



Research Article



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Examining the factors influencing changes in traditional funeral rituals among Frafra subgroupings in Northern Ghana

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Abstract

What connects people of all cultures, regardless of how or where people are born, is the reality that almost everyone eventually dies. Death is a passage from this world to the world beyond. When a family member dies, we are sobered with increased anxiety, sadness, and anguish. Befitting burial according to custom and tradition is the only obligation owed to the dead body. The rituals surrounding burial are designed to help the dead return to the realm of their ancestors. It has changed many things in our tradition and had significant impact on our people and culture. It is now costly for people to send their deceased to their family's home because the practice has changed. This research looks at altering funeral ritual trends and making positive impact in burial rituals, how it affects Frafra people of northern Ghana, and the impact of religious-cultural practices and socio-economic activity. From the dawn of time, there have been many funeral ceremonies. The funeral service gives one final opportunity to honor the dead. Funeral has a significance in African society Ghana inclusive. Many are unchanged even though funerary rites have been altered in the Frafra subgroup Traditional Areas due to modernization and technology in the last 50 years. The researchers utilized non-probability sampling to choose respondents into categories. Purposive and snowball sampling strategies were employed to gather respondents in this sampling. Information was mainly obtained through interviews and observation in the subject region; when this included recording and transcribing. It was discovered that funeral rites had sever negative financial and psychological turmoil for many families, including poverty, debt, prostitution, child labor, abortion, fighting, and death.

Keywords: changes, factors, funerals, Frafra, rituals

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Public Interest Statement

The study aims to look at the changes in funeral customs through time and the factors that affect those changes among the Frafra subgroups. This study adds knowledge to the existing literature on funeral performances in Upper East Region, especially the Frafra Subgroups. This study will bring to light the cultural significance of the indigenous funeral rituals and the history surrounding the evolution of the indigenous funeral rituals among the inhabitants of Frafra subgroups in northern Ghana. Additionally, the study results might aid traditional rulers in creating legislation to save the system.

Introduction

Funeral rituals are categorized as the last stage of rites of passage. Obsequies as rites, of course, serve as a gateway between the world of the living and the supernatural. They are based on the hematological consciousness, which posits a contradiction between the living self and the transcendental spirits. Such that funeral rites are meant to process a human being, upon his death, into a supernatural entity. They serve as the conveyor belt between the two orders of being, the living being and the spiritual realm Karani (2017). It is critical to say a proper goodbye at a funeral to say how sorry they are for losing a loved one. Frafra funerals (and other like ones) are very effective at bringing people together. Funerals, via spiritual ceremonies, offer a solid framework to cope with death and burial. However, during the last 50 years, modifications in funeral customs have arisen because of technical and contemporary developments, leading to family and community difficulties owing to many social and economic problems Ofori-Amankwa (2003).

Researchers on religion have established that funeral rituals are universal and ubiquitous phenomena in mourning the dead. Like any other life-transforming event, human civilizations worldwide have found mourning rituals to facilitate this transition. Human cultures perform funeral rituals depending on the religious meaning they attach to death and how the living beings are connected to the supernatural, Shisanya, (1992). Because of how long funeral services in Ghana tend to be, politicians and pastors criticize these events, as do news sources, because of how expensive they are. Funerals in Ghana cost money, according to Mazzucatoets (2006). Ghanaians utilize the cash to pay for housing, education, and funerals, which are significant endeavors that keep Ghanaians afloat when money is sent from migrant workers overseas. Sarpong and Nketia (1967) both note that the formal Ghanaians funeral celebration is an important cultural occasion, with implicit standards for the behavior of the bereaved. This tragic incident demands the help of everyone. Every effort is made to make it a memorable occasion. Funerals are made up of five stages, as stated by Nketia (2010). They include 1. Preparation, 2. Pre-burial sorrow (including wake), 3 –internment, the after-burial mourning, and finally, periodic mourning. In the event of a state viewing, the deceased is prepared for a display about clothing, grooming, and so on.

As soon as the individual passes, this stage begins according to Nketia (2010) in the traditional Akan communities. It begins either immediately upon death or, in some circumstances, a day after death. When facilities for keeping bodies intact were limited, there was little choice except to bury the deceased immediately. A person preparing a corpse had to ensure privacy to minimize the chance of strangers hearing and entering the funeral. He posited that careful body preparation reduced the likelihood of outsiders being involved. His research found that while the corpse is being prepared, messengers are dispatched to spread the news to close friends and relatives, those in the town or hamlet, and people who live elsewhere. People in communities with titles seldom attend funeral proceedings, even if they are in town or otherwise available to go to the ceremony. When an influential person dies, people are notified everywhere they are provided they are related in one way or the other with common affinity. The announcement is imperative before the burying process will commence. This help to inform people about the death of a relative as burial goes with some obligations and

financial commitment to people that are closely related including in-laws, well-wishers, age grades to mention but few.

Arhin (1994) discovered that societal developments, including urbanization, migration, and the like, helped to commercialize funerals. The public health sector, as well as changes in religious belief, also had a role. When it comes to money, changes in our daily lives help it ascend to the apex of our social and economic interactions. This has shifted society's approach to burial rites into something like a type of life insurance.

According to Mensah (1999), burial ceremonies have evolved into social security systems and fashion and entertainment for many participants, particularly women. Frafra sub-groupings, like all human societies, had established funeral rites to help transition between the living and the spiritual world. These obsequies were full of religious significance. The purpose of this study is to investigate the changes and the variables that impact the changes in the religious concepts and practices expressed in Frafra sub-groupings funeral culture through time and space, against a background of centuries of encounters and interactions with external religious systems in northern Ghana. This study will focus on the changes in the practices and the factors that influence that change in funeral rituals processes.

Problem Statement

There are many factors that led to changes in funeral rituals in Ghana than ever before. Statistics from Ghana show that before 50 years ago, our traditional funeral ritual practices were influenced by foreign culture and kept increasing to a high level Nketia, (1955), Sarpong (1974). Among the Frafra subgroups in rural regions in Ghana, there have been several modifications in the burial rituals because of modernization, religion and technology. Prosperity has become easier to express, which led to new customs, such as acquiring a popular new toy, which was impossible to do before. The increased expense in rituals has resulted in several people's complaints about the types of ceremonies at funerals, which are pretty extravagant. Some Frafra sub-groups have trouble understanding the changes and influencing variables that impact families and the things they care about. Although research has been conducted on funeral rituals among the tribes in Ghana, and its performance among different tribal groups, for instance Abasi, (1993 & 1995; Atinga, (2006) Nyamadi et al., (2015) Osei-Sarfo et al., (2016) Anoa, (1979 & 1980) Okaba, (1990) Asigre, (1991) but little is known about the studying of practices of funeral rituals and factors that influences the changes among the Frafra group. Therefore, the research will look at the various funeral rituals for the dead, there changes and factors that influence the differences among Frafra subgroups in the northern part of Ghana.

Research Objective

To describe the changes in the traditional funeral rituals overtime and the factors that influence the differences among the four Frafra subgroupings.

Literature review

In every academic study, it is understood that a review of what other authors and researchers have done is vital to the research being conducted; however, giving future researchers specific guidance is of the utmost importance. The inquiry is aimed at finding out what influences traditional funeral practices from changing. Studies relevant to the current topic have been collected and are given below, each with its subhead.

Changes in the traditional funeral rituals over time

Analysis of funeral modifications among the Frafra tribes in the Upper East Region, Ghana revealed a common topic of study Arhin (1994), Miescher (1997), Witte (2001), Nyamadi et al. (2001), Van der Geest (2004) and, Atinga, (2006). Arhin (1994) in his research posited that the traditional burial

rituals were changing and included examples, such as how shaves and fasting were no longer regular practices and how highlife music was used at the funeral site instead. The study found out that an effective funeral requires special gear, including tape recorders, turntables, speakers, and generators. Witte (2001) and Van der Geest (2004) also stated that the newest development in Akan funerals is documenting the event. It's striking to see visitors standing around the body; these scenes are cut together with footage of the deceased laid out in the state, surrounded by well-wishers. It's a striking picture, and its composition serves the purpose of the shot: showing the body of the dead person to the living, demonstrating that "It was a good death." According to Van der Geest (2004), funeral and how Ghanaians dealt with death had altered with the introduction of the mortuary, which he discovered after researching the Kwahu tribe. When they bury their dead relatives, they keep the body in the open air while all their family is there. The 'fridge' that is used in mortuaries makes this feasible.

In the Upper East Region of Ghana, traditional burial rites were a help or a danger to food security. Nyamadi et al. (2001) researched whether these funeral rites were a valuable old custom or not. In their research, they discovered that there were significant consequences on the well-being of families, particularly on their inability to get nutritious meals. Atinga (2006) also conducted a study among Frafra groups in the northern part of Ghana; in the study revealed many changes in funeral rituals like food, drinks, and preservation of dead in the mortuary for mortuary new of months.

Factors that Influence Changes in Traditional Funeral Rituals

In the area of Factors that influence the changes, literature has been reported on them. In recent decades, scholars and researchers like (Adjaye 2004, Atinga 2006, Atta-Cudjoe 2017, Apagya 2017, Nukunya 2014, Anngela-Cole 2012, Hagan 1992, Romanoff and Terenzio ,(1998), Adjaye (2004) and Atta-Cudjoe (2017). Many people assume that social, political, economic, and medical change in Africa is caused by Westernization, religious plurality, and the intersection of other factors. Western education, social status, and technological advancement all matter. Similarly, there is a long list of other variables, such as Western educational systems, technology, rural-to-urban migration, colonial displacement, and social media. Romanoff and Terenzio (1998) have shown that the West's scientific orientation typically causes people to reject traditional traditions.

Nukunya (2014) believes that colonialism is the introduction of foreign policies and laws permitted by legal systems. Colonialism can be understood as a country's use of force and imposition of its rule to expand or maintain control over another group, to promote its development and interests at the expense of others, including assisting underdeveloped colonies by guiding them to advance economically, religiously, and in health according to the parameters established by the colonizers. In addition to society's preference for commemorative pictures, Atta-Cudjoe (2017) argues that the growth of social media and technological tools has influenced societal norms on funeral services. The rising younger generation shares the recent deaths of their friends and family by posting them on social media. Atinga (2006) concluded that factors influence the changes among the people like technological innovations like improved hospital facilities, colonialism, education, and coming into contact with other cultures.

To summarize the study of recent funeral trends, contemporary academic literature primarily focuses on the financial limitations that modern people face and the patterns of contemporary funeral customs. However, the reasons behind these shifts have received little coverage. This research aimed to determine whether burial customs and the variables that affect variations in subgroupings of the Frafra people in northern Ghana are changing.

Methods and Materials

Design of Research

To investigate the perspectives of respondents on the funeral ritual changes, as well as the things that drive such changes, the study used ethnographic and case study techniques. Qualitative research, a scientific approach that aims to uncover answers, collect data, create results, and comprehend an issue from the locals' point of view, was used to shape the design (Patton & Cochram, 2002). For the research, there were Tindans (chiefs), Bayaahs (undertakers), Soothsayers, Widows, Widowers, Ritualists, Key Informants, Widowers, Widows, and Ritualists.

Information Sources

The data for the study came from two primary sources: Respondents include chiefs, clan leaders, and family heads, as well as Tindans, Bayaahs (undertakers), Soothsayers, Widows, Widowers, Ritualists, and Key Informants. Secondary sources such as books, journal papers, the internet, and newsletters were used to supplement this.

Procedure for Study Population and Sampling

Sample Population (Table 1.1)

Population Type of the Sample	Number
Chiefs	5
Clan heads and family heads	10
Soothsayers	5
Tindans	5
Bayaahs (undertakers),	5
Widows, Widowers, Ritualists, Key Informants	10
Total	40

Source: (Fieldwork, 2020).

Table 1.1 lists the sample population categories from the Frafra Sub-groupings communities used in the study, with a total sample population of 40 people. Due to data saturation, the sample population was chosen. Patton and Cochram (2002) averred data saturation occurs when enough information reproduces the study, and further coding is no longer possible. The respondents for the research were chosen using purposive sample, snowball sampling, and homogeneous sampling techniques or processes. The purpose of the purposive sampling technique was to find specific respondents for specified replies. Purposive sampling is when a researcher handpicks the examples to be included based on their expertise of the topic at hand (Asamoah-Gyimah & Anane, (2013).

Instruments for Data Collection

The study's tool was an interview guide. The interview guide was created with the study's goal in mind. Most of the time, Focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews (SSIs) were used.

Processing and Analysis of Data

Data processing and analysis were done because qualitative Analysis is about reducing the data without losing its meaning. Interviews were recorded transcribed. Patterns were matched under

themes for each case unit. The researcher transcribed speech recordings and translated the data from the Frafra native languages (Talen, Guruni, Booni, and Nabti) into English. Different responders classified and coded the data. Thematic coding was done using the study goals and data collection instructions. To make the participants' voices more evident in the study, quotes were selected from the voice recordings. Another method we used to establish credibility for the study was to detail how the data was obtained and processed step by step. The research-validated the instrument by adopting Lincoln and Guba's five (5) trustworthiness and rigor techniques for qualitative research, which include: (i) credibility, (ii) transferability, (iii) dependability, and (iv) confirmability. The ethical consideration of the study was based on the confidentiality of information, and respondents' anonymity was respected and observed by the laid down guidelines by the school ethics committee.

Results and Discussion of Findings

This report contains an analysis of focus group discussions and interviews conducted in the study communities. There are four primary sub-sections in this section: Changes in funeral rituals; factors that influence the changes; the economic advantage of a funeral; Social Costs and Benefits of Funeral performance in the study area.

Changes in Funeral Rituals among Frafra Subgroupings

Varieties of foods and drinks served

The majority of the respondents mentioned that in the area of food and drinks, it has changed if we do not do something about it now time will come that we cannot perform funeral rituals since things have started changing, for instance, at first, we used to brew pito for funerals now people do not want pito, but they now wish to beer. At first, women carried shea-nuts to funeral houses to be processed into shea - butter to prepare food like Bambara beans, beans, T.Z, etc., but now it has changed where people or women now carry Frytol oil to funeral houses which is foreign culture and tradition.

Serving food (take-out) and beverages has also become a new habit, with individuals who come to commiserate with the grieving family being stuffed with various foods and beverages, which are not part of the Farfra Culture in the traditional sense. This technique originated in Ghana's southern region. In the South, it is customary for attendees at funeral festivities to be offered food and beverages, and those who are served food or beverages at funerals to donate a reasonable amount of money to the grieving family to assist cover funeral debts.

When someone dies, families often release a considerable sum of money as a gesture of goodwill, so that supporters and well-wishers can be well-served with food and drink. The amount of people who attend a funeral and how effectively they are entertained by good music and group performances are used to judge it, according to the survey's respondents. This concept has undoubtedly impacted the elegant manner of funerals. One respondent said that:

"Now, beer used not to be part of the items in terms of drinks for funeral rituals."





Photo 4.2 Pictures of changes of food and drinks at Frafra subgroupings funerals which used not part of it.

Source: Researcher Construct, 20204.

Hiring of Canopies and Chairs

The rental of seats, canopies, and generators is another emerging trend in Farfra funeral presentations. This serves two purposes: it sheds light on the funeral grounds and makes seating easier. Even though this technique is widely seen as beneficial, many people are concerned about the financial burden it places on the bereaved family. Most household heads, according to the research, spend more than GHC1500.00 on canopies, chairs, beds, and music attendants.



4.2 Picture of Canopies and Chairs

Source: Researcher Construct, 2020

Preserving of dead bodies in Mortuaries or Improved Hospital Facilities

One important alteration in funeral practices is the practice of keeping bodies in morgues, widely referred to as 'fridge' funerals. This is the stage at which most families will wish to take their time planning for their deceased relative's funeral. They wish to hold the funeral in the presence of the deceased corpse, which the morgue system permits. However, many Frafra People believe that this approach is ineffective in light of the area's poverty. They contend that carrying the dead to and from the mortuary is too expensive, and they feel that the educated elites, Priests and Religious, and those living and working in the southern region of Ghana, bring this practice. Money that may be used for feeding, trading, or paying school fees is redirected to cover funeral costs. From the findings, one respondent said:

If the funeral is not an older adult, the number of days for performing funerals takes only three(3) days, and if the funeral is an older adult, it takes four (4) days for both new and final funeral rites. It has changed because the dead body will now be sent to keep in the morgues for several months and before burial.



4.3 A picture of Bolgatanga mortuary where dead bodies have been kept
Source: Researcher Constructs, 2020

House renovation of the Deceased

Another change uncovered throughout the inquiry was the renovation of either the deceased's or their family's home. Families are more concerned about impressing sympathizers with a well-furnished house than with improving living circumstances. When a family member dies, the respondents believe that their family residences should have a new roof, be cemented, painted, repaired, and supplied with contemporary amenities like electricity, new drapes, and other decorations. One respondent stated that:

At first, when a person dies quickly, they have buried the person, but now we see that the house is not in good shape for the funeral. They must renovate it before the burial can take place.

Forms of Funeral Announcement

A notable change in the Farfra funeral arrangement in recent years has been the way funerals are notified. Numerous residents in the study region promote burials to their relatives via local FM, telephone, billboards, posters, and mass media. They have ceased sending messengers between villages to inform funerals. It is true that the simplify funeral announcements. However, these kinds of announcements are highly costly. Although several respondents stated that the traditional method of notifying communities about funerals continues to exist.

Music and Dance or Cultural Groups

According to the study, people are increasingly abandoning traditional drumming and melodies in favor of popular highlife or gospel music, preferably two or more. Traditional drumming and dancing, praise singers, and conventional song armies were the primary forms of entertainment during a Frafra traditional funeral, especially for an older adult. However, these ancient forms of entertainment have been pushed to the margins in recent years, giving way in specific locations to so-called modern forms of entertainment like bandstands and record dances known as deck or spinning. This is how today's youth tastes. One respondent stated that: If you cannot make these conditions in our funeral, they may describe it as a 'cat's funeral.



4.4 A picture showing local drummers' and foreign music
Source: Researcher Constructs 202

Printing of T-Shirts and Cloths for Funerals

Funeral smocks and hand-woven cloths (funeral cloths) used at Frafra funerals have increasingly been replaced with black and red T-shirts and printed T-shirts, according to the research areas. A quick check at funeral grounds will indicate that many women wear red or black garments while most men continue to wear their traditional smocks, according to Frafra women who claim to be the proponents of this change. They attribute this deterioration to the influence of the South. Because of this, the Farfra funeral performances have now become more expensive.



4.5 A picture of changes in women wearing black and white clothes at a funeral
Source: Researcher Construct, 2020

Burying with Coffins

Grave diggers are no longer intimidated by the funeral home's presence, as they formerly were. If the deceased or his family members were well-to-do, they might have his remains carried in an open coffin by four or six men, or even in a car. There, the Farfra can vie for fame and fortune. Nowadays, the cost of a casket ranges anywhere from 100 to 1500 Ghana Cedis. This is fine for a small group of well-educated and successful businesspeople. They used to bury their deceased in chamber-like graves with an arrow round the entrance as the Farfra did in the past. Burial has shifted to coffin-sized trench graves with the invention of the coffin. When the coffin was first introduced, it had a significant financial impact on society. It's more of a fad than a need these days. However, for a normal subsistence peasant farmer's family, it can have severe financial ramifications. The family struggles for months or years to raise the money for a funeral casket.



4.5 A picture of burial with Coffin and local grave
Source: Researcher Construct, 2020

Factors that influence changes in Traditional Funeral Rituals among Frafra Subgroupings

Most respondents and document analysis revealed that funeral rituals performance has evolved over the decades as a result of technological innovations such as colonialism, Christianity, contact with other cultures, rural-urban migration, education, mortuaries, or improved hospital facilities, the

funeral has taken on additional dimensions as a result of modern media among Frafra sub-groupings in northern Ghana.

Colonialism and Christianity

The respondents believed that these Christian churches offered new and unusual concepts to the Frafra subgroupings and were also a critical factor in causing changes in burial rites. They also made many and far-reaching demands on the Frafra subgroupings. Among such requests were that the Frafra subgroups adapt and abandon their traditional worldview, manner of life, and religion. Instead, the Frafra subgroups were forced to accept a new worldview that, among other things, would incorporate Christian principles to a considerable extent. These would be blended with European culture and worldview.

The first Frafra subgroupings severely impacted by these pressures were those in close contact with missionaries and Europeans. Domestic helpers for ministers as well as church employees were included in this category. Those Africans hired by Europeans in their homes, attending missionaries' schools, farms, business organizations, and those working in the civil service and other government institutions were also affected. The Africans had no option but to obey. Instead of adopting European mannerisms, attire, and worldview, Africans gradually transformed and abandoned their traditional standards.

As a result, the converted Frafra subgroupings of Christians renounced nearly all cultural customs, including traditional religion, burial rites, and celebrations in this area.

One respondent said that most people nowadays do not refuse to perform funeral rituals for their spouses because of Christianity. Another respondent agreed and explained that; most women who go to Church do not want to perform the widowhood rites and widowhood inheritance in our communities now than before; he said in the area of widowhood rites, most women now give money to those who perform the ritual not to shave their hairs and also do not want to wear the ropes on their necks and in terms of widowhood inheritance they do not wish to remarry or to be inherited by their husband's brothers and these women always give the reason that these practices are against their faith in God.

Education

Frafra funerals in their current state appear to be a shadow of their previous splendour. This can be attributed to a multitude of factors. This may be traced all the way back to the start of Christian evangelism and the formation of the Western educational system through schools. According to a crucial insider, a former missionary in Africa, colonialists and missionaries established formal education in Africa. He believes it has spread swiftly throughout a large portion of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Pacific, and numerous Asian countries. Despite the huge variations between these locations, there was an unexpected uniformity in the conversion strategies employed by pioneer missionaries in each country. Rather than the colonial masters, Christian missionaries, particularly the White Fathers (Missionaries of Africa), were the proponents of school establishment in northern Ghana.

They viewed schools as a critical tool for evangelization, as well as a means of improving the lives of their potential converts. Along with math and English, they included religious education and catechism in their schools. As a result, missionaries pursued a dual objective: "...not only to educate the local, but also to educate him in literacy." This was not in and of itself a bad thing.

Several missionaries' attitudes and the content of their catechesis were disconcerting, with long-term ramifications for many educated Africans. Western culture became a barometer of success and a sign of civilization as education advanced and the number of Africans getting Western education increased. How will this alter the way the Frafra funeral rituals are performed? The issue is more complex than it appears at first glance. It is true that many educated Africans, especially the Frafra,

who may or may not be Christians, would struggle to accept being inducted into the act of burial ritualists, even if their family had a history of doing so. On the other hand, many Frafra would object if their ancestors' funerals were not conducted according to customary rituals. However, because of evangelising and educating, the face of Frafra funerals is rapidly changing. It is up to posterity to decide whether this is for the better or worse, but the reality is that much of what is happening now would have been unthinkable only a few years ago.

During my fieldwork, I observed some young people mocking certain rites. Even several of the young orphans present at the event were dismissive of them. Additionally, it was quite telling that educated widows who refused to go naked were permitted to sit in their clothing and, rather than sitting on the leaves as custom prescribes, were seated on floor mats with the leaves placed next to them for the sake of the ceremony.

Additionally, educated orphans who did not wish to have their hair shaved might purchase it. Some orphans and widows/widowers refuse to participate in the ceremonies due to their Christian beliefs, and they are permitted to do so even if they encounter substantial opposition from the elders. On the other side, some enthusiastic supporters, including highly educated individuals and even some Christians, believe that once it has developed into a people's culture, it must be preserved and all people, regardless of faith, encouraged to participate.

Coming contact with other cultures or rural-urban migration

These rituals were most likely influenced by encounters with different cultures in other parts of the country, particularly in Ghana's South, where these diverse customs are widely used at celebrations. In my opinion, one respondent:

This type of cultural change is undesirable and should be examined. Frequently, the music played has nothing to do with the funeral. Furthermore, because the music is not in the local language, many people are unsure if it is relevant; therefore, censorship is unlikely. Similarly, such a plan will stifle local artists' skills and encourage passivity in the community's entertainment business.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to develop a comprehensive and contextually informed description of the factors that influence changes in traditional funeral rituals among Frafra subgroups in Northern Ghana, answering the primary question: What are the factors that influence differences in traditional funeral rituals over time among Frafra subgroups? Many fascinating tales of Frafra traditions and traditions linked to burial rites were obtained throughout this study's qualitative data collection. During the analytic process, contextual differences were examined as narratives connected to past and current circumstances found in the Frafra areas. There has been a cultural movement in social values, beliefs, and ways of life over time.

This can be attributed to technological advancements such as colonialism, Christianity, and cultural contact. Rural-urban migration, education, mortuaries or improved hospital facilities, and mass media have given new dimensions to funerals among Frafra sub-groupings in northern Ghana, as have industrialization, migration of people from rural areas to cities, development of small towns, development of transportation and telecommunication, various aspects of globalization, and educational reforms. Participation in the local community was encouraged in Frafra regions, and people frequently associated with the group.

Nyamadi et al. (2001) performed research on traditional funeral rites, consistent with current findings. In that study, they revealed that funeral ritual performances bring social and economic impacts on people regarding household food security.

Atinga (2006) also conducted a study among Frafra groups in the northern part of Ghana, in that study it revealed that there are many changes in the funeral rituals like food, drink, preservation of dead in the mortuary for new of months, in conclusion, the study also made it clear that their factors that influence the changes among the people which included technological innovations like improved hospital facilities, colonialism, education and coming contact with other culture. This study has agreed with this stand.

This is consistent with the results reported by some previous researchers like Osei – Sarfo (2016), who conducted a study among the Frafra area, and the study saw that the dancers had introduced some items which hitherto were not a part of the costume. This could be the effect of modernity on the customs of the people or the difficulty in having access to clothing items used in the past, and this current study strongly agreed and confirmed that there are some changes in Frafra funerals than it used to be in the past.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study's primary goal was to collect factual qualitative information on changes in traditional funeral rites and identify the elements that are causing the changes presently. Funeral performances have evolved from the primary and low-cost manner they were done in the past to a more elaborate and sophisticated style. The introduction of mortuaries, various meals and drinks, and extravagant displays of presents by in-laws have resulted in uncontained spending on funeral performances, resulting in indebtedness, poverty, food insecurity among households, and poor education. While certain economic and social benefits, funerals entail enormous economic and social costs on bereaved families and society. Funeral performances in northern Ghana should thus be viewed as a failing institution that requires immediate intervention from local authorities. Community sensitization and education forums will enlighten the people of the study area on the consequences of traditional funeral rites on economic and social impacts, and they will contribute to the fight against traditional funeral rites, thereby improving people's livelihoods in the study communities. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made to the various traditional authorities to address the numerous issues found throughout the research:

1. Education should be used to influence the attitudes of Ghanaians, particularly Frafra sub-groupings in the north, about funeral performances. The Ministry might deliver this education of Gender and Children Affairs in conjunction with traditional authorities in local communities. The act of performing the dead should be revived. People should be made aware of the most lavish funeral rituals' detrimental effects on mourning families, widows, and society.

Instead, money should be spent on children, the elderly, the sick, and others; their living conditions should be improved, and their houses should be in better shape when they are alive than after they are dead.

2. The District Assemblies, in collaboration with the traditional rulers, can enact by-laws to prohibit or completely prohibit spinning, highlife, and live band music at funerals in Frafra sub-groupings, which incurs financial costs for families and harms the youth, particularly schoolgirls. The other traditional authorities should follow the lead of the paramount chiefs of Talensi and Bongo, who have banned the use of spinning or live band music during funerals in their respective territories.

3. The body shouldn't be stored at the mortuary for too long since it could become bad. A prolonged time at the morgue adds to the high funeral performance costs because this has been identified as an area where considerable funds are expended during a funeral performance. In order to educate family heads who are in charge of funeral performance in various communities about why corpses should not be kept in the morgue for long periods of time and should be buried immediately after death, District Assemblies, the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs, and others should collaborate to organise workshops.

4. Funerals are held to grieve and show respect to the deceased.

The variety of meals and beverages offered at funeral grounds should be locally produced in the communities' instead of ethnic cuisine and drinks and should be significantly limited.

5. Local governments should allow donations at funerals in Frafra subgroupings to assist in settlement of debts accrued in these regions.

6. In this era of COVID - 19 pandemic the researchers suggest for total compliance of COVID -19 preventive measures.

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