

## **An Exegetico-hermeneutical discourse of Romans 1: 29-32 in relation to cult killings and emerging insecurities in Awka metropolis**

**P. E. Nmah & Chiamaka Nkemdilim Chigbo**

Department of Religion and Human Relations

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Anambra State, Nigeria

### ***Abstract***

*The study investigated cult killings in the recent times and emerging insecurities in Awka. The text of the study, Romans 1: 29-32 captures the festering insecurities with associated cult killings. These issues contribute to the challenges of security in Anambra. Though these are not peculiar to Awka, however, the increasing cult killings have further caused security quandary in the state. The incessant killings have impeded the progress of the city and negatively impacted on Anambra people. The factors and causes of these killings and related crimes were identified through primary and secondary source of data collection. The exegetical cum hermeneutical tools of analyses also did help in interpreting the text as its characteristic descriptions of ungodly men that fitting towards describing the current geometric rise of cult killings in Awka. The findings shows that struggle over illegal revenue collections, inter-cult leadership tussle, scrambling for more members and territory, land ownership and allocation of lands in now developing/expensive landmarks and again need to avenge death of members especially those killed by the opposition groups are some of the key causes of cult killing and thus leading to further insecurities in Awka metropolis. The researcher recommends that*

*the government first of all should re-initiate campaigns and sufficient actions in the direction of permanently putting an end to the menace of cult killings. The local community leaders in Awka and youth leaders have crucial roles also to play in resolving this infamous insecurity challenges.*

**Keywords:** *cult, cultism, cult killings, insecurity, security agencies*

## **Introduction**

Joining cultism by the youths in a giving locality is informed by a need for them to assume power over others. Inferiority complex, threats from members of the existing groups, peer pressure, and the quest for quick riches and influence have lured many youths in Awka into cultism. Unfortunately, these apparent consequences of the cult groups are detrimental to the community's development. Members are often mandated to recruit more members in order to boost the manpower and influence of the group. Obielosi, Ihetu and Chigbo (2020) note that dream killers of youths are; drugs, alcohol and cultism. For the authors, "If one is involved in one, the propensity to get into others is on the high side" (pp. 27-28).

Hearing and reading about cultism is more common in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Gradually, some the members of the cult groups embarked on proliferation these groups across their none-higher institution's environment. Alumona and Amusan (2019) state that "Cultism has become a national security threat to the extent that no week passes without any report of arrest of members, killings or clashes involving rival cult groups" (p. 13). Adversely, as consequent upon the radical effects of development, some of those host communities began to witness cultism in the grassroots, sadly now the cultists are not only visiting or residing students, the local youths have been infected by the malfeasance. Not for too

long, the ugly barrel head of cultism permeated many secondary schools as well. The ripple effect of this ambivalence is that the young and ignorant youths are deceived into dangerous bond and association. The solution that was utilized in higher institutions which is the opportunity given to repentant cultists to denounce and separate themselves from their former group through the help of anti-cult groups in the different institutions do not offer much towards ameliorating the issue.

Awka and many communities in Awka South Local Government Area are fast becoming urban areas. The presence of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka from 1991, just immediately Awka was made the state capital territory changed these local communities within Awka. Urbanization and modernization are concomitant agents that impacted on the behavioural patterns of the youths in Awka metropolis. These factors mentioned above had tremendous bearing as it slowly infused some contentious characters and tendencies that are otherwise foreign to these core African communities. Some of the vices associated with cultism and cult groups which are anti-social in nature and disregards the original African value for human life. Studying the text, Romans 1: 29-32 would therefore show one a scriptural description of this cankerworm that has eaten deep into the very being of the Awka society. It provides a Christian framework for understanding the infamous popularity of cult activities in the last few years in Awka. The fear and insecurity that these actions have escalated amongst the people so far is mammoth. This paper examines in detail the history of cultism in Awka, the spread of cultism in Awka local communities, factors that motivate the increasing cult killings, and the effects of these on the security status of Awka as an important city in Anambra state. It correlates the subject of cultism and cult killings in Awka with the emotive description of Paul in the

selected text of study. This is with the aim of using the content of Christian message to assuage the emerging insecurities in Awka. Finally, the paper recommends biblical principles and other possible solutions that could help contain the security situations within and around the Anambra capital territory.

### **Origin and spread of cult and cultism in Awka**

The common agreeable background to cultism in Nigeria is traced to the Seadog confraternity known as Pirates. It was founded by Wole Soyinka and six others at the foremost University of Ibadan in 1952 (Ajayi, Ekundayo and Osalusi, 2010). There is hardly any single public higher institution of learning that has not experienced of cultism. Udoh and Ikezu (2015) note that the foremost cult group (Pirates) were formed with “the aim of producing future Nigeria leaders who should be very proud of their African heritage. They have skull and cross bones as their logo while members adopted confraternity names as “Capon Blood” and “Long Silver” (p. 22). These founding members of cultism could be said to be noble students who thought to form a formidable patriotic and nationalistic minded organization that will be useful in the struggle for independence in Nigeria. There are many tales of success that accompanied their early activities. Years later, the motive, activities and their entire organization became shrouded in violence and numerous negative vices. This was mostly because some factions began to break away and form sinister groups that discarded the core values of the mother groups. Chukwurah, John-Nsa and Isimah (2022) assert that “It is so unfortunate that the initial purpose of the founders of cultism was defeated ages ago and has resulted into a national crisis” (p. 5).

The sociological definition of the term cultism gives off the fundamental characteristic of any small organization of people

called cult, their strength of the bond seems to rely on the fact that the beliefs, activities and dynamics are secretive, esoteric and individualistic. It claims that the knowledge of the details of the group is a privilege of the members only. Thus rituals, greetings, activities, identities of members, admission requisites, initiation rites and entire operation are considered a secret. Because of this secretive nature of the group many have referred to them as secret cult. Some persons however trace the origin of cult in Nigeria to indigenous African Traditional Religion special groups such as: Ogboni, Ekpe, Okonko, Owegbe, Ekine and even the masquerade groups. These groups were notable and served both social and political purposes in the various societies of domicile.

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka was established by the Nigerian government in 1991 just immediately Awka became the new state capital. The unprecedented influx of students into otherwise quiet communities was a blessing as it exploded the population density of the city. There were many students and university workers looking for accommodations and others businesses in the students' area. At first, the university's temporary site was much closer to many Awka indigenous youths, this created room for them to interact and mingle more. Cultism which was assailed many Nigerian universities soon penetrated the new university in Awka. Their activities were always within the local communities where these students resided. Not for too long non-students were admitted as members in these groups. The local chapters of these cult groups steadily or rather deliberately defined the local units of the groups and moved them on outside the school and students' band. By this they carved permanent independent outlook and most members were now non-students of the university.

At the grassroots, the indigenes and non-indigenes (local migrants) in Awka populated these groups. Initially, many voluntarily joined these groups some because of peer pressure and others because of flamboyance and air of superiority exuded by the students' arm of the cults. There are allegedly existing female cult groups in local Awka communities. Young ladies are primary members of these groups, although they are not as popular as the male counterparts, they account for the relentless propagation of cultism in Awka. Ofor, Onunkwo and Ofor (2023) enumerate the activities of female cult groups in Anambra to be as vicious as the male counterparts. They claim that:

it has become a common phenomenon to hear, read and witness incidence of female students' involvement in reprisal attacks against other cults and this has led to the death of students, intimidation of non-members, some end up as school dropouts, alcohol intake and drug abuse, and taking of cigarettes becomes business of the day and all kinds of unwanted misdemeanor. (p. 176).

Several groups of cults operational in Awka and its environs include; Black Axe (*aiye*), Vikings (baggers), Seadogs and Buccaneers. Each of these groups often divides themselves into sections, the senior and the junior. The older members particularly those above 25 years are regarded as the seniors. These older ones usually have been members for many years and must have contributed meaningfully towards the cause of the system. The juniors are mostly young new members, they are frequently sent on errands, missions and tasks. These JVCs or juniors in Awka are most identified by their razz dressing, side bags scarcely without weapons in them and they commonly move in herds when they are going to execute missions/tasks. They appear to be trigger happy

and do not hesitate to shed blood. Many today point to them as the reason why there are incessant cult killings in Awka. These groups bank on the power of numbers so they are regularly looking for young boys as their major targets for recruitments into the groups because they are easily forced, impressed or convinced to associate with vices. Value systems in Awka metropolis has further declined by the spread and unpleasant activities. They therefore not only threaten peace in the society, but a danger to state and national development. It also contributes to the depletion of the core African Traditional values and understanding of life. Nwobodo (2022) quips that “the goal of sustainable development in Africa will forever remain utopian with the constant violent and destructive cult activities.... The culture of violence will continue to stagnate Africa’s development” (p. 99).

Occasional inter and intra-cult crises were easy to manage without too many deaths and casualties at the early beginnings in the local communities in Awka. The past few years however owing to the decline in the effectiveness of the police and other law enforcement agencies, these cult groups are further emboldened to operate fully and freely. The police anti-cult unit at Enugu-Ukwu lessened in their functions within Awka. This could be because of many counter petitions to the Inspector-General of Police that have queried their *modus operandi*. The SARS unit also did its bit at the time it was functional to abate the cultism in Awka through their intelligent units, several arrests of suspected cult members and regular patrols. The Department of State Service (DSS) and Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) were also part of these early attempts to subdue cultism in Awka. Unfortunately, they have not been totally successful in nipping the bud of cultism in Awka.

Cultism in the recent years has escalated and the related crises and insecurity in Awka environs have heightened. From 2018 till date there have been numerous cult related clashes and crises among these groups, some spanning over 2-3 months at a stretch before there will be momentary sanity. Robbery attacks, kidnappings and assassinations have since trailed Awka as a city. Obviously, there is no a time frame/singular pattern or timetable to these attacks anymore. In years gone by, Imo-Awka cultural festival celebrations, New year, preparations for the July 7<sup>th</sup>(7-7) celebrations for the cult groups, Christmas eves and Easter eves were the prime time for anticipated cult clashes and crises by most members of the communities. It appears so because they were times the oppositions were less likely to be on guard because the celebrations. It seems however that there is a reversal to these attacks in the past 3 years, many of such violent shootings and hits along Ziks Avenue, Eke Awka, Aroma junction, Agu Awka, Unizik Temporary site, Umuokpu, Nibo, Amawabia, Ifite Awka e.t.c. are executed in the broad day light.

## **Causes of cultism or factors that increased cult killings in Awka**

### **Leadership tussle**

The cult groups in Awka conduct periodic leadership tests that could warrant the deposition of an existing leader. The competitions or tests are always open for the position of the head known as “carrying the ship” especially among the junior category. Only the individual who qualifies is crowned or carries the “ship” of the group. Conferment of the ship is possible when the title holder is dethroned or voluntarily denounces the ship/submits the title. Another chance of opening up the contest of the ship is when

any other person successfully draws out the blood of the present title holder in a fight or attack. The most important qualification is the number of opposition members' heads/death an individual in the contest or competition can claim for himself.

### **Inter-cult struggle for domination and scrambling for territory**

Many cult groups are concerned with number of people who are part of their group. It is a crucial point to have manpower that will engage in the activities of the group, increase the finance and help and in securing more territories for the operation. The Aiyees and Baggers over the years have forcefully recruited many youths and even secondary school students. Jumbo, Emeodu and Chukwu (2021) remark that "Today, cultism in secondary schools, unfortunately, apply violence as a conveyor belt for their frustrations, ranging from academic failure, quarrels over girl friends. The quest for lucrative jobs and even sharing of things" (p. 24).

### **Need for protection**

The need to feel protected by a renowned cult group was one of the foremost reasons that cultism thrived in Nigerian universities. This was the same with Awka especially at the earliest beginning of cultism in the city. These youths felt more protected and almost untouchable because the group they belonged. In the recent this has turned sour for some repentant youths especially in the face of unending shooting, attacks, and assassination. Mere identification of one as a member is a cause for worry to these youths. Allegedly many inactive cult members are killed in these attacks. It is sad that many of them have to flee Awka immediately these killings ensues to avoid being caught up in these attacks. Notwithstanding the

danger that even casual membership brings, some youths still willingly join these groups.

### **Delinquency from family background**

Where the family which is the primary place of nurturing fails in its role, the outcome is badly behaved children that may soon become problems to the society. Lack of proper upbringing and discipline could come from insufficient parental attention to the physical and emotional needs of the children, separation of the parents among other considerations. The crux of this, however, is that the love, protection, attention and authority that were supposed to be provided are substituted and sort after in the prominent cult leader. When they assume the roles and duties of the parents in this case, the result is usually catastrophic.

### **The need for finance and influence**

Sequel to the need for domination is finance and influence. These play significant role in the popularity and advancement of the cult group activities. Expanse financial power and social cum political influence are necessary to secure immunity from law enforcement agencies and authorities. They need both further in order to purchase weapons especially guns and sometimes process bail for their members in police detention. Since these clashes lingered for the years, there have been series of accusations that they have prominent people in Awka and some now abroad support the various cult factions. The older and affluent members mostly residing outside Nigeria heavily sponsor these cult groups back home thereby encouraging violence and fuelling cult killings. Okafor (2019) reports some prominent individuals in Awka that were arrested as the alleged sponsors of cultism in Awka. Chukindi (2023) mentions the captures the renewed commitment of the

police in Awka to hunt down the sponsors of these gang wars. Part of the statements made to reporter by the police correspondent is that, elders of the community know the sponsors and they also know what the problems are. The violent continuance of these cult killings despite the declared readiness of the police to arrest the culprits and their sponsors is a show that they are yet to match their words with commensurate actions.

### **Tax force and revenue collection**

The Anambra state government over some years has been using notorious and rough young men or touts (*agbero*) as agents for revenue collection for commercial transport system and market leadership. These young men/touts are placed in charge of markets, parks, busy junctions and streets. The leaders often recruit others especially fellow cult members in these places to collect even illegal levies are enforced by them. This has been one of the major factors that has fueled cultism in Awka. The revenue collection particularly the overcharges and illegal taxation is a way of financing the cult leaders and activities so the interest to be protected is quite high. Each of the groups continuously struggle to defend their revenue centers and remain in control as against the intrusion of any individual or any other cult group around them.

### **Need to avenge death of members**

Reprisal and counter attacks are one of the reasons cult killings have not ceased in Awka. Thus these groups continue to seek revenge for the death of their members and continue to kill each other regularly. Earlier on, victims are usually trailed to lonely paths and public places at night, however with the current general

decline in security in the Awka metropolis and indeed Nigeria, they have gotten more bold in their actions. Many are shot, maimed and axed to death in their in the presence of their family members, in the market places and on the streets in the day time. These unmasked young men with their gun bags slung over their shoulders are obviously not afraid of being identified. The assassins and cult members also are now creative in their bid to protect themselves. Rumours of the cultists' improvisation with charms are common to resist death is not new in Awka. Sometimes many are said to have survived the attacks because they are fortified with these charms and amulets.

### **Allocation of land and ownership of community lands**

Several lands across Awka Express road and Agu Awka tagged as family, kindred and village lands have been open for land grabbers. The strongest of the individuals interested usually claims the land as personal or group property in the bid of re-selling them. Many of the older cult group members are vested in this land grabbing business and involve the younger cult members in the land tussles. Many people are killed in the process of these violent scuffles for lands. Some of these cult members serve as gun for hire for even non-cult members in land disputes and are used to scare away even real land owners.

### **Affordability and accessibility to weapons and guns**

Awka as a town is known for its popular blacksmith business. Local musical instruments, weapons and guns are forged by these local smith makers. With availability and spread of these guns, it is clear that the government is doing a poor job of regulating the production and selling of these ammunitions. This has made the

proliferation of weapons and ammunitions very easy to these young boys. Recovered ammunition by the security agencies from many crime scenes in the city are mostly these locally produced weapons.

### **Unemployment and unfavourable economic conditions or poverty**

Several rural communities that transited into semi-urban and urban cities are bedeviled with a similar misdeed; many of the young people in such areas seem to be preoccupied with selling lands and collecting rents. Such disposition have deprived some of them the zeal and motivation to venture into other meaningful sources of income. This attitude could probably account for the number of unemployed youths within these communities in Awka. Again, the familiar institutional poverty in Nigeria is also part of the reason why cultism persists in Awka. A fair share of the members of these cult groups comes from poor homes hence they struggled for daily feeding, with school fees and other expenditures. These frustrations have compelled a number of youths to join cultism. Obviously, this is because of the promises and false presentation of such brotherhood as a solution to such lack. Examples and wealth displayed by some strong men in these groups persuade especially the young ones to abandon their education and concentrate on building connections in the brotherhood.

### **An exegetical and hermeneutical discourse of Romans 1: 29-32**

The text Romans 1:29-32 reads: 29. πεπληρωμένους πάση ἀδικία ἴσχυρῶς ἐπιθυμῶντες, ἀποδοῦναι τὸν ἴδιον ὄνειδος ὡς ἡμεῖς, ἵνα ἡμεῖς ἴσχυρῶς ἐπιθυμῶμεν ὡς ἡμεῖς, ἵνα ἡμεῖς ἴσχυρῶς ἐπιθυμῶμεν ὡς ἡμεῖς, 30. Ἐκτεταμένους ἐν τῇ ἀπειθείᾳ, ἀποδοῦναι τὸν ἴδιον ὄνειδος ὡς ἡμεῖς, ἵνα ἡμεῖς ἴσχυρῶς ἐπιθυμῶμεν ὡς ἡμεῖς, 31. ἀσυνέτους ἀσυνθέτους ἀστόργους ἰσχυρῶς ἐπιθυμῶντες ὡς ἡμεῖς, 32. οἵτινες τὸ

δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἔπιγνόντες ὅτι οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες ἄξιοι θανάτου εἰσίν, οὐ μόνον αὐτὰ ποιοῦσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ συνευδοκοῦσιν τοῖς πράσσουσιν.

Key parts of the text is analyzed for its linguistic evidence and a further comparative analysis to further strengthen the position of this paper. The aim thus is to isolate and present the latent confluence in ideas and thoughts of the text. Under the segment, the researcher adopts the synchronic method of analysis as it will help to unveil the meaning and implication of the text on the research topic.

### **Textual Criticism and Preparatory Analysis of Romans 1: 29-32**

Here it is important that a working translation and textual problem be looked at clearly. The Nestle Aland reading (28<sup>th</sup> ed.) as used here indicates that some part of the text that has textual critical problems. vs. 29 was replaced πονηρία πλεονεξία κακία with κακία πονηρία πλεονεξία by C 33 81 and 1506. Another alternative of the reading is provided by K manuscript. πονηρία κακία πλεονεξία is another alternative for the enclosed words by D\* G. there is a another alternative or variation of reading πλεονεξία κακία is provided for the variants (-D<sup>2</sup>) D<sup>avid</sup> L P ψ 104. 365. 630.1175. 1241. 1505. 2464 sy<sup>(p)</sup>. Finally, the reading of our text was attested in B 0172<sup>vid</sup>. 1739. 1881. Another variation with one omission is found in A., thus it has a slight difference in A.

In verse 30, καταγάλους was replaced in D document. ἀοπονδους as a term was seen in ℵ<sup>2</sup> C D<sup>2</sup> K L P ψ (33). 81.104.365. 630. 1175. 1241. 1505. 1881. 2464. m vg sy. The reading of our text here is witnessed in ℵ\* A B D\* G 6. 1506. 1739it bo; Lcf Ambst. ἐπιγνόντες as seen in the text replaced ἐπιγινωσκοντες by the

manuscript B 1506.also D\* G latt. Another variation with the insertion δε of recurrence is seen in the manuscripts 1175. 1241. b m. other manuscripts such as D\* inserts γαρ in its document. Verse 32 has alternatives for ἀὐτὰ ποιῶσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ συνευδοκοῦσιν in different documents such as B b vg ; Lcf.

The textual problems presented by the text are quite many, however the variations noted are mostly insertions, replacements or alternative readings given by other manuscripts that are recent in their dating. The choice of our text contains keywords and texts witnessed in many earlier manuscripts. For this reason, the research considers the text probably closer to the original on the instances of textual witness and attestation and for the lack of sufficient premise to accept the positions of the late manuscripts that seem to have altered the text and producing these problems treated above.

### **Exegesis of the text**

This is the delimitation of the text, linguistic analysis and finally the exegetical interpretation of the text.

### **Delimitation of the text**

The scope Romans 1: 18-32 is categorized by Talbert (2002) as the “unrighteousness of the Gentiles” (p. 56). The Gentile Christians who now make up a greater percent of the Pauline church were addressed by the authors having noticed some errors that is disturbing amongst the people. The text understudy is a sub part which focuses on the Gentiles cut off from the larger pericope of Romans 1: 18-32. Kizhakkeyil (2008) on the other hand delimits or groups Rom 1: 18-3:20 to form a significant unit. For him the whole section deals with humanity without Christ: sin and

judgment and specifically, 1:18-32 deals with God's wrath against the Gentiles.

### **A look at the text as it is**

A robust explanations and analysis of the linguistic components of the text might be expansive. The researcher would rather break them down into segments and attempt exegetical comments and explanations according to individual verses holistically.

### **Verse 29-31**

The opening segment of our text, v. 29 represent vivid illustrations and descriptions of the list of the vices indulged by the gentiles. The catalog of vices names those things the Pagans and Gentiles are known for, they willfully engage in these that are contrary to Christian values. There are some other similar instances of such list of vices utilized in the Bible and other extra canonical sources (Gal 5: 19-21, I Cor 5:9-11, Rev 21: 7-8, Mark 7:21-22, Rom 13: 12-14, I Cor 6:9-11, I Clem 35:5, Epistle of Barnabas 20:1, Didache 5:1). Talbert (2002) however explains that "Enough difference exists in the contents of the various lists to show that there were no standard catalogues of vices that Paul was copying from. He was using a standard form with his own content. Rom 1: 29-30, like Gal 5:19-21 deals with vices that go beyond sensuality into antisocial attitudes and behavior directed towards both humans and God. Haacker (2003) points out that these vices buttress the opinion of Paul as overall introduced in v.18. A picture of mankind at odd with God is carefully crafted here. For Haacker (2003) therefore "The pieces of this puzzle are taken from traditional Jewish polemics against the Gentiles who don't God" (p. 42). Metzger (1988) sees these vices as rather sin against others. Yeshwanth (2014) mentions that these vices are sins against others,

he notes further that, Paul is not focusing on any particular sin but the whole conduct of the self and relationship with others do get distorted by deliberate rejection of righteousness of God. They are responsible and accountable for their rebellion.

### **Verse 32**

The writer Paul earlier in vv. 24, 26, and 28 introduced the formula “God gave them up/ *παρεδωκεν* was used three times (24, 26, 28). This was used to emphasize in a rhetorical manner the wrath and judgment of God that is presented as ongoing. Paul concludes what he has elaborated on this pericope about the Gentiles he was describing. The verse 32 more so establishes another vital direction, the author quips that they know God’s righteousness decree (*δοκίμος*). This opinion about their knowledge of *θεος δικαίος δοκίμος* raises a question, which righteous decree do these pagans know? Are they familiar with OT and the laws of Moses or is it the natural law and commonsensical knowledge of good and evil? A reference vv. Rom 1: 18-20 shows that it implies that they must have known about the truth about God through what he (God) has created. They know about his invisible qualities, eternal power and divine nature. Paul therefore supposes that this knowledge of God through general revelation where God is known as creator and savior is made available to everybody everywhere through the natural order and is dependent upon the conscience of the individual. Refusal or blatant failure to abide by that dictates of the knowledge of God and divine will derived under the general revelation is unacceptable. Hence humans must be held responsible for their choices be that idolatry, immorality, lifestyles and other actions.

Fitzmyer (2011) asserts that Paul’s notion of punishment that is God’s judgment is an indication that the Pagan conscience

perceives at times some of the injunctions prescribed in the Mosaic law. Furthermore, Romans 1: 19, 21, 28 are some of the passages in the same unit of the study where Paul employs a similar idea of gnosis/epignosis referring to knowledge. The verb “to know” and the noun “knowledge” forms are vital aspects of the final resolution of God’s judgment highlighted in the text. This subject of God’s judgment as used in the text could be linked to apocalyptic thinking that penetrated even the Christian traditions of the early church.

### **Recommendations and possible ways of curbing cultism in Awka**

Containing cultism and its spread in Nigeria is not impossible. Yes, it may not be easy because of the shortcomings of the Nigerian nation. Be that as it may, it can be reduced to a great extent. This is especially so in places where the effects/activities of these outcomes are becoming danger to the entire society. There are measures that must therefore be taken seriously in Awka metropolis towards solving the problem. They include:

- The essential roles played by the church as spiritual and moral building agent in the society must not be ignored. The prophetic church should continue to speak out against this societal dilemma abounding in Awka today. It could also extend its arm in the areas of social development, especially in the education system and skill acquisition programmes.
- The government and security officers must focus on building intelligent intel/information on these groups, the sponsors and the details of their activities. They must endeavour draft proper blueprint for patrols to checkmate the unfurl and menace in Awka. They can collaborate with

each other where and when necessary also with the federal ministry of interior, state commissioner of police and Senior Special Assistance on security in Anambra state. Again, the government and security agencies must ensure that culprits are arrested and prosecuted without fear or favour.

- Education and accessibility cum affordability of the school could be helpful. Thankfully, the current state administration has solidified the efforts of past administrations with its hundred percent quality and free education policy in primary and junior secondary schools. The school fees for the senior secondary schools were generously subsidized. Secondary schools in Awka amidst the recent attempts to invading male dominated schools and forcefully initiating students must beef up its security and other strategies of combating the rising threats of cult activities in Awka.
- The Grass root contributions and re-orientations. This is where the most essential part of the solution lies. The communities and its leaders must be involved and be honest with identifying and reporting to the police these perpetrators and not cover them up. It is further important for volunteers, schools, government agencies and Non-governmental organizations to take part in this duty of re-orientation particularly the youths on the dangers and effects of cultism and cult killings in Awka.
- Provision of employment and skill acquisition opportunities. Many of these youths lack means of earning a living. So this has been a major challenge as to why they are still looking for free money and lands to sell. Better employment opportunities could help bridle this haste for

loose money, curb robberies and curtail the tendencies of joining these groups.

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*P. E. Nmah is a professor while Chiamaka Nkemdilim Chigbo is a young academic in the Department of Religion and Human Relations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria*