



Awareness and believability of the ‘Oke-ite’ money ritual charm efficacy claims on Facebook by Anambra Youths. A Study of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Undergraduates

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Abstract

The advent of Social media particularly the facebook platform has enhanced the way individuals interact with each other. It is a platform where individuals especially the youths showcase themselves in order to draw admiration and attention to their lives and it is equally an avenue where entrepreneurs ply their goods and services to get patronage. The Get-rich-quick syndrome that is prevalent amongst Nigerian youths today has led many youths to seek for wealth and validation through engaging in money rituals. Research has shown that many youths especially University undergraduate students engage in anti-social behaviours like cybercrime and blood rituals to make quick money in order to imitate their rich peers. Most of these money making rituals are advertised through facebook videos by native doctors and spiritualists who make claims of its efficacy and popular among them is the Oke-ite money ritual charm. This study therefore seeks to find out the awareness and believability of the efficacy claims of the oke-ite money ritual by Anambra youths using Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Undergraduates as the study population. Anchored on the Technological Determinism theory, the study employs the Survey method for the research design and the Questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. Findings indicate that most Anambra youths are aware of the facebook videos of the efficacy claims on the Oke-ite money ritual by spiritualists and native doctors and believe in its efficacy while some believe that such rituals can only be effective for a short period of time as it comes with its attendant problems. The study therefore recommends amongst others the need for relevant stakeholders to create awareness especially through the facebook platforms on the dangers of engaging in money rituals by the youths and emphasize on the need for parents and the society at large to question their children and wards whenever they acquire sudden wealth.

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Introduction

The 20th century established the use of technology in almost every sector of the economy to enhance connectivity among similar sectors and allow hitch-free communication while conducting business and performing other activities (Kaplan & Heinlein, 2010). Facebook which is one of the technological innovations enhances interactivity and increases knowledge among its users. It is assumed most individuals are familiar with this saying “Knowledge is Power” but few recognize the empowering role facebook has played in enhancing communication and facilitating information dissemination. Through facebook, anyone online is allowed an unrestricted flow of information to enrich their knowledge bank. In contemporary times, it is evident that facebook plays a major role in impacting our culture, our economy and our perception of the world. Facebook is a platform that brings people together to exchange ideas, connect with each other, relate with one another, and mobilize for a cause, seek counsel and guidance on issues of interest. (Nkrumah, 2018). This media outlet accommodates a vast assortment of scholarly, informal, spontaneous, unscholarly, and formal writings and videos to thrive.

Notwithstanding that it has brought about many advantages and benefits, allowing for easy connect with friends and family around the world, permitting for the breakdown of international borders and cultural barriers, facebook has come with its own consequences (Falae, 2018) ^[17]. It has exposed the young and old to lots of information that could be detrimental to them and the society at large. Many business vendors have taken the opportunity offered by facebook to ply their wares and ideas online with a bid to garnering clients to themselves. Popular among these vendors are native doctors and spiritualists who use the reach of facebook to make the issue of money rituals an alternative for anyone seeking quick riches. Kaplan & Heinlein (2020) in their study discovered that youths are the most active users of the facebook platform and therefore are more exposed to these information online. The prevalence of poverty and the need to be identified with the elite has been identified as the driving force for many people especially the youths to engage in crime and criminal activities including money rituals. The Oke-ite money ritual is one of the money ritual mechanisms peddled by these native doctors and vendors on facebook (Daily News Reporters, 2022). It is a type of ritual that involves the severed parts of human beings and animals in an earthen ware pot alongside numerous kinds of herbs and concoctions which is believed to bring wealth to an individual after a certain period of time (Fanusionwu, 2022) ^[18]. The videos of this type of money ritual are seen on facebook with the native doctors advertising its potency and the need for an individual to engage in it in order to escape the biting pangs of poverty. Nevertheless, the upsurge in money rituals prevalent amongst youths in Nigeria currently has attested to new forms of threat to lives and security in internal security management (Ritual killing has appeared as a crucial security concern in Nigeria, and the fate of the victim of ritual killing is giving rise to growing concerns (Oyewole 2015b; 2016a&b). According to National Bureau of Statistics (NB) (2020), there have been over 8,000 cases of ritual killings disclosed to the police in the last decade. Ritual killing entails killing or severing the part of a human being for the sole purpose of using it as an object of ritual sacrifice aimed to obtain fame, power, favour, protection and wealth which has taken a new dangerous dimension by youths in Nigeria (Daily News Reporters, 2022). The new evil of Oke-ite money ritual currently rampaging our society does involve the killing of its victims and severing their parts with other parts of animals and herbs stored in an earthen ware pot otherwise known as Oke-ite in the local palance. It has been discovered that the video of this new form of ritual is seen on facebook to attract the gullible youths that need quick money and fame which when acquired tend to showcase their new found wealth on social media (Daily News Reporters, 2022). With the growing popularity of the trend of Oke-ite money ritual in our society today, the study sought to find out the awareness of Nigerian youths to this trend. It is assumed that they are exposed to these money making ritual videos on facebook being the most popular users of this platform as studies have found out and which this study will substantiate by empirically looking at the level of awareness of these youths who use facebook as regards to the oke-ite money ritual mechanism. With the efficacy claims of oke-ite money ritual made by these native doctors and spiritualists on facebook, do the youths who come across these videos actually believe in the efficacy of the oke-ite money ritual? Besides the legal-policing measure, a government response that has proved

insufficient to address this menace, this study observed that this oke-ite money ritual phenomenon is a consequence of lack of opportunities for young people, inequality in the society, prevalence of poverty, eroding values and norms that cannot be easily wished away unless genuine steps are taken to address the socio-economic underpinning in the society.

Statement of the Problem

Before the advent of social media, communication was basically interpersonal and the dependency on the mainstream media of radio and television for information was relatively high. One hardly found ritual services advertised through this platform as a result of very stiff regulations put in place therefore having knowledge of issues bothering on money rituals was relatively low. The coming of facebook has changed that narrative as everyone is exposed to the platform and most individuals and business owners utilize the opportunity of facebook having a very wide reach and its accessibility feature to reach out to potential clients to sell ideas or products to them. Native doctors and spiritualists have cashed in on the opportunity provided by this platform to lay claims on the efficacy of certain money making rituals in order to gather clients to themselves. Popular among these clients are the youths who have been proven to be the highest users of the facebook platform. The high rate of unemployment, poor educational system, poverty and peer pressure has been identified as the possible causes of youths engaging in money rituals. It has been observed that Nigerian youths get entrapped with the myth of making money through ritual killings as shown by the peddlers of the efficacy of money rituals through facebook. The Oke-ite money ritual is one of the most talked about on the facebook platform as it is portrayed to have the power to bring vast wealth to whoever indulges in it. A notable number of Nigerian youths hold the conviction that magical concoctions and ritual sacrifices assembled with bizarre ingredients will usher in affluence, power and fame, and the practice of ritual sacrifices are a significant phenomena that have appeared to be part of the Nigerian society for ages. This kind of belief is still common across most social classes and ethnic groups in Nigeria. Hence, the tendency of gullible youths getting carried away by what they see on facebook and the flagrant display of wealth by their peers. This study therefore sets out to determine if Nigerian youths (with a focus on the undergraduates of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra state), are aware of the oke-ite money ritual mechanism as shown on facebook and whether they believe in its efficacy claims made by the promoters of this particular money making ritual.

Objectives of the Study

The following specific objectives informed this study

1. To find out the level of awareness of the oke-ite money ritual by undergraduate students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu University, Anambra state.
2. To ascertain the level of exposure of the undergraduate students to oke-ite money ritual efficacy claim videos on facebook.
3. To determine the undergraduate students level of believability of the oke-ite money ritual efficacy claims made on facebook by its promoters.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions;

1. What is the level of awareness of the oke-ite money ritual by undergraduate students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra state.
2. What is the level of exposure of the undergraduate students to oke-ite money ritual efficacy claim videos on facebook?
3. Do the undergraduate students actually believe the efficacy claim videos of the oke-ite money ritual made on facebook by its promoters?

Literature Review

The reality of supernatural powers and the practice of ritual sacrifices is a belief that has been part of the Nigerian society from time immemorial (Falae, 2018) ^[17]. According to (Moore & Sanders, 2003) Nigeria and other sub-saharan African countries hold unto a traditional belief that individuals' victories and achievements could be acquired with the intervention of a mystical power(s) (Moore and Sanders, 2003). This mode of belief is still popular across most social classes and all ethnic groups in Nigeria. A remarkable number of Nigerians have the opinion that charms and amulets strapped around the body or draped in houses and cars can fortify them against any calamity such as death, accidents, diseases, sicknesses and stillbirths (Oyewole, 2016). Furthermore, people are certain that magical concoctions and ritual sacrifices assembled with grotesque ingredients will usher in fame, power and financial fortunes to their lives (Obineke, 2008). Hence, ritual sacrifices are usually conducted (to achieve these objectives) in numerous forms using diverse materials. The type of ritual sacrifices conducted to induce or augment financial fortunes are known as money rituals. Money rituals according to popular belief ought to make the perpetrator rich or attract fortunes to him or her (Smith, 2001). "Ritual" as a religious term requires a ceremony that involves communication with certain external forces which includes a belief done with some form of solemnity and seriousness. Rituals are connected to the realm of the sacred, entailing sacrifices, basically (Adisa 2005). Adisa, (2005) points out sacred and the non-sacred as the categorization of rituals. The sacred rituals are said to be negative or positive as the case may be. Rituals entails sacrifices for initiations, life crisis, customs and death rites. Non-sacred rituals involves the similar types indicating reenactment. With regards to the sacred type of rituals, the positive ones are mostly interested with renewing or consecrating a religious object.

Sacrificial ritual is another ritual classified as sacred by the French sociologists Henry Hubert and Mercel Maus (Adisa, 2005). The two scholars endeavor to discern between offering and consecration, sacrifices and rituals of oblation. They observed that the clear cut feature of sacrifice ritual is the annihilation of the sacrificial victim which could be human, plant, or animal through burning, dismembering or eating either totally or partially.

Emily *et al.* (2019) states that a ritual must fit into four patterns which are: a repetitive social practice, different from the patterns of day-to-day life, follows certain kinds of ritual scheme and concealed in myth. Rituals usually have its roots in religion and myth, binding itself to prehistoric practices between the divine and humans. Nonetheless, a ritual is not always religious in nature. (Akinoyemi, 2019).

A ritual done to bring about money or to alter a person's circumstance or situation or circumstance where in which to ensure more wealth and prosperity is known as money

ritual. (Fanusionwu, 2022) ^[18]. The conception that a human being and other living things could be sacrificed to acquire wealth may not be proved empirically, but the fact remains that the phenomenon does exist, and is magic. Magic is a ritual enactment or performance believed to impact human or natural events through reaching to an external mystical force beyond the ordinary human sphere (Encyclopedia Britannica (6) 1974). Opoku (1978) opines that magic has two underlying principles which are contiguity and homeopathy. While homeopathically speaking, 'like generates like or that an effect is similar to its cause; Contagious magic on the other hand employs the philosophy that things which have previously been in contact with each other will continue to relate even when the contact is broken. Opoku (1978) and Awolalu (1979) ^[9], observed that contagious magic are exoteric energy which a man in his limitations who has esoteric proficiency may utilize to have his will obeyed.

The form of materials applied in money ritual sacrifices depend on the proportion of wealth the perpetrator craves for. Some utilize wildlife, while most use human body parts that are assumed to be more potent (Jegade, 2014; Abayomi and Dedeke, 2006) ^[1]. Obineke (2008) asserts that the several parts of the human body, are understood to generate different outcomes in money rituals. Notably, in an interview conducted with persons captured with human body parts, Usman, (2017), discovered that the human head, tongue, bones, genitals, heart and female breasts, provides potent results in money rituals. In addition, some classification of human beings with distinct genetic conditions particularly people with hunchbacks, albinism and dwarfism, are also said to be appropriate for money ritual sacrifices (Brilliant, 2015; Nkrumah, 2018) ^[13].

Consequently, thousands of innocent Nigerians (male and female) covering all ages have been killed and their body parts decapitated for money ritual sacrifices (Usman, 2017). The frequency at which people are killed and severed bodies abandoned in Nigerian cities has been frightening in recent times. It has been observed that news about missing persons and the discovery of decapitated human bodies found in strange places have been rampant in the media. Again, numerous cases of persons captured with human body parts have constantly been in the news currently (Salihu, Isiaka & Isiaka, 2019) ^[26]. The authentic number of individuals murdered for money rituals in Nigeria is unknown, and this is as a result of lack of systematic data gathering on matters connecting to money ritual-related killings in the nation (Olokungboye. Fapetu, Agbi, Ologun (2021). Furthermore, academic enquiry that investigated this area are relatively inadequate. Hence, it is a challenge to hand out data and show how widespread the situation is in Nigeria.

History of Ritual Practice in Nigeria

Nevertheless, It is worthy to note that ritual-related killings are not novel in Nigeria. The history dates back to the precolonial era which had many communities present human and animal parts and souls for ritual sacrifices to the deities (Moore and Sanders, 2003). Awolalu (1979) ^[9] stated that criminal offenders, persons who committed abominable acts such as incest and persons who defied the instruction of the gods and leaders were the victims during this period. There were also times communities turned to human sacrifice in times of misfortunes. This practice was criminalized and exterminated in Nigeria, and there were no occurrences of such practices reported anywhere in the country in the last

few decades (Oyewole, 2016).

According to Usman (2017) African communities have presented ritual sacrifice to their deities, which sometimes included human sacrifice. The kind of victim for ritual sacrifice vary from one case to another, depending on the aim of the sacrifice and the community. Again, choice of victims for ritual sacrifice defers from one community to another (Salihu *et al.*, 2019) ^[26]. In some communities, a breaker of the law of curfew announced for ritual order turns out to be the victim for such Ritual and which is why strangers mainly fall victim of ritual sacrifice, considering that they are not aware of such curfew announced for the ritual order. As a result, guards that discharge such ritual order will apprehend the victim. (Akinyemi, 2017) ^[7].

Again, in certain communities, the killing of slaves were another kind of ritual sacrifice. Ayegboyin (2009) ^[10] discovered that human sacrifice was the topmost and costliest ritual sacrifice that the community turned to especially in times of national disaster, to appease certain deities and cleanse the community. Adefila and Opeola (1998) equally observed that the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria, engaged in a ritual tradition that involved using human beings, mainly slaves for sacrifice prior to any military undertaking in the course of the Yoruba political war Between the 11th and 19th centuries. Ayegboyin (2009) ^[10] opines that making use of human beings for rituals was not as a result of lack of respect for sanctity of human life but a distinctive philosophy of life that it is preferable to sacrifice human life for community's good than for the downfall of the community. Nevertheless, there has never been a widespread acceptance of human sacrifice in Africa and there are some circumstances where this form of ritual has been presented to the divinities in a debased form of African religion (Ashanti 2009).

The custom of human sacrifice, magical powers, juju, and witchcraft, were outlawed under colonialism across the African continent (Nkrumah, 2018). These infamous practices have also been outlawed in the Nigerian penal code since 1916 as a step to collaborate with the colonial masters to establish a successful economic, social and political order in Africa (Ebhomele, 2016) ^[15]. Nevertheless, as the yearning for extraordinary wealth and protection maintenance heightened among those in business and other economic elites, together with some other individuals who desire for advancement in their affluence, private ritual is established at the expense of general community ritual (Falae, 2018) ^[17]. This development is strengthened with the increase of private ritualist experts and professionals with the mastery of using humans or human body parts for money ritual (Olokungboye *et al.*, 2021). Nonetheless, the increase in the practice of taking peoples' lives for money ritual sacrifices in Nigeria is common in recent times (Usman, 2017). The basis for this escalation remain obscure. This might be as a result of a dearth in academic research and probably lack of varying opinions among divergent scholars on this circumstance. Melvin & Ayotunde (2011) is of the view that some professionals are of the opinion that the unsavory socioeconomic situation which showcases the extent of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria is an underlying factor while Adagbada (2014) ^[2] asserts that the culture of unending quests for material wealth, fame and power, among Nigerians and the popular beliefs that ritual sacrifices particularly those that entail using human body parts induce fortunes that have heightened money ritual-related killings in Nigerian communities (Jegade, 2014; Okeshola & Adeta, 2013).

In Nigeria, Akinyemi (2017) ^[7] states that money rituals are classified into three forms. The first classification entails the use of human body parts such as the head, eyes, tongue, genitals and heart as sacred representations and commodities for ritual sacrifices. The second classification entails using wild animals merged with roots and herbs for ritual sacrifices, while the third classification entails using charms and amulets, as well as chants of phrases and prayers that are expected to bring fortune to the individual who uses them. The first classification is popularly believed to be more potent, dependable, and enduring than the other two; Hence, many people involved in money rituals go for it (Falae, 2018) ^[17]. Persons who are interested in rituals and are captivated by it are expected to bring fresh or decomposed human body parts for ritual sacrifices (Akinyemi, 2017) ^[7]. Correspondingly, Brilliant (2015) ^[13], Usman (2017) and Nkrumah (2018), observed that body parts of persons with special genetic conditions like dwarfism, hunchbacks and albinism are equally perceived to be more potent in money ritual purposes. The ritualists who are otherwise called head hunters usually go hunting for victims at the demand of the herbalists, who carry out the rituals (Oyewole, 2016). The victims' body parts are acquired by either cutting down innocent lives or exhuming dead bodies from their graves and presenting them to the divine deity or spirit to whom the ritual is directed to in exchange for wealth and fortune (Ebhomele, 2015) ^[15]. Besides, the ritualists also participate in bizarre activities such as engaging in sexual intercourse with corpses and with persons with physical disabilities and mental health disturbances (Usman, 2017). The corpse, for instance, is perceived to be surrounded by spirits that could be controlled through intercourse and charms to usher in wealth to an individual (Fanusionwu, 2022) ^[18]. In the same vein, individuals with physical disabilities and mental health challenges are assumed to be possessed by untamed natural forces that could be changed into envoys of fortune (Adagbada, 2014) ^[2]. From the forgoing, this study explains money rituals as a series of spiritual ventures and rites and which are believed to generate fortunes or bring wealth to individuals when conducted. It entails the use of offerings of human and animal body parts, objects, and incantations as the sacrificial elements of the rituals to the divine spirits in exchange for a life of fame and fortune.

The Oke-ite Money Ritual Charm



Fig 1: A Picture of the Oke-ite Money Ritual Charm

Oke-ite money ritual charm is a charm prepared with blood of human and animal parts in clay pots or crude metal pots known as 'ite-ona' in igbo language and left boil over time without fire underneath (Fanusionwu, 2022) ^[18]. Oke which means 'male' or 'great' simply signifies that the charm is a great one brought about by a male deity while 'ite' means pot hence the name oke-ite. This oke-ite charm is equally known as a pot of progress because it is believed that if the ritual is properly done it engages in the work of ushering in quick riches and unmerited favours to whoever engages in it (Daily News Reporters, 2022). It is also perceived to help one succeed where others experienced failure with lesser or no effort. Oke-ite money ritual charm according to Igbo tradition custodians is believed to be a deadly money making ritual in clay or metal pots filled with assorted herbs and roots as well as specific human and animal parts that demands regular blood sacrifices. It is a pot of concoction tied with a white cloth laced with different bird feathers with a red thread tied round it which is said to be the easiest way to get wealth but with dire consequences (Fanusionwu, 2022) ^[18]. The most popular human parts used for preparing the oke-ite money rituals are the placenta of a baby, the womb of a young female, the vagina of a young female and the penis of a young male while the most popular animal parts used are the head of an owl, the talons and gizzards of an eagle, the head and wings of a vulture and the head of a python (Daily News Reporters, 2022). It is a charm made by witch doctors for their clients with the aim of accelerating their wealth and accomplishments faster than it would have been. The oke-ite money making ritual according to Fanusionwu (2022) ^[18] is of two types; the oku awele and the ite awele. The oku awele involves using mainly animal parts and wild herbs and roots for its sacrifice which is constantly renewed with the blood of a ram either monthly seasonal or yearly. It is said to bring less wealth and success to an individual compared to the ite awele which requires human parts alongside some herbs and roots for the ritual to be effective (Daily News Reporters, 2022). The ite awele involves the blood of a human being used for its renewal either monthly, seasonal or yearly as otherwise instructed by the witch doctor. (Fanusionwu, 2022) ^[18]. It requires a very versatile and great dibia to prepare the charm as the charm is known to be very powerful and deadly. (Daily News Reporters, 2022). According to Fanusionwu, (2022) ^[18], the pot of charm is prepared in the four market days of the igbo calendar (eke, orie, afor, nkwo) with some different powerful items used for the ritual process put inside the pot on specific market days which is to say that within these four market days different sacred items are sanctified and put inside the pot. The witch doctor preparing the ritual is expected to do so unclad and is expected to make a white ram sacrifice to the deities each day for protection. (Daily News Reporters, 2022). On the last day of the ritual preparation, it is expected that the client is present for the final rites to be complete and perfected. At this juncture which is most important, the initiation of the client is done as part of the ritual process for this is when the pot of progress acclimatizes with the owner and is spiritually activated to be effective. (Fanusionwu, 2022) ^[18] According to Daily News Reporters (2022), oke-ite charm is not part of the igbo culture but borrowed from other tribes like the Igala and Yoruba kingdoms as well as other African countries.

Side Effects of the Oke-ite Money Ritual Charm

The oke-ite awele is not without its consequences. It is perceived to be the fastest means of acquiring fast wealth if done properly but requires steady sacrifices for it to remain effective (Fanusionwu, 2022) ^[18]. The ritual brings about the

untimely death of a loved one as it chooses the victim it needs from the family of the client using the ritual. It is equally said to bring about series of miscarriages to the family of the client and untold hardships if any law governing the effectiveness of the ritual is broken. (Daily News Reporters, 2022). Again, since the oke-ite charm is believed to accelerate an individual's predestined accomplishments in weeks and years and that of his generation, it is expected that the consequence of that action is a poor generation filled with sickness and untimely deaths reason scholars with in-depth insight into this ritual process warn against indulging in it. Most individuals especially the youths have continually disregarded this warning and have indulged in this ritual in their quest to make quick wealth and fortune damning the consequences. (Daily News Reporters, 2022).

Facebook as an advertising Tool for Money Ritual Awareness

Marketers and advertisers had previously fraternized with the traditional media of communication (Television, radio and print) to reach their audiences, and to engage in advertising 'war' in competition against themselves (O'Toole, 2000). Nevertheless, this situation is rapidly changing. Current studies show that traditional mass media audiences are speedily tilting towards the new media for information and gratification of specific communication needs (Rudloff & Fray, 2010; O'Toole, 2000). This has shown a conscious shift from the more conventional mainstream media particularly among the younger generation to the new (social) media which they view as a better alternative. In recent times, it is assumed that if one is not on any of the social networking sites, then such a person is not on the Internet. This fact has become accurate for advertisers as well as for consumers. (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2017) And advertisers and marketers are very mindful of this singular fact. With the Internet advanced into Web 2.0, the new media is currently promoting a two-way online interaction and user-generated content has become the anchor of this advancement (Moore & Sanders, 2003). What has become evident is that social media, particularly Facebook, allow users to showcase themselves, create and maintain social connections with others, and put together their own social networks (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007, Weinberg 2009; Kaplan and Haenlein 2010; Meerman Scott 2010). The days are long past when monopoly of content creation was solely in the hands of a few content creators and media distributors. The days have gone when marketers controlled the communication path between consumer and advertiser. The present day model is collective, collaborative, shared and customized (Jegede, 2014). It's a world in which the consumer is the creator, consumer and distributor of content. There are currently over a billion content creators and hundreds of millions of distributors all vying for recognition in the social media especially the Facebook platform (Radloff & Fray, 2010). The increase of affordable and quality technology alongside the popularity of Facebook and other social networking sites have forever altered the media landscape. This growing popularity of Facebook has also necessitated a paradigmatic shift in the manner advertisers now utilize traditional media to 'catch' their target audiences, directing them to capitalize on communicating with consumers through online social networking sites with a major focus on Facebook. (Akinyemi, 2017) ^[7] The coming of social media platforms have empowered and emboldened

many vendors that ordinarily would not ply their services through the mainstream media to do so through the facebook platforms. In recent times, marabouts, spiritualists, witch doctors and other promoters of money making ritual techniques have seized the opportunity of the interactivity and the popularity of facebook to seek for their target audience and woo them into patronizing their services. The rate of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria has placed the youths in a gullible position where they easily fall victims to certain information and advertisement seen on facebook. The quest to get rich quick has further placed these youths at the mercy of these vendors who introduce them to these money ritual techniques and try to convince them on their efficacy claims. Upon investigation, it has proven that most youths caught engaging in money rituals swore that they got the idea on facebook as most of the promoters of money rituals have their facebook pages where they disseminate information concerning the particular money ritual technique they are advertising and making its efficacy claims to anyone who cares to listen. (Daily News Reporters, 2022). It is no doubt that the facebook platform has the highest number of users more than other social media platforms with the youths topping the chart of users (Brilliant, 2017). Reason, advertisers of money making ritual techniques utilize this platform to get through to their target audience.

Empirical Reviews

Olokungboye, Fapetu, Agbi, Ologun (2021) in their study 'Upsurge of Money rituals among youths in Nigeria and National security examined the threat of money ritual among youths in Nigeria. They established that the apparent downward trend in socio-economic greediness and quest for material possession, have resulted in the increase of the number of youth utilizing fetish practices to attune with prevailing socio-economic demands.

Salihu, Isiaka & Isiaka (2019) ^[26] in their study "The Growing Phenomenon of Money Ritual-motivated killings in Nigeria: An empirical investigation into the factors responsible" examined how beliefs in magical powers and related sacred activities, particularly those that accept human body parts for ritual sacrifices in exchange for fortunes, alongside poverty, unemployment, and quest for wealth as predictors responsible for the increase in money ritual-related killings in Ilorin Emirate of Kwara State, Nigeria. A total of 1736 respondents were selected using simple random sampling techniques. The instrument employed for data collection was a questionnaire. Furthermore, the information gathered was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The results showed that the increase in money ritual-related killings in Ilorin Emirate is as a result of the general belief that ritual sacrifices enhance fortunes, the boundless desire for material wealth among Nigerians, unemployment, and poverty in Nigeria. The paper therefore recommended that there should be public enlightenment in all languages spoken in Nigeria about the dangers in relating individual successes with spiritual influences. This study is quite similar to the current study in that it focuses on the issue of money rituals with a similar methodology except for the area of study which differs and the measurable variables used.

Akinugbe (2016) in his study Kidnapping for ritual in Nigeria-The media perspective examines the threat of kidnapping for ritual in Nigeria. Relying on accessible public data, this study interrogates the phenomenon and its

motivations and implications for the media, security, and the efficacy of state responses, and possible ways forward. The study found out that the media plays a big role in fueling and at the same time curtailing the incidents of kidnapping for rituals in Nigeria. The study therefore suggested that media stakeholders should seek out ways of engaging and enlightening the public on issues bothering on kidnapping for rituals and ways to put an end to it.

Smith (2001) in his study "Ritual killing, 419 and Fast wealth; Inequality and the popular imagination in south eastern Nigeria" situates an apparently fantastic series of events in Nigeria in a context that makes them meaningful and recognizes their intimate connection to everyday issues of wealth, power, and inequality focusing on popular stories of the occult circulating in the aftermath of a widely publicized case of ritual killing.

From the empirical reviews above, the gap in literature is evident which this current study attempted to fill. None of the studies above focused on the oke-ite money making ritual technique and none had its area of study as Anambra state. Again, none of the studies had awareness and believability as their measurable variables and none had undergraduate students as its respondents.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Technological Determinism theory which was propounded by Marshall McLuhan (1962) states that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how the society conducts itself as we move from one technological age to another. It explains that when new systems of technology are created, the culture or society is instantly changed to reflect the senses needed to use the new technology. It predicts that with every new system of media technology, society will change and adapt to that technology. There is a simple cause and effect analysis between the introduction of new technology and the changes in society's way of thinking, acting, feeling, or believing. The theory could be proved false if a new technology is invented and nothing changes. Situating this theory to the present study, it shows how the emergence of facebook, a media technology changed the way advertisers marketed their products to their target audience. It was formerly a one-way form of communication and most times services like that of money-making rituals were never advertised openly and brazenly. The facebook platform has enabled witch doctors, marabouts and spiritualists to make the videos of their money making ritual techniques and upload to the viewing pleasure of their target audience thereby getting their attention and interest to this phenomenon. Again, facebook has equally shaped the way we act think and feel in the sense that most youths who have dabbled into some questionable vices flaunt their wealth and status on this platform as a way of luring the gullible ones to venture into questionable means in their quest to get rich quick. This was not obtainable before the advent of facebook. One only has to have a face-to-face interaction or hear news of youths who suddenly made it big to get them interested in towing the same path.

Methodology

This study was designed as a survey and the area of study is Anambra State of Nigeria. The state hosts Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University which is the university of the undergraduate students under study.

Population of Study

The population of the study comprised all undergraduates of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University in Anambra State. They number 16,900 according to data sourced from the records of the university registry. Undergraduates were chosen for this study because of their heavy usage of facebook of accessing information which has been proven by media scholars.

Sample size and Sample technique

The sample size for the survey was decided by referring to sample sizes for various population ranges as worked out by krejcie and Morgan (1970). The sample sizes are seen in the table below

Populations and sample sizes at 5% Error Margin, 95% Confidence Level

Population size	Size
100	80
500	217
1,000	278
10,000	370
100,000	383
500,000	384
1 million and above	384

Therefore, since this study population is 16,900, the researcher settled for 370 as the sample size. Thus, the sample size of 370 is adopted at 5% error margin and 95% percent confidence level. The sample selection involved a multi-stage procedure. In other to ensure spread, the first and second stages involved four faculties each and two departments from each faculty which represents over 60% of the university population (which in the researcher's opinion is a fair representation) which were randomly selected through a lucky dip from each of the university campuses as follows: Faculty of Education (Education Foundation and Library & Information science) Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences (Anatomy and Physiology) Faculty of Physical Sciences (Computer Science and Mathematics) Faculty of Enviromental Sciences (Urban& Regional Planning and Architecture). Faculty of Social sciences (Political Science and Public Administration) Faculty of Arts (English and Religion) Faculty of Agriculture (Soil science and Horticulture) Faculty of Management Sciences (Business Administration and Marketing).

The third stage, the researcher randomly selected 23 respondents from each of the departments and extra two respondents from a department chosen by a lucky dip to make up the 370 sample respondents.

The data collection instrument is questionnaire. The questionnaire contains only structured questions framed to generate quantitative data in line with the variables mentioned in the study. The method of data analysis is quantitative. Answers extracted through the questionnaire is recorded as numerical data. The frequency of each answer is found and the percentage computed accordingly. Statistical tables are employed for the presentation of these data.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Response Rate of Respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Returned	358	96.8%
Not Returned	12	3.24%
Total	370	100

Data in table 1 shows that 96% of the distributed questionnaire was returned while the remaining 3.64% was not returned. This indicates that majority of the questionnaires were returned.

Demographic Data

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Respondents' Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	156	43.6%
Female	202	56.4%
Total	358	100

Data in table 2 indicates that 43.6% of the respondents are males while 56.4% are females. This shows that the majority of respondents are females.

Table 3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Respondents' Age	Frequency	Percentage
15-20 years	195	54.5%
21-25 years	115	32.2%
26-30 years	48	13.4%
Total	358	100

Data in table 3 shows that 54.5% of the respondents are in the age bracket of 15-20 years, another 32.2% of the respondents are in the age bracket of 21-25 years while the remaining 13.4% are in the age bracket of 26-30 years. This data indicates that majority of the respondents are in age bracket 15-20 years.

Table 4: Level of Study of Respondents

Respondents' level of Study	Frequency	Percentage
100 Level	118	32.9%
200 Level	94	26.3%
300 Level	83	23.2%
400 Level	63	17.6%
Total	358	100

Data in table 4 shows that 32.9% of the respondents are in 100 level of their study, another 26.3% are in 200 level, 23.2% of the respondents are in 300 level while the remaining 17.6% of the respondents are in 400 level of their study. This data indicates that majority of the respondents are in 100 level of their study.

Table 5: Respondents' level of Awareness of the oke-ite Money Ritual Charm

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	42	11.7%
High	51	14.2%
Moderately High	75	20.9%
Very Low	38	10.6%
Low	64	17.9%
Moderately Low	58	16.2%
Indifferent	30	8.38%
Total	364	100

Table 5 shows that 11.7% respondents level of awareness of the oke-ite money ritual charm is very high, 14.2% respondents are on a high level of awareness, 20.9% of respondents are on a moderately high level of awareness, 10.6% of respondents are on a very low level of awareness,

17.9% of respondents are on a low level, 16.2% of respondents are on a moderately low level while 8.38% of respondents are indifferent about being aware of the oke-ite money ritual charm. This data indicates that a majority of the respondents have a moderately high level of awareness of the oke-ite money ritual charm which implies that majority of Nigerian youths have a knowledge of this type of money ritual technique and the gullible ones among them may have the tendency of picking interest and getting involved in the ritual process with a bid to acquiring quick wealth and fame. The facebook platform which has information on the oke-ite money ritual charm has helped create awareness on this phenomenon and awareness is high among the youths because studies have found out that youths and adolescents have the highest number of facebook users globally hence the tendency that these youths could stumble upon this information randomly or intentionally as the case may be.

Table 6: Respondents' Level of Exposure to Oke-ite Money Ritual Efficacy Claims on Facebook

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	71	19.8%
High	110	30.7%
Low	87	24.3%
Very Low	62	17.3%
Indifferent	28	7.82%
Total	358	100

Data in table 5 shows that 19.8% of respondents have a very high level of exposure to Oke-ite money ritual efficacy claims on facebook, 30.7% of respondents have a high level of exposure, 24.3% of respondents have a low exposure, 17.3% of respondents have a very low exposure while 7.82% are indifferent about the efficacy claims. This data indicates that majority of respondents are on the facebook platform and have been exposed to the oke-ite money ritual efficacy claims on facebook. This implies that most Nigerian youths are on facebook and if not guided properly could readily avail themselves to the promoters of this money ritual technique and could be brainwashed towards believing that this particular money ritual charm could actually bring them wealth and fortune. This would definitely not augur well with the development and sanity of the society who expect the youths to be part of the change process. Those respondents that have a low exposure to the efficacy claims could indicate that they may not have come across the videos or they deliberately do not avail themselves to listening or viewing such messages on facebook which implies that such respondents have shielded themselves from gaining extra knowledge on issues like this and so choose to stay ignorant to maintain their sanity and respect their religious beliefs which may be against money rituals.

Table 7: Respondents' Level of Believability of the Oke-ite Money Ritual Efficacy Claims on Facebook

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	40	11.2%
High	88	24.6%
Very Low	56	15.6%
Low	74	20.7%
Not at all	44	12.3%
Indifferent	56	15.6%
Total	358	100

Table 5 shows that 11.2% of respondents believe very highly in the oke-ite money ritual efficacy claims on facebook, 24.6% of respondents have a high level of belief in the efficacy claims, 15.6% of respondents have a very low belief, 20.7% of respondents have the level of the efficacy claims at a low level, 12.3% of respondents do not believe the efficacy claims on facebook at all while 15.6% of respondents are indifferent to the efficacy claims. This finding indicates that majority of the respondents believe highly in the efficacy claims of the oke-ite money ritual charm on facebook despite the negative consequences attached to money rituals in the society. This definitely implies that many Nigerian youths are evidently fed up with the high level of poverty and unemployment rate in the society and are poised to dabble into money rituals to make it big. Again, with the flagrant display of wealth by some youths who may have engaged in one form of social vice or the other to make fortunes, it further fuels the interest of many other youths to engage in money rituals to be like their rich peers as seen on various social media platforms and the around the society. With the efficacy claims of the oke-ite money ritual made on facebook and the high belief most of the respondents have to these claims, there is a high tendency that these respondents will reach out to these witch doctors, marabouts or spiritualists as the case may be to partake in this ritual they believe would bring quick wealth to them. For the respondents that have a low belief in the efficacy claims of the oke-ite money ritual, it indicates that some of the respondents may believe in the potency of the ritual process but have misgivings as to the dire consequences that await the ritualist and as such prefer to watch how events surrounding this phenomenon unfolds. For the respondents that do not believe in the efficacy claims at all, it goes to show that they view the promoters of the oke-ite money ritual charm as charlatans that are out to deceive gullible youths and therefore are not in the least interested in the efficacy claims of the money ritual charm. The respondents that are indifferent to the efficacy claims indicates that whether the oke-ite money ritual charm is potent or not, they obviously do not care and are not interested. These group of respondents tend to be carefree in their judgement of issues and may or may not show interest in the oke-ite money ritual charm efficacy claims.

Discussion of Findings

Findings for the research question one which probes respondents' level of awareness of the oke-ite money ritual charm indicate that majority of respondents have a moderately high level of awareness which could be as a result of heavy social media usage by undergraduate students who studies have proven that youths make up the highest number of facebook users and as a result come across all sorts of information especially on this money ritual phenomenon. Some of the respondents have a low and moderately low level of awareness of this phenomenon which could mean that they may not have come across such videos or information on oke-ite money rituals and therefore their level of awareness is insignificant. Salihu, Isiaka & Isiaka (2019) ^[26] in their study agree with the major finding of majority of the undergraduates being aware of the oke-ite money ritual charm as they also discovered that there is a high level of awareness by Nigerians on acquiring quick wealth through money rituals hence collaborating this finding.

The major finding for research question two which sought to find out respondents' level of exposure on the oke-ite money

ritual efficacy claim videos on facebook indicates that the undergraduate students have a high level of exposure to these efficacy claims on facebook which readily shows that most of these youths utilize the facebook platforms frequently and could be following the pages of the promoters of this money ritual charm which enables them have access to these videos and expose themselves to whatever information therein. This finding equally shows facebook is a major platform used by the promoters of the oke-ite money ritual charm to reach out to their target audience to offer their services. Olukungboye, Fapetu, Agbi & Ologun (2021) agrees with this finding as their study pointed out that most nigerian youths who are on the facebook platform are exposed to all sorts of information on money rituals and some of the criminals caught engaging in rituals have confessed to getting ritual information on facebook pages that offer these ritual services thus the upsurge in money rituals in recent times.

For research question three which sought to ascertain respondents' level of believability on the oke-ite money ritual charm efficacy claims on facebook, indicate that majority of the undergraduate students have a high level of belief in this particular money ritual charm which is rather surprising. This is surprising because observers of this ritual trend have discovered there are numerous side effects which is supposed to deter these youths from engaging in this ritual but unfortunately is not the case. The youths believing in this phenomenon to a reasonable extent as discovered in the study shows how evident the rate of poverty and unemployment is in the society which has encouraged many youths to take interest in the ritual bussiness to make fast wealth in order to escape from poverty damning all consequences attached to this oke-ite money ritual charm. Akinnugbe (2016) in his study agrees with this major finding as his study asserts that most Nigerian youths believe that they could escape poverty through kidnapping for rituals and therefore engage in it without minding the consequences attached to the criminal act.

Conclusion

The rationale behind this study was to investigate the awareness and believability of the oke-ite money ritual efficacy claims on facebook among Anambra youths with a focus on Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu undergraduate students. From the results of the survey, it was inferred that Anambra state youths tend to use the facebook platform to a large extent, and therefore are aware of the oke-ite money ritual charm and to a very reasonable extent believe in the efficacy claims as made on facebook by the promoters of the oke-ite money ritual charm. With the level of poverty and unemployment in the society, the youths avail themselves the opportunity to get acquainted with information on money rituals and probably engage in it to escape poverty and be like their peers that have amassed wealth for themselves. The study therefore concludes that facebook plays a key role in the dissemination of oke-ite money ritual charm efficacy claims information and the youths in Anambra state utilize this media channel that helps creates this awareness and thus exposes them to the efficacy claims of money ritual charms with a particular focus on the oke-ite money ritual. The high level of believability of the efficacy claims of oke-ite money ritual charm by the youths equally show the interactive and persuasive power of the facebook platform that brings the advertiser or promoter of this money ritual charm together with the youths thereby enhancing an understanding to the

phenomenon.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the discoveries made from literature review, the following recommendations are made;

1. Awareness on the dangers of money rituals should be made by relevant stakeholders using the facebook platform. This would help counteract the efficacy claims of such rituals and dissuade youths from indulging in such practices.
2. Relevant government agencies should create more opportunities for the youths to get them gainfully employed. This would go a long way in engaging them thereby making money rituals less attractive to them.
3. There should be programmes like seminars and conferences organised by the state ministry of youths and culture to continually keep the youths informed about the consequences of performing money rituals and there should be sanctions meted out to youths seen flaunting their wealth online. This should serve as a deterrent to others that would want to imitate their lifestyle.

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