov/2018)

By and large, the findings confirm that ritual killings are committed across all social classes but not only for wealth, long-life, power, success, and several other reasons. The practice, especially in ancient times and till this period, is also done to provide solutions to problems in households, towns and villages. The factors that explain the reasons include greed, corruption, poverty, unemployment, insecurity, police inefficiency, etc. The findings are plausible with the studies of Smith (2001), Igwe (2004), Munthali (2006), Ugonabo (2008), Nwolise (2013), Pandey (2015), Oyewole (2016), Evelyn (2017), Isaac (2017), Mcadiogh (2017), and Patrick (2017).

Owing to the above submissions, the socio-economic factors that drive people to ritual killings include fear, poverty, unemployment, underemployment, desperation/obsession to rule, thirst for power and positions, frustration, family/peer pressure, depression, ignorance, greed, superstitious beliefs, etc. This is in consonance with the statement that Nigerians are motivated by poverty, cultism, religion (Igwe, 2004; Ugonabo, 2008), unemployment, frustration, greed, superstitious beliefs (Ugonabo, 2008; Abdulkabir, 2017), ignorance, desperation, gullibility, irrationalism (Igwe, 2004), power (Special Report, 2014), impunity (Dr. Ekhomu, the President of Association of Industrial Security and Safety Operators of Nigeria, AISSON, cited in Evelyn, 2017), breakdown in cultural, religious and moral values, undue quest for sudden wealth, poor system of punishment (Mr. Nwanguma, the National Coordinator of the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria, NOPRIN, cited in Evelyn, 2017; Mcadiogh, 2017), supernaturalism, and theism and as such, kill their fellows for rituals (Igwe, 2004).

It has been established that the perpetrators of ritual killing cut across socio-economic class and that the factors that motivate them are defined by their status differences. For instance, while the poor are motivated by poverty, ignorance, fear, family/peer pressure, depression, frustration, unemployment, etc, the wealthy individuals engage in ritual killings because of their greed, desperation to rule, thirst for positions and fame, etc. Essentially, the reasons for people's involvement in ritual killings include money, success, power (political and spiritual), positions, fame, peer acceptance, vengeance, etc. This submission confirms the statement of Munthali (2006) that the motivation of ritual killing varies from personal, cultural, economic, religion and lust of power. The lust for money, power, success, courage and confidence, long life, spiritual defence and fortification drives people into killing for ritual purpose. But among all the above, killing for money rituals is the most common (Evelyn, 2017; Patrick, 2017).



5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Ilorin and Nigeria at large would continue to suffer from the activities of ritual killers because of the belief attached to ritualism at the various levels of human activities. There are several reasons depending on different individuals' motivational factors to ritual killings in Ilorin towns, even though, none of these factors is not socio-economically conceptualized. While some people engage in rituals to end poverty, others believe that one can only sustain an already acquired wealth via ritualism. To some, fame, spiritual defence, security, longevity and solutions to socio-economic and household problems can only be achieved through ritualism.

Traditionally, people still believe in the powers of ritual sacrifices. Thus, the study recommends cultural re-orientation of people to the belief in the power of science, technology transformation and skills acquisition as basics for development, successes and sustainability. People's faulty orientations and belief systems should be eradicated, changed and substituted with new, rational and positive sets of thinking, and belief systems. Native doctors and fake religious clerics that encourage ritual killing must be arrested; their shrines must be demolished; and must also be given severe warnings to abstain from practicing evils or otherwise face life imprisonment or death. Anyone also found in connection with human parts, the witch doctors, the perpetrators themselves and buyers must be condemned to death by crucifixion.

Youths, including drop-outs and university graduates, dwell into lifestyles of crimes, including ritual killings with the excuse of poverty in the country and lack of jobs after graduation. Therefore, government should improve on their educational sectors, encourage formal education, make and strengthen provisions for job opportunities, create poverty alleviation programmes and also encourage entrepreneurship and vocational trainings. Youths should also be trained in science-based skills that would enable them get full employment and/or profitable engagement.

The do-or-die affairs of politics in the country have positioned every politician in competitive disadvantages. The desperation to rule, struggles for power and control, and the greed for more wealth, fame, powers, etc are factors that explain the reasons why politicians and rich individuals commit ritual killings. For this reason, politics should be demonetized and the over-emphasis placed on the acquisition of wealth, fame, positions and power should be curtailed. Relative to this recommendation, celebrations of influential individuals should be focused on their diplomatic integrity rather than the origin of their wealth.

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