

Concerns Over Rising Number Of Children Killing Their Parents

In recent years, there has been a troubling surge in cases of children involved in violent acts such as murder against their parents and siblings. **FELIX IGBEKOYI** writes that these alarming cases, particularly in Delta State, raise serious questions about the underlying causes, including familial dynamics, mental health issues, and societal influences.

Families in Delta State are facing troubling times as the alarming trend of children killing their parents becomes increasingly prevalent. This heinous crime, among the most reprehensible globally, is now occurring more frequently within the state.

Reports reveal that some perpetrators have targeted their fathers, while others have turned against their mothers, and in some cases, both parents have fallen victim. Many incidents remain unreported, often resolved locally due to fear of repercussions or other influencing factors.

As LEADERSHIP Weekend explore this disturbing trend, it becomes essential to understand the factors contributing to such extreme behaviour and to consider potential preventive measures to safeguard both children and families.

This is because, addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach, encompassing psychological support, community awareness, and effective intervention strategies.

On July 10, 2024, Delta State police arrested a 23-year-old man named Samson for fatally stabbing his mother, a quinquagenarian in her 50s, in Obiaruku.

Sources indicate that after completing secondary school, Samson was sent to Asaba to learn a trade but was returned home a few months later due to his involvement with a group of boys engaged in drug activities, which reportedly affected his mental health. Upon his return to Obiaruku, his mother sought treatment for him at a local native mental health facility.

An anonymous eyewitness recounted the incident, stating, "They live on Jehovah Street, Obidike Obiaruku, near my shop. The mother is in her 50s, likely not yet 60."

At around 5 a.m., she stepped outside and found her son, Samson, smoking. She confronted him, possibly raising her voice, prompting Samson to go inside and return with a knife, which he used to stab her. It was the elder brother, a sickle cell patient, who shouted for help, drawing attention since the compound gate was still locked at that time.

Other neighborhood residents noted that Samson had struggled with drug addiction since returning from Asaba. They also reported that police arrived to arrest Samson while he was near his mother's body.

When contacted, SP spokesman for the Delta State Police Command, SP Bright Edeke, confirmed that a suspect has been arrested.

The most recent incident involves a 25-year-old man, identified as Emmanuel, who was apprehended by police operatives in Sapele for brutally hacking his 53-year-old mother, Mrs. Fatima Umukoro, a school proprietress of His Majesty



Umukoro (Son)

Group of Schools in Sapele, to death. LEADERSHIP Weekend gathered that Emmanuel has been grappling with mental health issues stemming from substance abuse.

A church pastor, who requested anonymity due to the fact that he is a close friend of the suspect's father, revealed that Rev. Prince Umukoro, a pastor of a popular Pentecostal church in Sapele and owner of a private school, had previously taken Emmanuel for drug rehabilitation. Although Emmanuel showed improvement upon returning, he recently began showing signs of relapse.

The pastor recounted troubling behavior, stating that Emmanuel would often stand in front of their house in the Ugbeyiyi area, smiling for no apparent reason, and had previously attacked his mother with a cutlass, only to be stopped by his father.

On Saturday, September 6, 2024, trouble escalated when no one was home; his father had left for a burial ceremony in Imo State. During this time, Emmanuel attacked his mother with a brand-new axe, killed her, and subsequently dragged her body outside before setting it ablaze.

When our correspondent visited the police station, neighbours gathered at the police station when Rev. Umukoro returned from his trip.

A few who spoke exclusively to our correspondent recounted the horrifying events surrounding the death of the victim, popularly called,



Umukoro (Slain Mother)

'Mama Faith.'

They added that after setting her body ablaze, Emmanuel fled to Warri in his mother's Sienna car. He was later apprehended by police at Effurun Roundabout and brought back to the Sapele Police Station.

"The woman's body has since been deposited at Sapele Central Hospital."

The police spokesperson said this to LEADERSHIP Weekend, "You can see the pastors and neighbours milling around; what they told you is the truth. We arrested the boy and brought him back to Sapele with the vehicle at Effurun Roundabout, where he was even trying to pick up passengers. Imagine!" a source said.

When she returned home from school that fateful day, she had no idea death was lurking nearby, nor did she have any premonition of the tragedy that awaited her. In a helpless and horrifying moment, she was set ablaze while the fire raged around her.

The arrangement made by her son, Emmanuel Umukoro, 24, late at night left the neighbours in shock and bewilderment. Another source alleged he killed her for ritual purposes while under the influence of drugs. A male resident of the neighborhood, who wished to remain anonymous, shared that the entire community was thrown into mourning after the incident.

Another neighbour and passers-by described the scene as gruesome and horrific.

According to eyewitnesses, Emmanuel was spotted driving his mother's car out of the compound

at high speed around 8:30 PM. This reckless behavior caught the attention of neighbors, who went to inform his mother. However, upon arriving at the Umukoro residence around 10 PM, they found the gate unusually left open.

Concerned, neighbours and passersby decided to investigate and discovered flames coming from inside the house with the door ajar. When they entered, they found Mrs. Umukoro's lifeless body, burnt beyond recognition.

In a separate chilling incident on May 2, 2024, the Delta State Police Command paraded 24-year-old Sofia Nkwo for the murder of her one-year-old son. Nkwo confessed to killing her child because she felt unable to care for him after the father rejected him.

Commissioner of Police Mr. Abaniwonda Olufemi, condemned her actions, stating, "On April 28, 2024, a case of infanticide was reported at Oleh Division, alleging that Sofia Nkwo, a resident of Isoko South LGA, dumped her son, aged one year and four months, in a well in the Araya community. Children playing nearby discovered the body floating in the well. Nkwo was promptly arrested and admitted to abandoning the child on April 26, 2024."

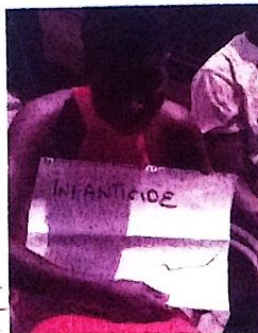
Similarly, in 2023, a teenage boy attempted to use his father for ritual purposes by purchasing a bedspread cover for him. The father, suspicious of his son's intentions, refused to use the cloth despite pressure. Eventually, he did cover his son with it while he slept, leading to the boy going mad. The son later confessed that he had intended to kill his father to acquire quick money.

These cases highlight a disturbing trend of children harming or attempting to harm their biological parents for various reasons.

Different reasons have been advanced by psychologists as to why children turn against their parents, ranging from unhealthy and unhindered access to illicit drugs, broken homes, money-making rituals, as well as irresponsibility on the part of parents.

According to a report by the National Drugs Law and Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), drug abuse is increasing in Nigeria as over 14.9 million people between the ages of 15 and 64 engage in it. It is believed that the majority of the crimes were committed under the influence of drugs. And they are majorly linked to quick money making rituals.

While drug abuse takes the front row in the reason for the crime, most of the cases were said to have been influenced by the rush for material things, leading many to consult ritual killers who convince them to sacrifice their relatives, mostly parents. Some murder their parents and trade their body parts.



Surajudeen

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