

SCHOOL OF MISSION AND THEOLOGY, STAVANGER

**THE KILLING OF ALBINOS IN SUKUMALAND, TANZANIA: A CHALLENGE TO
THE CHURCH'S MISSION IN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN
TANZANIA - EAST OF LAKE VICTORIA DIOCESE**

**THESIS FOR THE MASTER DEGREE IN THEOLOGY,
(MOPG – 30)**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study is a critical analysis of the mission strategies used by the church in Sukumaland, Tanzania in encountering the killing of Albinos. This idea arose in between the year 2006 and 2007 by the Sukuma traditional healers who believed that some Albino body parts have a magic power to bring fortune to someone life like in business, illness, education etc. Because of this, many Albinos have been murdered, others who are injured are left handicapped and some graves of Albino have been opened and bodies removed. However, this practice is still conducted until today and Sukumaland is the leading in this practice.

This research therefore, seeks to understand *what* are the mission strategies used by the church in Sukumaland in encountering the killing of Albinos and *how* are these strategies implemented. To pursue this, the researcher conducted interviews in two of the most affected villages, that is, Kisesa and Igombe. The interviews were conducted to Sukuma traditional healers, church members and some governmental and non-governmental leaders in Mwanza region. The findings of the interviews are analysed and discussed critically in the light of perspectives from theology of mission.

Chapter one of the thesis presents an introduction of the study. It consists of the statement of problem, motivation of the study and aim of the study. This is followed by methodology, problem encountered, ethical consideration, data collection and research situation and theoretical reflections. Chapter two concentrates on defining the Sukuma people. In fulfilling that, the chapter focuses on the Sukuma historical background, myth of origin, social and cultural life, and religious life.

Chapter three, presents the explanation on the whole practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. The background information of this practice, the current situation of this practice in Sukumaland and the root causes of this practice are presented here. Chapter four presents the mission approaches used by the church in Sukumaland in encountering this problem of the killing of Albinos. The strategies of preaching and teaching of the Word of God, Advocacy and Diakonia as they are used by the church in encountering this problem are carefully presented here. Chapter five analyses critically the findings from the church mission strategies used and the proposed strategies by the informants in encountering this problem. It also gives a theological reflection on those strategies. Chapter six is my recommendations on the appropriate mission strategies to be utilised by the church in encountering this problem in Sukumaland. Chapter seven, is a general conclusion of this study.

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*To all Church ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania- East of Lake
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CWA	Children With Albinism
ELCT	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania
ELVD	East of Lake Victoria Diocese
LHRC	Legal Human Right Centre
MHS	Misjonshøgskolen
PWA	People With Albinism
TAS	Tanzania Albino Society
TOTs	Training of Trainers
UTSS	Under The Same Sun
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem

1.1.1 Statement of the Problem

The belief in the killing of people with albinism (albinos) in Sukumaland, Tanzania was at its highest rise in between the year 2006 and 2007 among the Sukuma traditional healers. The idea behind the killing is the myth that some albino body parts have magical power to bring fortune in one's life like in business, education, health etc. This practice has brought challenges not only to albinos as a group and the society of Sukumaland, but also to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania - East of Lake Victoria Diocese (ELCT-ELVD). The church's mission strategies have been challenged because until today, the killing of Albinos is still conducted in Sukumaland.

Thus, the focus of this study will be to describe the church strategies in encountering the killing of albinos in Sukumaland. Specifically, the study will discuss critically both, the strategies used by the church and that proposed by the informants in encountering this problem. By doing so, the study will, at last, come up with some appropriate strategic measures that will be utilised by the church in encountering this problem in Sukumaland.

1.1.2 Motivation of the Study

This research is about *The Killing of Albinos in Sukumaland, Tanzania: A Challenge to the Church's Mission in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania- East of Lake Victoria Diocese (ELCT-ELVD)*. The fact that there are no other studies in this particular area, that is MHS, plays as a major factor which motivated my ambition to do this research. As the study itself is a Missiological one, the research intends to contribute academically on the appropriate mission strategies that can be used by the church in the environment where traditional beliefs seem to be strong to the extent of causing deaths such as the prevailing killing of albinos in Sukumaland.

In regard to that, there are several researches done worldwide which attempted to investigate the root causes for the practice specifically in Sukumaland, Tanzania. From these researches, it shows that there is a series of possible reasons concerning the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland such as witchcraft belief, poverty and illiteracy, illogical thinking in connection with politics and racism, income shock etc. Variations on the causes of this practice fostered my ambition to investigate more on this issue. I found myself developing some questions: if the root causes for the killings have been identified why until today these killings are still happening in Sukumaland? Is the church and other stakeholders in Sukumaland aware of these investigated factors that they have been acting accordingly?

Similarly, the practice of the killing of albinos has become a problem not only to Sukumaland as a community, but also the idea and practice have now spread to the entire society of Tanzania. As it is the case with many other institutions in Tanzania, the church (ELCT-ELVD) as well, has become a victim of this practice. Some of the church members are still being affected by this problem. This situation disturbs her daily routine because through her mission work, the church was forced to find the solution to this ongoing problem. Along this situation, my experience on this problem as one of the Pastors in this church also awakened my mind and developed my desire to study deeply the church strategies in encountering this problem in Sukumaland. I hope that knowing the weaknesses and strengths of those strategies, the study will be in a better position to suggest the appropriate strategies in eliminating this problem in Sukumaland by either affirming to the present strategies or by proposing the new and modern approaches.

Therefore, the point of departure from this research to the former researches done on this issue is that, this research intends to see if the investigated root causes are handled accordingly particularly by the church in the research area. This will be fulfilled by directing focus on analysing and discussing critically the church mission strategies in dealing with the killings of albinos in Sukumaland.

1.1.3 Aim of the Paper

This research aims at exploring how the church in Sukumaland encounters some of the Sukuma's negative traditional beliefs such as the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. The focus will be on the church mission strategies that are used in encountering the problem. The study will first analyse and discuss those strategies critically and then, will suggest some approaches that can be used by the church in Sukumaland in encountering the killing of albinos.

1.1.4 Scope and Limitations

Sukumaland is made up of four mainly regions known as Mwanza, Shinyanga, Geita and Simiyu.¹ The research concentrates mainly in Mwanza region because this region is among the leading regions for the killing of albinos in Sukumaland. The focus is further concentrated in Magu and Ilemela districts with the villages of Kisesa and Igombe respectively. These villages are also among the villages that are most affected by the killing of albinos and are situated in the rural parts of Mwanza region.

As to the limitation of the paper, I have specifically focused on the study of the mission strategies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mwanza region known as East of Lake Victoria Diocese (ELVD) in encountering this problem. Though the study is a Missiological one, but to a certain extent, the social-theological and anthropological approach will also be applied depending on the nature of the problem itself that it is about human killings, that is, the killing of albinos.

This paper is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one is an introduction while chapter two gives the general overview of the Sukuma people. Chapter three discusses the whole practice of the killing of people with albinism (albinos). The investigated root causes for this practice is also part of this chapter as it was presented by some of those researches done on this topic and further supported by some informants. The chapter will also include the general overview on the current situation on the killing of Albinos, specifically in Sukumaland. Chapter four discusses the church response to this practice and chapter five analyses and discusses the general findings. Chapter six presents my suggestions on the mission strategies to be utilised by the church in Sukumaland in encountering this problem. Chapter seven is the conclusion of this paper.

1.1.5 Definition of Terms

Sukuma

Sukuma is the largest ethnic group, out of about 120 ethnic groups found in Tanzania. Sukuma are said to be about 5.5 million people equals to 16% of the Tanzania's total population. Sukuma live in the north-western part of Tanzania.²

¹ See the enclosed APPENDIX no.1 about the map of Tanzania and Sukumaland.

² Sukuma People - Wikipedia. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sukuma_people. Internet; accessed 18 March 2013.

Belief

Belief (s) is defined as the way people think about the universe and their attitude towards life itself. Mbiti, when citing an example of African religious belief(s) he says, these beliefs(s) are concerned with topics such as God, spirits, human life, the hereafter and so on.³

Albinos

Albinos are the people who lack pigment in their skin, eyes and hair. The genetic disorder causing albinism also results in abnormal vision, and often, in involuntary eye movements (nystagmus).⁴

Church

The word church is simply means an instrument for mission. This means, without mission, there is no church.⁵ In this study, wherever the term church used, it will mean the local church, East of Lake Victoria Diocese (ELVD) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Both words, ELVD and Church will be used alternatively.

Mission

Mission is defined as witnessing to the Kingdom of God in word and deed. Furthermore, witnessing is defined as everything that the church and her members do or say, representing the King in the World. Examples of some of mission activities are like establishing and building up of churches, dealing with issues connected to the socio-economic and political well-being of people like development, peace, justice, liberation etc.⁶

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Qualitative Research Method

This study is a Missiological perspective. Therefore, it combines data from both, empirical materials and theological reflections on the strategies used by the church in encountering the killing of people with albinism in Sukumaland. Considering the fact that this study touches people's lives, I found that collecting data through the empirical materials was the best way to

³ John S. Mbiti, Introduction to African Religion: 2nd Edition, (Malaysia: Heinemann International Literature and Textbooks, 1991), 11.

⁴ Boniface E. Makulilo, "Albino Killings in Tanzania: Illogical Thinking or Racism?" P&J 594 (2004): 1.

⁵ David Bosch, Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991), 390.

⁶ HL Pretorius (et al.), Reflection on Mission in the African Context, (Bloemfontein: Pro Christo Publications, 1987), 5.

achieve the relevant information for this study. Therefore, I used variety of empirical material like the case study (the killing of Albinos), interviews and personal interviews, reflection and discussion. In addition to the materials found in the field, I also used personal observation and experience which I have concerning the given topic.⁷ The written materials used are the available literatures on the topic under this study including journals, articles, internet sources and books.

1.2.2 Interview Guide

This project is a descriptive project; that is, it needed a bigger room for collecting data directly from the informant's life experience. Therefore, I used a semi-structured interview method whereby I prepared some guiding questions which I used them in the field. In addition to that, I had also the possibility to ask follow-up questions depending on how the informants responded to my questions.⁸ Some of the important areas discussed were focused on the general understanding of the informants on the whole practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. This include the questions on how they find this practice of the killing of Albinos as a problem and the measures taken to encounter this problem. The questions about the church's participation in eliminating this problem in Sukumaland and the major challenges the church faces in encountering this problem were also part and parcel of this interview session.⁹

1.2.3 Selection of the Informants

The selection for the informants for this study, first considered the offices that were responsible for this kind of study. The offices such as Church office, Sukuma traditional healer's office, Mwanza Regional Statistics office and Mwanza Social Welfare office were visited for the interview session. There were also two People With Albinism (PWA) and two members from two of the affected families from this practice. Together with that, two groups of youth and women (who were ten to fifteen people respectively) from the church side were also interviewed. In all these groups, the gender equality was much considered.

For the non-professional informants such as PWA and members from the affected families, I made a visit to their homes physically and requested them for an appointment for

⁷ Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln Eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*: 2nd Ed, (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc., 2000), 3.

⁸ Steinar Kvalle & Svend Brinkmann, *Interviews: Learning the Qualitative Research Interviewing*. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2009), 27.

⁹ See the enclosed APPENDEX no.2 for the interview guide questions used.

the interview. One of the PWA, was known to the me. Therefore it was easy to arrange for an interview session.

1.2.4 The Interview Process

Before the interview session was done, I visited the offices mentioned above and introduced myself with the introductory letter from the School of Mission and Theology – Stavanger. After the introduction session, to some of these offices, I was connected directly to the people who were responsible for my study topic; there, we made an appointment for the interview session. From these offices I was given the names of the people to be interviewed also two names from the two affected families. For the case of Sukuma traditional healers, the data from the Regional Statistics office revealed the most affected places. Then, I met the local government leaders and arranged for the interview to the two identified traditional healers.

In the church office, I was directed to the two departments, that is youth department and women and children department. These departments have some projects on human rights whereby the killing of Albinos is one of the issues they dealt with. Venues for interviews were chosen by the interviewees. To some few cases venues were to be changed due to the interference occurred caused by interviewees' co-workers. In those cases, my home place particularly in the study room was used instead. However, despite those small challenges, the whole process of interview was successful. The good cooperation among the team members and the availability of facilities for the interview were the major factors which contributed to this success.

1.2.5 Analysis of the Materials

During the interview session, I took the notes which I typed directly onto my laptop computer. The interview notes collected were later used when organizing the materials for this thesis. During the analysis on my findings, I read through my notes and focused mainly to the very important issues that were mentioned by the informants which were also useful in my thesis. Such topics are like the background information of the killing of albinos, the root causes for the killing of albinos and how the killings are conducted in Sukumaland. Afterwards, I would go through relevant sources to the study topic such as journals, articles, books and other researches done worldwide about the killing of albinos in Sukumaland, Tanzania. For the confidentiality and security of the informants, the notes collected in the field were later destroyed.

The Lutheran World Federation documents on Mission in Context and Diakonia in context are the main Missiological literatures used in the Missiological analysis of the mission strategies used by the church in encountering the problem of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. These documents represent the LWF contribution to the understanding and practice of Mission to the ongoing ecumenical re-articulation of what it means to be a church in our constantly changing context. Furthermore, these documents were the bases for the analysis and reflection of the mission strategies used by the church in Sukumaland in the analysis chapter. They also played a very important role in opening up a way for me to propose other ways which can be used by the church to face this problem of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

1.2.6 Problems Encountered

Some informants thought of me to have a financial benefit from this research, so some of them expected or asked for money before or after the interviews. Also some of the interviewees did not meet the scheduled dates or time, so I had to squeeze my time, we rescheduled, it was tiresome but successful. Another problem was my religious background, as a Christian to escape the biased questions; I had to make sure that I found good approach of interviewing traditionalists.

In addition to that, interpreted wrongly by some of my informants because they thought I was given a lot of money to conduct this study. Therefore, they dared to ask about the payment after their participation in this study. This was a dominant question to many of my informants. I responded to them by sharing the need and importance of this study to the society, but we could not reach the consensus easily. To settle the matter, I had to consider having something like a token at the end of the interview session where I provided like soft drinks and snacks as a way of expressing my sincere thanks for their participation and cooperation. Therefore, the process was successful.

1.2.7 Ethical Consideration

The nature of this research is about people's life i.e. Sukuma traditional healers (the alleged killers) and Albinos (the targeted people for the killings). In addition to that, considering that the practice itself is alive, therefore, it needed sensitivity in collecting data. Like Ryen when quoted by David Silverman he said that, "At times we come across delicate situations that involve hidden or problematic information that someone may be harmed or being at risk (like

crimes being planned) or that certain findings may be discomfoting (like job evaluations or health information) or even dangerous to some subjects (like some kinds of illegal activities).”¹⁰ Having been aware of this situation, before conducting the research, I reported to the security authorities to make sure that in every step I take, there is security. While doing the interview to the two Albinos, I was accompanied by a pastor in charge from this particular area of study. Since the pastor was known to these informants, the informants were seem to be free and they were open to share their information concerning this problem. The same approach was used to the affected families, though the two church leaders from the villages of study joined us. As it is also a tradition in Sukumaland as far my experience is concerned, the interview to this particular group who lost their family members, we gave them some foodstuffs as a sign of showing our grief to the deaths of their beloved ones. The interview was ended by sharing the Word of God and prayers the activity which was done by the pastor as a comfort to the families.

In regard to that, I informed my informants ahead of the time about confidentiality that the notes taken by typing them in my laptop will be held secretly and that their names will also not be revealed for their security purposes. After the completion of my thesis, all the printed noted or materials will be destroyed as well. This situation brought confidence to both of us. The informants were open and free to share their experience on this study topic without any fear.

1.3 Research Situation and Theoretical Reflections

This study is about church mission encountering Sukuma traditional belief basing on the practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland, Tanzania. There are several studies done on the issue of human killings including the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. The focus of these studies differ from one study to another of which according to my observation, they can be divided into two categories i.e. the ones done from the *secular side* and other from *religious side*.

The *secular side* studies consist of several studies recently done specific on the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland, Tanzania. These studies concentrated on investigating the root causes for these killings whereby it was found out that there are series of possible factors which are said to be the root causes of this practice. This situation led me to develop some questions: if those are the root causes for this practice, why until today the practice is still

¹⁰ David Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data: 4th Edition* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2011), 88.

done despite the fact that those studies are worldwide published i.e. through internet? Perhaps, the society around the most killing areas (e.g. in the countryside where very few people are exposed to the internet technology) is not aware of them, hence the living problem of the killing of Albinos until today.

Therefore, through this study, I intend first, to see the application of those investigated root causes where I will look through the church mission strategies in encountering this problem. Second, the appropriate strategies in encountering this problem will be exposed to the society and the whole country at large to have a fight together on this problem. Therefore, I intend to have some printed brochures with some important aspects from my study topic. Those brochures will be distributed as a start to church leaders and governmental leaders in particular.

The *church side* has no study done on the killing of Albinos. However, there are two studies done on *witchcraft* (one of the mentioned root causes) *and church* which altogether concentrated to show on how this factor is a challenge to the Christian faith. These studies ended by analysing the effect of this kind of belief to the church and the role of the church in responding to this problem. Therefore, nothing has been done in assessing the church mission strategies in encountering Sukuma traditional belief such as the killing of albinos. The aim of this study is also to acquire more and possible better strategies in encountering this problem.

Chapter Two

INTRODUCING THE SUKUMA PEOPLE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on defining the Sukuma people. The focus will be on topics such as Sukuma historical background, myth of origin, social and cultural life, and religious life. These factors will help us to understand better about Sukuma people who are the centre of this research.

2.2 Historical Background of the Sukuma People

As it has been the case with many African societies, the Sukuma historical background is not well known due to the fact that there have been no written documents concerning Sukuma society.¹¹ Possibly, as Mbiti says, this is because the art of writing in Africa came later and that after the art of writing was invented; most people did not know how to read and write. Therefore, the only way used to pass on the information from one generation to another was by word of mouth, that is, through storytelling and so on. Mbiti further shows the effects of this method of passing information that, on one hand, it has helped us to be reached by some valuable information and on the other side, it has brought difficulties in some cases when it is not easy to tell the “true from the fictitious” due to the fact that many things told were forgotten or confused in repeated tellings.¹² This situation plays a very big part of having the anonymous historical background of the Sukuma people.

Due to that situation, there have been variations on the origin of the Sukuma people. According to Tanner, variations comes through their chiefdoms whereby each chiefdom in Sukumaland has a different history and origin outside of Sukumaland. He further adds that, this situation brings variations in from area to area both; in accent and social practice, and in ecology between the well-watered north and the dry rolling plains of the south.¹³ As it was shared by one Sukuma informant, the way Sukuma people introduce among themselves

¹¹ Ralph E. S. Tanner, *Transition in African Beliefs. Traditional Religion and Christian Change: A Study in Sukumaland, Tanzania, East Africa.* (New York: Maryknoll Publications, 1967), 1.

¹² Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 4.

¹³ Tanner, *Transition in African Beliefs*, 1.

shows clear the awareness on these variations. According to this informant, it is their tradition to introduce among each other by tracing their original clan when using the word “*Ngw’ana nani?*” means “*to whose clan do you belong?*”¹⁴ Always their intentions have been to know one's clan of origin, hence one's chiefdom of origin.

The awareness of the Sukuma people on the variations of their origin possibly comes from what is mentioned by Berta Millroth, that, originally, Sukuma people had no conception of tribal unity;¹⁵ similar to Imaculate Mirambo who asserts that, the concept of ethnic unity never occurred to the Sukuma people.¹⁶ This idea has been dominant to many scholars like Tanner who is convinced that Sukuma people are not a unified people in the sense that they have had one culture for a very long time,¹⁷ the idea which was later adapted by Frans Wijzen.¹⁸ Tanner adds that, Sukuma people have been using that idea of what he termed as, “The assumed uniformity” in favour of opposition to Government's plans. He concluded that, this absence of a single culture has been a factor in delaying change, certainly in ecclesiastical matters.¹⁹

In regard to that, there are some other factors which are connected to this complication of Sukuma historical background. One is the introduction of the “Indirect rule” by British colonial administration in 1925, whereby the word Sukuma was used.²⁰ Tanner sees this idea of uniting Sukuma people as a single entity, as a mistake which have been always made by the Government.²¹ For him, traditionally Sukumaland was divided into a number of chiefdoms of widely varied origins of which 47 survived until independence, whose history showed a steady demographic expansion rather than push and pull of tribal wars and slave trading.²² Therefore, he is also convinced that the hugeness of this tribe became as a factor which led to the failures of British federation in administering this society.²³

Another factor is said to be on the language conflict between Kiswahili²⁴ and

¹⁴ Interview with N 18th June 2012.

¹⁵ Bertha Millroth, LYUBA: Traditional Religion of the Sukuma. (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri AB, 1965), 15.

¹⁶ Imaculate Mirambo, “Oral Literature of the Sukuma,” in an Electronic Journal of Folklore Vol.26, 2004, 114.

¹⁷ Tanner, Transition in African Beliefs, 59.

¹⁸ F. J. S. Wijzen, There is Only One God: A Social Scientific and Theological Study of Popular Religion and Evangelization in Sukumaland Northwest Tanzania. (Netherlands: Kok Publisher, 1993), 46.

¹⁹ Tanner, Transition in African Beliefs, 59.

²⁰ Wijzen, There is Only One God, 47.

²¹ Tanner, Transition in African Beliefs, 59.

²² R. E. S. Tanner, Crime in East African: 4, The Witch Murders in Sukumaland – A Sociological Commentary. (Uppsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1970), 13.

²³ Tanner, Transition in African Beliefs, 59.

²⁴ Kiswahili is a Tanzanian national language and a means of communication among all tribes in Tanzania.

Kisukuma.²⁵ This situation is said to happen after the government of Tanganyika (today's Tanzania) had introduced Kiswahili as a national language whereby Kiswahili was used in education and political matters. Sukuma refused and wanted Kisukuma to be used on their case.²⁶ The government tried to implement it but could not succeed because Kisukuma was suitable only for the Sukuma people and the idea of using Kiswahili was meant to unite all tribes in Tanzania. Because of this, the Tanganyika government as well proved failure in administering this society on that matter. As the consequences of the hugeness of this society, that not only hindered communications between Sukuma themselves as stated by Bertha,²⁷ but also as Tanner asserts:

The huge size of Usukuma not only hindered communications for trade, but also prevented the population from being influenced by many of the changes inherent in a situation of rapid national political evolution. It prevented the population from being communicated with and even from communicating among themselves as a stimulus to change. The whole of Usukuma has had a relatively slow rate of exposure to external and internal influence toward change.²⁸

Presumably, it is clear to say that it is impossible to state clearly where did Sukuma people originated from. However, there has been a trace of the place of origin of the Sukuma people, whereby it is stated that Sukuma people originated from a Bantu speaking people who together with Nyamwezi seem to belong to the same group as the Bantu of western Uganda.²⁹ In addition to that, Sukuma are said to have been primarily hunters who also practised arable agriculture. According to this source, many legends and traditions agree that the reigning chiefs were of Hamitic descent and the genealogies go back for fifteen or sixteen generations. These Hamitic people are further mentioned as the Bantu-Hamitic pastoralists from the Nyoro-speaking countries of Uganda and north-west Tanganyika.³⁰

2.3 Sukuma Myth of Origin

Myth is said to be not a merely story told, but a reality lived.³¹ It is further said that, to a native, it is neither a fictitious story nor an account of a dead past; it is a statement of a bigger reality still partially alive.³² Therefore, myth is a crucial thing for understanding one's cultural

²⁵ Kisukuma is a language for Sukuma people.

²⁶ Tanner, *Transition in African Beliefs*, 59.

²⁷ Millroth, LYUBA, 15.

²⁸ Tanner, *Transition in African Beliefs*, 60.

²⁹ "People Profile" - The Sukuma of Tanzania. Available from <http://strategyleader.org/profiles/sukuma.html>. Internet; accessed 6 December 2012.

³⁰ Millroth, LYUBA, 14-15.

³¹ Bronislaw Malinowski on "Myth in Primitive Psychology" in *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*: 2nd Ed, Michael Lambek (Ed.) (USA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2008), 169.

³² *Ibid*, 174.

environment, inherited characters and morals. This is why this study takes seriously the Sukuma myth of origin believing that through this myth some of the Sukuma present characters will be revealed in relation to the past. Thus, this section will also discuss the famous character of the Sukuma of being expertise in traditional medicines and magic power staffs. The contribution from this part will also be useful to the understanding of the leading practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland as it will be discussed in the next chapter.

Sukuma people have a myth of origin known as “*Masala Kulangwa*” literally means “The smart or the clever person who understands quickly” and the monster or Ogre *Shing'weng'we*.³³ This myth seems to be active and alive among the Sukuma people of today. The findings also prove this, two out of four Sukuma informants showed awareness on this myth.

The story is about a “Monster” or “Shing'weng'we”³⁴ who swallowed all people in the world except one pregnant woman who hid herself in a forest. This woman gave birth to a baby boy named Masala Kulangwa. When the boy had grown up, he asked his mother why there are only two people and the mother told him the story of Shing'weng'we. From this story Masala Kulangwa got a desire to search for Shing'weng'we and fight it. When he was an adult, he once left home and went out hunting for Shing'weng'we, in the process he killed several creatures thinking that it was Shing'weng'we, but not.³⁵

One day he found Shing'weng'we in the forest, he fought it and managed to kill it by cutting his back; there came out all people who were swallowed including his relatives. While cutting Shing'weng'we, he unfortunately injured the ear of an old woman who became angry to him and insulted him. As she tried to bewitch him and kill him, but the people whom he saved protected him. Instead, Masala Kulangwa found medicine and healed the old woman. These two incidences made Masala Kulangwa the great as he was made a chief of the whole world and his mother became the queen mother.³⁶

The Sukuma myth of origin means a lot to the Sukuma people. As it is my observation, like their hero and saviour Masala Kulangwa they mostly tend to use this myth

³³Joseph Healey and Donald Sybertz, *Towards an African Narrative Theology*. (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1996), 64.

³⁴ For Sukuma the Monster or Shingw'engwe is anybody (not anything). Mostly is said to be a marginal person, a weak one, somebody confused already guilty. Therefore anybody at any moment may take the nature of the monster or Shingw'engwe and that it is upon the agreement of the people to decide who to be a monster. Cf. Fr. Pascal Durand , “Albino Killings in Sukumaland,” 6.

³⁵ Healey (et al), *Towards an African Narrative Theology*, 64-65.

³⁶ Ibid, 65.

of origin to testify some of their well-known characters such as people with no fear,³⁷ gentle (*wapole* in a Swahili word) with a natural dignity in their community life and rarely speak out what is in their mind. Also, they are known to be such kind of people who do not show hunger and irritation easily.³⁸ This also goes together with their well-known expertise in traditional medicines and magic power staffs, the factor which has made them to be viewed as very superstitious and who mostly (when are in trouble)³⁹ seek aid from the *Bafumu*, *Balaguzi* and *Basomboji*, that is medicine men, diviners and sooth Sayers.⁴⁰

It is said that many Sukuma people when encounter troubles such as sickness, deaths (particularly a sudden death of a young person, deaths from snake-bite or from wild animals), miscarriages and infertility, losing the way in the bush or on a well-known path, the theft of property, road accident and failure of rain;⁴¹ always their reaction is in a word “*Nimelogwa*” a swahili word means “I have been bewitched” (cursed by a witch) or “I have displeased the ancestors.” Questions “Who did it” and “Why” are always asked and a witch-doctor is always consulted to settle the matter because they believe that a witch-doctor is a person in true harmony with the spirits of nature, and who prays for the guidance of God (*Liwelelo* in Sukuma).⁴²

In addition to that, it is argued that, there are about forty-nine different kinds of medicine which Sukuma people are said to depend much on them and that they normally turn to them when they have such kind of problems as mentioned earlier. These medicines are further said to be divided into two groups; the local herbal medicine which are said to be the good ones, and the magical medicine said to be the bad ones⁴³ made from human and vegetable ingredients which are normally said to be used in linking the two, a victim and the desired result (or the one who made a problem to the victim. Furthermore, the use of these magic medicines is said to be put either in the food or on the path so that the victim's leg pick it up and introduce it into the body. The use of this medicine is said not aiming at killing the person, but to identify a person if he/she, is responsible for the event that is said to have occurred. In addition to that, this knowledge of using magic medicines for identifying a responsible person causing a problem is said to be known by a witch-doctor alone and that it

³⁷ Tanner, Crime in East African, 13.

³⁸ Wijsen, There is Only One God, 58.

³⁹ Tanner, Crime in East African, 19.

⁴⁰ Mirambo, “Oral Literature of the Sukuma,” 116.

⁴¹ Tanner, Crime in East African, 20.

⁴² Healey (et al), Towards an African Narrative Theology, 291-292.

⁴³ Ibid, 292-293.

cannot be inherited but one learn it through practising.⁴⁴

2.4 Social and Cultural Life

Sukuma social and cultural life is said to be very closer with the Nyamwezi (the second largest tribe in Tanzania living at the central plateau of Tanzania)⁴⁵ and that their attitude and way of life is closely related.⁴⁶ Their relation is also seen from the Sukuma tribal name “*Sukuma*,” in which the name is said to originate from the Nyamwezi language with the meaning “*north*.” The word is said to have been formerly used by the Nyamwezi who used it in referring to the people living to the north of them.⁴⁷ According to Berta Millroth, that north, as termed by Nyamwezi is located to the south of Lake Victoria in the Lake Province of Tanganyika territory in East Africa,⁴⁸ which is further mentioned to be the north-western part of Tanzania as mentioned by Ralph Tanner.⁴⁹ Therefore, Sukumaland as it is commonly written today was formerly made up of two regions namely Mwanza and Shinyanga, but for the administrative purposes today the land is divided into four main regions namely Mwanza, Shinyanga, Geita and Simiyu.

Sukumaland covers an area of about 19 square miles with an altitude of 3,800 to 4,000 feet above the sea-level and average of rainfall about 30 inches a year with the heaviest rainfall occurring mostly in the vicinity of Lake Victoria. The land has a tropical climate with the average temperature in between 15 to 32 degree Celsius throughout the year and has both, wet season (rain seasons from November to January and from March to June) and dry season (remaining months of the year). There are also mountains but with no great height, a great Lake Victoria, few rivers and permanent water wells.⁵⁰

Sukuma is a patrilineal society whereby kids are considered to belong to the same descent group as their father. Traditionally, Sukuma household consists of a man with his wives and his unmarried children, also his sons with their families and recently married daughters whose husbands served until the bride-price had been settled.⁵¹ Normally, it is the father who provides a piece of land to his sons to start their own families around his

⁴⁴ Tanner, *Crime in East Africa*, 20.

⁴⁵ List of Ethnic Groups in Tanzania. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ethnic_groups_in_Tanzania. Internet; accessed 21 January 2013.

⁴⁶ Tanner, *Crime in East Africa*, 11.

⁴⁷ Wijzen, *There is Only One God*, 46-47.

⁴⁸ Millroth, *LYUBA*, 13.

⁴⁹ Tanner, *Transition in African Beliefs*, 1.

⁵⁰ Millroth, *LYUBA*, 13-14.

⁵¹ Wijzen, *There is only One God*, 47.

compound and this land becomes part of their inheritance. It is also done so for the father (as the head of the family) to have a control in shaping his own successors i.e. sons.⁵² This kind of life is mostly said to occur in the rural areas where the average “homestead” (*Kaya* in Swahili) consists of two or three huts, kitchen and stabling accommodation for small livestock.⁵³

The Sukuma social setting is divided into several groups depending on the division of labour. There is a group of *Basumba* and *Banike* (Sukuma words meaning boys and girls respectively) where the society has a task to teach and prepare them for their future when they will have their own families. Traditionally, women teach girls mostly the domestic works and men teach boys works like caring for the flocks, preparing them to be leaders etc.⁵⁴ Moreover, Frans Wijsen adds that the two genders mostly do not mix; men live among men and women among women and that men and women hardly ever walk together, nor do they eat together.⁵⁵

The second group consists of young married couples known as “*Nsumbantale*” who mostly work as leaders to other youth (unmarried ones) in supervising them to fulfil their responsibilities. The last group is of *Banamhala* and *Bagikulu* (Sukuma words means old men and old women respectively). This group has a responsibility to make sure that the traditions and customs of the society are being observed by all members in the society. Together with that, it is their task also to assign a kind of punishment to the one who goes contrary to their customs. In most cases, elder men are the one's responsible for the whole society and in some few cases elder women can be welcomed, unless otherwise elder women are responsible for women matters only.⁵⁶

Moreover, there is a special ritual called *ihane* (means “to teach a youth to keep the secret”) which is always done to welcome a youth only *Nsumbantale* to the group of *Banamhala* and *Bagikulu*. From this informant's experience, *ihane* has mostly done to young men than women due to the nature of the societal division of labour whereby men are always prepared for leadership position and women for domestic work. Therefore, *Nsumbantale*, can enter the group of *Banamhala* and *Bagikulu* if s/he is rich, for example has many cows because for them cows means prestige and it shows possibility for one's ability to lead

⁵² Interview with N 18th June 2012.

⁵³ Wijsen, *There is Only one God*, 56.

⁵⁴ Interview with X 22nd July 2012.

⁵⁵ Wijsen, *There is One God*, 56.

⁵⁶ Interview with X 22th July 2012.

others.⁵⁷ It is further said that for the ordinary Sukuma, herding cow is seen as more profitable thing than anything else like education etc.⁵⁸ In regard to that, Sukuma are said to have been so much kin in investing on social relationship than in material thing. Thus, they value and expect everyone from the society to attend the traditional social gathering like wedding, feast or cultivation ceremonies which are mostly accompanied by songs, drumming and dancing.⁵⁹

Furthermore, Sukuma are known to be pastoral agriculturalists⁶⁰, they depend much on farming activities and herding cattle. These two activities are the backbone of the Sukuma economy. For example, Sukuma are very famous in cultivating rice, cassava, potatoes and corn for both food and commercial. They also grow cotton as a cash crop. Their famous food from these crops is *Ugali* (made from corn flower) and rice. The agriculture and pastoralist activities are mostly done in the rural areas where the land is big and enough for cultivation activities and pastoralism as well. Generally, cultivation is the activity for the entire family to ensure that they cultivate more.⁶¹

2.5 Religious Life

Sukuma is said to be the largest and fastest growing ethnic group in Tanzania with about 5 million people, which is 20% of the Tanzanian total population.⁶² Due to the time factor, today their population might have increased. For example, it is said that by 2012 Tanzania population was about 44, 000,000;⁶³ from this figure, Sukuma may be approximately 8,800,000 million people equals to 20% of the Tanzanian total population.

Sukuma people believe on the existence of High God whom they call with different names but the common ones are *Lyuba* or *Liwelelo* meaning Sun.⁶⁴ With variations in their history and origin, Sukuma beliefs and practices also vary from clan to clan and place to place. For example, in the field of study, God was given different names such as *Lyuba*, *Liwelelo*, *Limi*, *Likube* etc. As it is my view, Sukuma religious life seems to be divided into

⁵⁷ Interview with X 22th July 2012.

⁵⁸ Wijzen, There is Only One God, 58.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 58-59.

⁶⁰ Tanner, Transition in African Beliefs, 1.

⁶¹ Sukuma Culture and Tanzania. Available from <http://philip.greenspun.com/sukuma/intro>. Internet; accessed 30 March 2012.

⁶² Wijzen, There is Only One God, 49.

⁶³ Sukuma People – Wikipedia. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sukuma_people. Internet; accessed 21 January 2013.

⁶⁴ Millroth, LYUBA, 95.

two groups; the ones follow the Sukuma (African⁶⁵) indigenous religion and the ones follow the foreign religion i.e. Christianity and Islam. The followers of Sukuma (African) indigenous religion are further said to be divided into two groups; the ones follow the ancestral worship (their number were said to be declining) and the one's bear on witchcraft character (these were seemed to be very strong). So far, it is said that for the Sukuma society, witchcraft plays an important role.⁶⁶

In regard to that, a research done to a small group of Sukuma of Geita can be used as an example to display a picture of Sukuma religious life. From that study it is also revealed that most Sukuma are the followers of Sukuma indigenous religion. For example, about 85% of the Sukuma in Geita were found to be adherents of the Sukuma Indigenous religion, 10% Catholics, 3% Protestants, 2% Muslims and very few from African Independent churches and Pentecostal churches.⁶⁷ Furthermore, it is said that most of the followers of Sukuma indigenous religion are found in the rural areas where religion is closely linked with the fertility of land and cows; therefore its adherents are mainly those who are involved directly in agriculture, the activity which is mostly done in the countryside. Comparing with other ethnic groups in Tanzania, the number of Sukuma who are adherents of African indigenous religion is said to be higher than in any other ethnic group in Tanzania like Haya, Chagga etc.⁶⁸

The Sukuma people, particularly those who follow the ancestral worship, believe in ancestors that their spirits exist and affect their lives. These are, at the same time, mentioned to recognize the existence of Supreme Being that he is greater than their ancestors. Furthermore, they attribute him with a wide variety of power whom they called him under various names. As a way of maintaining relationship with this supreme being, the Sukuma normally conduct rituals and offer prayers and offerings through the medium-ship of the ancestors. For them, misfortune and diseases are caused by ancestors or witches and that this must be revealed by divination. Therefore, to protect themselves against witchcraft or evil spirits, they use medicine and wear amulets.⁶⁹ Tanner, also agrees that most Sukuma wear amulets or *lupigi pl. mhigi* though he sees that this practice can not be necessarily connected to the ancestor worship because for him, there are several reasons for Sukuma to wear

⁶⁵ The term African as used by Frans Wijsen represents Sukuma Indigenous Religion. Cf. Wijsen, *There is Only One God*, 59.

⁶⁶ Wijsen, *There is Only One God*, 62.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 59.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 62.

⁶⁹ Wijsen, *There is Only One God*, 67 – 68.

amulets and that only a person responsible can tell the reason. He further adds that these amulets are normally put around the wrist, on the thigh girdle or around the neck etc.⁷⁰

Furthermore, Sukuma people are said to fear about two things in life, utter failure and success. For them, utter failure is a result of bewitchments and it may lead someone into being despised by the society. So also, highly successful causes someone to be branded as proud and it may lead someone into being bewitched. Therefore, their life have been always in a dilemma of being caught between success and failure and this is said to be one of the factors which tempers their involvement in community affairs.⁷¹

In addition to that, Sukuma indigenous religion is said to be totally interwoven with their social and political life i.e they did not separate religion and society.⁷² Sukuma are also said to have a number of variations of social activities that were prescribed by the diviners (means *Waganga*).⁷³ These activities are said not to be purely religious in form because Sukuma themselves are said to vary widely in what they felt they ought to do. Furthermore, their religious practice is said to have comprised many interlocking systems. For example, a certain practice performed in one area can be interpreted by the observer as religious or social while the same practice in another place can be interpreted as a religious one. Therefore, it depends much on the explanation of a person (a Sukuma) himself/herself on what has occurred.⁷⁴ This situation led to Tanner's conclusion that, "It is impossible to say that Sukuma do this or believe that, but only the broadest principles may be common to them as a whole." He further sees that in Sukuma religious life, there is an area of consensus but not conformity.⁷⁵

2.6 Conclusion

As it is the findings from this chapter, Sukuma is the largest ethnic group in Tanzania. Sukuma origin is unknown, however according to the findings, Sukuma might have originated from Uganda. Some characters of Sukuma as they are revealed from their myth of origin display Sukuma as a polite people, kind and superior. Furthermore, the findings show that the majority of Sukuma are the followers of their indigenous religion. Sukuma also believe in Supreme Being and the same time they observe their ancestors and retain their

⁷⁰ Tanner, *Transition in African Beliefs*, 29.

⁷¹ Wijsen, *There is Only One God*, 72.

⁷² *Ibid*, 72.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 63-64.

⁷⁴ Tanner, *Transition in African Beliefs*, 1-2.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 3.

belief in witchcraft. This character of believing in witchcraft seems to be deepened in their culture. This situation has also made them to be known as experts in traditional medicine including the current practice of the killing of Albinos for the sake of making a medicine for someone's fortune. Therefore, traditional medicine has become to be a part and parcel of the life of a Sukuma.

Chapter Three

THE KILLING OF ALBINOS IN SUKUMALAND

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to display a general picture on the practice of the killing of people with albinism (albinos) in Sukumaland, Tanzania. Therefore, the chapter presents the background information of the killing of albinos in Sukumaland and it shows how the killings are perpetrated. The chapter also presents the discussion about the killing of albinos. In this case, the current situation of this practice will be also revealed. Thus, the major sources for this chapter will be the informants, the worldwide researches done on this issue and the available reports on this issue.

3.2 Background Information of the Killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

Like Jesus, when he was in the garden praying before his betrayal, a ten year old, Rebecca Machungwa having seeing the men with Machetes kicking their door, open it and pinned her mother behind the door while facing her, she knew that she was going to be killed. Rebecca knelt down beside the bed and put the two hands together praying to God saying, “God help us, please!” Having seen that situation, her brother Philip (not albino) hid himself under the bed. While Rebecca kneeling down praying, the men slashed Rebecca's neck from back, she cried once saying, “Mum, they are killing me! God help me!” Those were the last words said by Rebecca, before she died. In this event, Rebecca's mother, Kado (who intervened to rescue her daughter) and her sister, Monica who was nine months pregnant (who was screaming from seeing the horrible death of her sister, Rebecca) were also killed.⁷⁶

The above event is an example of about the idea of the killing of Albinos that are happening in Sukumaland today. Like animals, Albinos in Sukumaland are being hunted day and night. Because of this practice, the majority of these Albinos have been killed; some got injured and left handicapped and some graves of Albinos have been opened and their body parts being removed. The killing Albinos have brought tensions to the entire society of Sukumaland.

K who is working in one of the governmental offices in Mwanza region shared her experience on the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. K says:

⁷⁶ Vicky Ntetema, “Life Cut Short” in TUNAWWEZA: Under The Same Sun-Facing Challenges Head on. Newsletter of September- December 2010, ed. I.K.Ero et al., 24-25.

The killing of Albinos in Sukumaland started between the year 2005 and 2006. The killings went on increasing until 2007 when the killings were highly practised. After the killing of Albinos was initiated in Sukumaland, Mwanza⁷⁷ region became the leading area for these killings. Because Mwanza region was found to have many cases of killing Albinos than it was in Shinyanga region.⁷⁸

In line with the informant K, Vicky Ntetema who is the executive director of Under the Same Sun (UTSS)⁷⁹ affirms that, “almost about fifty percent of the murders of persons with albinism between 2006 and 2010 in Tanzania were committed in Mwanza region.”⁸⁰ Chinenye P. Dave-Odigie⁸¹ quotes Deogratias Mushi who says that the Mwanza region of Tanzania has not only witnessed the largest number of Albinos murdered, but also contains 3,000 registered witch doctors and that, this figure makes Mwanza to be the region with the highest proliferation of witch doctors in the country.⁸² Alum and his fellow, further reports that the vast majority of the killings have occurred in the remote areas where the villagers are uneducated and other religious faiths are lacking. They further add that, in these villages, witch doctors are fearfully respected.⁸³ Ernest B. Makulilo⁸⁴ not only agrees that Mwanza is very rampant in killing Albinos, but he also shares a case of Lazaro Lazaro who is an Albino who has run away from Mwanza to Iringa fearing for his life threats.⁸⁵

When sharing on the reason for the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland, the informant K says, “There is a belief among the witch doctors that some albino body parts have magical power which can make someone rich. This idea has spread to the whole of Sukumaland as well as in the whole of Tanzania.” K further insisted that her experience and observation from several cases she has attended, this idea of the killing of albinos is a matter of witchcraft belief.⁸⁶

⁷⁷ The regions referred by this informant are the former Mwanza and Shinyanga regions. Today, Sukumaland is divided into four mainly regions namely Mwanza, Geita, Shinyanga and Simiyu.

⁷⁸ Interview with K 18th June 2012.

⁷⁹ Under The Same Sun is Canadian NGO and a Christian -based international charity that promotes the well-being of persons with albinism in Tanzania formed. His founder or president is Peter Ash who is a white Canadian Albino. UTSS has managed to bring international attention to the Albino butchery. UTSS head office is in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. (Interview with Y 6 July, 2012 cf. Makulilo, Albino Killing in Tanzania: Illogical, (18).

⁸⁰ Vicky Ntetema on “Jailed for Trying to Sell a Person with Albinism” in TUNAWEZA: Under The Same Sun-Facing Challenges Head on – Newsletter of September- December 2010, ed. I.K. Ero et al., 7.

⁸¹ Chinenye P. Dave – Odigie is a senior research fellow at the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Nigeria.

⁸² Chinenye P. Dave – Odigie, “Albino Killings in Tanzania: Implications for Security,” PSJ 3 No.1 (2010): 5.

⁸³ Hocus Pocus, Witchcraft, and Murder: The Plight of Tanzanian Albinos. Alexander Alum (et al) (International Team Project 2009- Tanzania), 10.

⁸⁴ Ernest Boniface Makulilo is a fulbright visiting scholar and a Professor of Global Connections: Discover Africa at Marshall University in West Virginia.

⁸⁵ Ernest Boniface Makulilo, “Albino Killings in Tanzania: Illogical Thinking and Racism?” P & J 59: 10.

⁸⁶ Interview with K 18th June 2012.

Like K, Vicky Ntetema observes, “Witch doctors in Tanzania have been blamed for fueling Albino killings for over three years. They tell their clients that Albino body have magical power that can bring prosperity.”⁸⁷ The same picture is displayed in the *Governmental report on the killing events that had happened in Mwanza region because of Witchcraft beliefs*. From this report, it is stated that the main factor which fosters the practice of killing Albinos is the idea from the newly formed saying of “*Albino is Gold*”, which means albino brings wealth or prosperity. The report further asserts that those who engage in the killing of Albinos not only look forward to become wealthy and prosperous, but also they seek to get quick wealth.” It finally concludes that the source of this idea is not only from witch doctors, but from the “unfaithful witch doctors.”⁸⁸

The idea of “quick wealth” is further adapted by Dave-Odigie who is of the opinion that, “The trade in Albino body parts presents itself as an alternative way of making quick money. As he sees, this “get rich quick” syndrome shows that people do not want to do regular jobs through which they will serve, but want quick fixes where money is concerned.”⁸⁹ However, some researches declare that, these clients who seek to get rich quick, have never achieved it. Alum and his fellow present that, “Despite the promise of wealth and prosperity, customer expectations are not always met. Indeed, clients often notice no difference in their lives or businesses after buying a potion containing Albino body parts. The witch doctors, however, are skilfully deceptive: they convince dissatisfied clients to make changes to their lifestyles that over time will make it appear as though they have miraculously become wealthy”.⁹⁰

The killing of Albinos is also connected to the issue of politics. Makulilo is of the opinion that since politics is dominated by witchcraft, therefore Albinos are also associated with politics.⁹¹ Makulilo emphasises his idea by quoting one of the members of the parliament who declares that, “We at the political level also believe in witchcraft, so stopping it has got political impediments to it.”⁹² At election time the demand for albinos is too high.⁹³ On the other hand, Vicky Ntetema who is among the informants of Makulilo, was assured by the witch doctors that police are among his customers in relation to Albino killings. While

⁸⁷ Ntetema, “Jailed for Trying to Sell,” Sept-Dec 2010; repr. 8.

⁸⁸ Makundi Lengwa na Mauaji ya Kishirikina Mkoani Mwanza in a Conference about Juhudi za Pamoja dhidi ya Mauaji Katika Mkoa wetu wa Mwanza held in BOT Mwanza on 17th – 18th March, 2008, 11.

⁸⁹ Dave – Odigie, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 5.

⁹⁰ Alum (et al), *Hocus Pocus*, 12.

⁹¹ Makulilo, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 3.

⁹² Makulilo, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 4.

⁹³ Ibid.

still at the witch doctor's place, she observed a police officer visiting a witch doctor.⁹⁴ Most informants also mentioned this factor as also contributing to the killing of Albinos.

The above factor seems to be a reason for the activists against the killing of albinos to condemn the government that the actions taken in encountering this problem have been always inadequate. Peter Ash who is the founder of the Under The Same Sun (UTSS), when quoted by Makulilo states that, “the most observable situation is, as Albino butchery increases, Tanzanian courts abandon prosecutions”.⁹⁵ Dave-Odigie is of the idea that, some citizens perceive that the government's response to the threat against the lives of Albinos are inadequate as the number of trials and convictions have not been commensurable with the number of killings.⁹⁶ Similar to that, Alum and his fellow declared the same thing that the government's duty to safeguard the lives of Albinos has been inadequate.⁹⁷ They added that:-

Since the killings began in 2006, there has not been a single prosecution in connection with any of the forty- four reported killings⁹⁸ Although there have been approximately 170 arrests, many of those arrested have been allowed to post bail or have been released for other unknown reasons. In short, Tanzanians with albinism do not feel any safer today than they did when the first killings were reported in 2006. Many are still afraid to even leave their homes or send their children to school.⁹⁹

Mwananchi Newspaper of 7th April, 2013 presents the same idea that, there were about seventy-three murders of albinos, thirty- four attempted murders and nineteen grave robberies and that only four cases were prosecuted.¹⁰⁰ This idea can be compared to what is stated by Vicky Ntetema that, “Meanwhile, records compiled up to mid 2012 shows that there have been seventy-one documented killings of persons with Albinism since the butchery was first reported five years ago.”¹⁰¹ She further adds that, “During the same period there were twenty-eight attempted murders with some survivors left mutilated and thirteen grave robberies were documented. However, to date,¹⁰² there have been very few prosecutions, only ten cases in total.”¹⁰³

However, the act of the killing of Albinos which represents the whole issue of human killing, seems not to be a new phenomenon in Sukumaland. The findings show that there

⁹⁴ Makulilo, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 7.

⁹⁵ Makulilo, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 16.

⁹⁶ Dave-Odigie, “Albino Killing in Tanzania: Implications,” 2.

⁹⁷ Alum (et all), Hocus Pocus, 16.

⁹⁸ This information is due to the year 2009 when this report was publicised

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ “Watu 73 Wenye Ulemavu Wauawa Kikatili,” *Mwananchi Newspaper*, 7 April 2013.

¹⁰¹ Ntetema, “Has Justice Been Done,” in TUNAWWEZA; Quality, 20.

¹⁰² The time referred here is by the end of the year 2012 when this magazine was publicised.

¹⁰³ Ntetema, “Has Justice Been Done,” in TUNAWWEZA; Quality, 20.

have been several events of human killings in Sukumaland. Those killings occurred have been conducted in different forms with different perspectives and with different targeted people. However, in all such kind of killings, the idea of witch craft belief has remained to be a predominant idea. The research by Edward Miguel,¹⁰⁴ on *Poverty and Witch Killing* he cited Meatu¹⁰⁵ as among the study areas, where the issue of human killings in Sukumaland due to witch craft belief started since 1960's whereby in between 1970 and 1988, about 3072 people were killed. He adds that figure was more than two-third of the total witch murders which had happened in the entire society of Tanzania with women being the majority of approximately 80% aged between 50 to 60 years old.¹⁰⁶

Miguel presents a case of one of the victims of the killing practice of the “allege witches” which occurred in Shinyanga, a region in Sukumaland. In quoting that victim, he mentions that:

I ran away from Rusule in Shinyanga District after being suspected of being a witch...There were many deaths in the family...then rumours began to spread in the village that I was the one who killed them...My own children started to hate me,...some of them started taunting me as a witch. I tried to explain but they did not give me the chance to vindicate myself. I knew what would befall me in view of what had happened to others previously, for they were brutally killed. Thus, when ...one of the grandchildren whispered to me that they were about to kill me, I left the same evening...I have lived in this camp for three years now, and though I love my family, there is no way of going back to face certain death.¹⁰⁷

In reacting against that practice, once the former President of Tanzania, Mwinyi, as quoted by Miguel was heard speaking out saying:

You are killing innocent women, some of them your own mothers, grandmothers or old people who have all along taken good care of you: how come they suddenly become witches? Do (you) pay them back by killing them?¹⁰⁸

Beside that, the information shared by K shows the killings of old women with red eyes arose again in Sukumaland in between 2002 and 2005.¹⁰⁹ K further argues that, “Many killing events on this practice occurred in Shinyanga region than in Mwanza region. K concludes by insisting that, this practice is still done in Sukumaland until today.¹¹⁰ The report by Teresa Minja who is working with the Tanzania Social Protection Network affirms what has been

¹⁰⁴ Edward Miguel is a Professor of economics and director of the centre for effective global action at the university of California.

¹⁰⁵ Meatu is one of the districts in Shinyanga region.

¹⁰⁶ Edward Miguel, “Poverty and Witch Killing,” RES 72 (2005): 1154-1155.

¹⁰⁷ Miguel, “Poverty and Witch Killing,” 1155.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with K 18th June 2012.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

shared by K that this practice of the killing of the old women with red eyes is alive. Teresa Minja reveals this by sharing the event from one of the victims of this practice that:-

In Shinyanga region this year,¹¹¹ a 72 year old woman narrowly escaped being buried alive after her grandchildren had tied her up and attempted to throw her in the grave in which her brother was to be buried, claiming that the old lady had bewitched their father (her son). It was the community members who attended the funeral who rescued her.¹¹²

This event can be compared to Nyamizi's story that:

“I received a threatening letter which said, ‘You must leave this village, move 15 villages away from here. If not, the sungu-sungu [a group of men, given the role by their communities of guarding the people and their property] from this village will do something that you will never, ever forget. Some time later I was returning home at night. Suddenly, someone came running towards me – he struck me with a machete and chopped off my arm and slashed my head.’”¹¹³

Teresa's report when traced the data from the Legal and Human Rights Centre report (2009), it shows that there was a total of 2,585 killings of the older women with red eyes in eight regions of Tanzania. The report further adds that in those regions the killing of older women with red eyes was predominant for the last five years prior to February 2009. The report concluded that, that figure was an average of 517 killings per year.¹¹⁴

As far as the killing of Albinos is concerned, it is observed that this practice is still alive not only in Sukumaland, but also its idea have spread in all parts of Tanzania. There are a string of Albino killing events that had happened since the beginning of the year 2013. The first event occurred in January 31 in Tabora region (central part of Tanzania), a seven-year-old albino boy was killed by a group of men who chopped off his arm and killed him and his grandfather (95 year-old) who fought to rescue his grandson. Similarly, on February 5, 2013 in Simiyu region (Sukumaland), armed men attacked the home of a seven-month-old boy with albinism. The boy survived by the help from the villagers. On February, 11, 2013, in western Rukwa region, five armed men attacked a thirty nine-year-old mother (her husband was among the invaders) and cut off her left arm but she survived. Again on February 15, 2013 in the same village, a group of men chopped off the arm of a 10-year-old boy as he was heading home from school.¹¹⁵ These events show clearly that the trade of albino body parts in

¹¹¹ The year referred here is 2011-when this report was presented.

¹¹² “Violence Against Older Women in Tanzania” “Receipts of 2011 Paper Prepared for the Panel Discussion”; available from <http://social.un.org/ageing-workinggroup/documents/VIOLENCE%20AGAINST%20OLDER%20WOMEN%20IN%20TANZANIA%20presentation-%20Final.pdf> ; accessed on 18th October, 2012.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ “Attacks on Albinos Surge in Tanzania.” Available in <http://www.voanews.com/content/attacks-on-albinos->

Sukumaland as well as in Tanzania, is still a living problem.

3.3 The Killing of Albinos in Sukumaland

The killing of albinos in Sukumaland seems to be a phenomenon of Sukuma people. Fr. Durand presented his findings that, “most of the killings took place in the North-Western part of Tanzania (Mwanza and Shinyanga regions), an area largely covered by the Sukuma people, to a lesser degree, the Nyamwezi people.”¹¹⁶ Tanner affirms that by saying, “...this tribal area (Sukuma where his research concentrated on) without any other reputation for social or political violence, was prone to this social malignancy.”¹¹⁷ According to Miguel, “The concentration of Tanzanian witch murders in a region dominated by one particular ethnic group (the Sukuma), and the especially high number of witch murders in villages where indigenous religious beliefs are strong both to the important role of non-economic factors.”¹¹⁸

The killing of albinos in Sukumaland is further said to have engaged close-relatives of an Albino to be responsible in one way or another in arranging for the murders of their family members. Ntetema presents the attempted murder of Adam Robert Tangawizi, a eleven-year-old boy who is said to be attacked on 14th October 2011 in his home at Nyarugusu in Geita region (former district of Mwanza region) in front of his father and stepmother who had invited a killer. The parents are mentioned to have watched the attack when Adam was struggling to rescue his life. He managed to save his life though his two right fingers and a thumb were chopped off by a machete. The boy was later taken to Canada for the operation, therapy and rehabilitation.¹¹⁹ Makulilo is also presenting another incidence which occurred on 20th February 2009 in Sengerema District (former district of Mwanza region also) where Eunice a fourteen- year-old girl was attacked at home and her legs were hacked off when the family was outside their house taking dinner. Makulilo further quotes the Mwanza commander of police saying, “The evidence collected so far shows that the father to Albino girl is a principal in the murder of the daughter.”¹²⁰ Alum and his fellow quotes Al-Shaymaa Kwegir who was a Tanzanian Member of Parliament and also a person with Albinism saying:

surge-in-tanzania/1619907.html. Internet; Accessed 5 April 2013.

¹¹⁶ Paschal Durand, “Albino Killings in Sukumaland: Study on a Shifting Cultural Paradigm”; available from www.africamission-mafr.org in Articles on the African Actuality, No 115.

¹¹⁷ Ralph Tanner, “Ideology and the Killing of Albinos in Tanzania: A Study in Cultural Relativities.” in the Institute of Missiology. Radboud University 2010 (ed. R. Tanner et al.; Netherlands: Nijmegen, 2010), repr. In *Anthropologist*, vol. 12, Article No. 4, 229-236.

¹¹⁸ Miguel, Poverty and Witch Killing, 1153.

¹¹⁹ Vicky Ntetema on “The Majority of Recent Attacks.” In TUNAWEZA: Under the Same Sun – Quality Education: Key to Ending Atrocities (et al). September – November, 2012. Newsletter, Issue No.2, 18.

¹²⁰ Makulilo, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 6.

“There are “spotters” in charge of identifying where Albinos reside. Many of these spotters are particularly hard to detect because they themselves are family members of targeted Albinos.” There are also those who are in charge of actually carrying out the killings, and those responsible for transporting the body parts to the witch doctors.”¹²¹

This situation of the relatives being assigned to be responsible in arranging for the killings of their fellow family members who are Albinos was also stated by the informant Y. Y (who is an albino) shared that, “I have developed a tendency to fear of my own family because from what I have heard and observed from my fellow Albinos who have been killed and some of their relatives found to be responsible in arranging for the killings.”¹²² Y's idea can be compared to J's idea who stated that, “I can not call this country my home more, wherever I go, I am without peace. I am always in a tension thinking that perhaps my relatives or my close friends will also be robbed and arrange for my death.”¹²³ J insists her idea by sharing an example from one of her friends who was also an albino who was killed when coming from the church for choir practice. J shared that the fiancée of her friend the was assigned to be responsible in arranging for her friend murderer.¹²⁴

As it was also argued above, in Sukumaland as well witch doctors are assigned to be responsible for the killing of albinos. Dave-Odigie states that the witch doctors direct the perpetrators on how to go about the killings, operating as the heads of gangs with middle men that help them carry out the killings in a loosely organized form of criminal activity.¹²⁵ Ackley affirms Dave – Odigie's idea by asserting that, “Fisherman and the community of Lake Victoria ...fisherman who feel slighted by the failures of capitalism, turn to witch doctors who promise portions and charms made from albino body parts to fill a void and to bring riches.

¹²⁶

The killing of Albinos in Sukumaland, is concerned with some specific albinos body parts which are believed to have special impact depending on the use. Makulilo asserts that, “those who survive past infancy become commodities, with a full set of arms, legs, hair, genitals and blood potentially yielding \$30,000.”¹²⁷ He further adds that, “In almost all cases, the parts are chopped off while the victim is alive, in accordance with mystical belief that a live sacrifice is more potent.”¹²⁸ The same picture is displayed by Alum and his fellow

¹²¹ Alum (et al), *Hocus Pocus*, 11.

¹²² Interview with Y 14th July 2012.

¹²³ Interview with J 11th July 2012.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Dave-Odigie, “Albino Killings in Tanzania: Implications,” 5.

¹²⁶ Ackley, *The Fetishization of Albinos in Tanzania*, 34.

¹²⁷ Makulilo, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 11.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

that: “Many in the fishing industry believe that weaving the golden hair of an Albino into the fishing nets will attract more fish and result in a greater catch. It is also common practice to sprinkle the ground-up hair and bones of an Albino bones over the nets.”¹²⁹ They further add that, “In the mining industry, many seeks the bones and blood of Albinos for use in portions and that these portions are sprinkled over the mining sites in hopes of recovering valuable minerals and that sometimes these miners chose to place the blood of an Albino in an amulet that they will wear for life.”¹³⁰

In addition to that, the findings the killings are always done by a group of men. Ackley point this more clear that:-

“Witch doctors and their middlemen are represented as key actors in the narratives of albino killings. They are vital producers and mediators of the albino market...Witch doctors provide the commodity in order to satisfy the fishermen's fetishization of albino body parts, while middlemen are said to be hired as contractors by the witch doctors to perform the attacks on albinos and to extract specific body parts and organs necessary for the portions and charms witch doctors sell.”¹³¹

The findings also reveals that the killing of albinos are mostly done at night or when a targeted person is alone. Together with other events shown earlier, the following event which occurred in Sukumaland, shows an example on how the killings are being conducted:-

It was around midnight when the life of Mariam Kija Mbogo, a seven-months-old baby girl was shortened by four men whose faces were covered. Having carried the machetes in their hands, the four men invaded their house, broke it and entered inside. Kija, as they used to call her, was the only child with albinism. By that night, she was sleeping with her mother and her three sisters in the same room. After entering inside the house, the four men requested the mother to give *Zeruzeru* (a Swahili word for Albino) unless they would also kill the remaining children. The mother begged them not to kill her daughter. But one of the four men seized Kija from her hands. They put her at the corridor and slashed off her legs and hands and disappeared leaving the dead body behind.¹³²

Mariam's event can be compared to Majaliwa Ngoyelwa, a eleven year-old boy who was about to be killed in November 2011 by a group of young men who pursued him as he was going home to his village from school. Majaliwa escaped the death by running back to school where his teacher rescued him. The boy refused to go back home, and he is now being taken care by Under The Same Sun who took him to a boarding School in Mwanza region.¹³³

¹²⁹ Alum (et al), Hocus Pocus, 12

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ackley, The Fetishization of Albinos in Tanzania, 42-43.

¹³² Vicky Ntetema, “Maisha Yalivyofupishwa.” In TUNAWWEZA: Under the Same Sun – Elimu Bora ni Muhimu (et al). September – November, Toleo 2012, 20.

¹³³ Ntetema, “CWA- The Majority of the Killing Attacks,” TUNAWWEZA: Quality, 19.

3.4 Factors for the Killing of Albinos in Sukumaland

Since the practice of killing albinos took a wave in Sukumaland, there have been several researches done both nationally and internationally to investigate the root causes for this practice. Together with the findings in the field research, the following are said to be the reasons for the practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

3.4.1 Belief in Witch-craft

The field research revealed that the belief in witch-craft particularly from the indigenous people i.e. Sukuma, is the first and the foremost factor which plays a very big part to the practice of killing albinos in Sukumaland, Tanzania. Dave-Odigie is of the idea that, “Superstitious beliefs in the rural areas largely account for the killing of Albinos as the higher number of killings portrays.”¹³⁴ As it is my observation from the investigated root causes by researches done and from the interviews done, this factor of witchcraft can be divided into two categories i.e. witch-craft due to the indigenous socio-cultural belief and witch-craft due to the old traditional belief about a person with Albinism.

3.4.1.1 Indigenous Socio-Cultural Belief

Sukuma culture and tradition are said to be strong while deepened their roots in witchcraft belief.¹³⁵ According to Miguel, witchcraft beliefs are strong in ethnically Sukuma of western Tanzania and that a belief in witchcraft is rooted in the whole Sukuma system of knowledge and morality.¹³⁶ *The report from the events that had happened in Mwanza region because of the witchcraft belief* also declares this by presenting that, there are about 689 people who have been killed in Mwanza region in between 2002 and 2007 because of witchcraft belief. This figure is said to be equal to about 115 people each year which is equal to about 651 and 38 women and men respectively.¹³⁷ The same idea is further affirmed by Miguel who asserts that witch killing victims in Sukumaland are nearly all female (about 96%), with relatively in the village (about 98%) and ethnically Sukuma (about 96%).¹³⁸

Witchcraft or *bulogi* seems to be a very crucial thing for the entire life of a Sukuma person. This is due to the fact that witchcraft is said to be a root of the whole systems of

¹³⁴ Dave- Odigie, “The Killing of Albinos,” 5.

¹³⁵ Miguel, “Poverty and Witch Killing,” 1154.

¹³⁶ Miguel, “Poverty and Witch Killing,” 1154.

¹³⁷ A Report on “Kongamano kuhusu Juhudi za Pamoja Dhidi ya Mauaji katika Mkoa Wetu wa Mwanza,” held in the venue of BOT, Mwanza, 17th and 18th March, 2008, 7.

¹³⁸ Miguel, “Poverty and Witch Killing,” 1161.

beliefs in their society. Furthermore, witchcraft is said to have been implemented to their social life and that they have built up a folklore which they have kept it alive in many generations. In addition to that, it is said that it is almost impossible to find anyone in Sukuma society who does not believe in the existence of witch as one of the basic elements in his/her social life; that witchcraft is said to be a living reality than an abstract idea.¹³⁹ As it has also revealed in the previous chapter, their activeness on witchcraft matters have also made them to be well known today as experts in witchcraft in Sukumaland. It is said that a belief in witch-craft allows people to make sense of the seemingly arbitrary misfortunes that affect them, and pin blame on a particular person rather than on chance.¹⁴⁰

The experience of the informant S in Sukumaland who S, though S himself was not a Sukuma by origin, collaborates with the idea about Sukuma strong belief in witchcraft. As S shared, after his arrival in Sukumaland where he was transferred to, one of his children got a chest problem. According to S, the chest problem to his child was due to the change of weather. This situation came to be as a surprise to S when his friends who mostly were Sukuma by origin, interpreted that situation negatively. For them, his child was bewitched, therefore, they convinced him to find the person who brought problem to his child by simply visiting a witch doctor. As he shared that he was shocked because he was not used of doing that.¹⁴¹ This situation reveals a picture of how a life of a Sukuma is occupied of witchcraft ideas.

3.4.1.2 Old Traditional Belief about an Albino

The Swahili name of albino, *Zeruzeru*, has many names from most of the Tanzanian societies. In most of these societies the meaning and interpretation are not having good notion. As it was done in the former days on these albinos that they were being killed, even today the same interpretation is said to have been continuing and that its impact has been mostly negative. Most informants shares that it is very obviously that when someone hears about the word *Zeruzeru*, the first interpretation comes in his/her is that, that a person is abnormal or cursed or someone who has something which can bring something bad to the society or a ghost. This has also led them sometimes to have been given different names which are not theirs but which give bad impression. They further share that, the way the society treat them seems as if they are rejected them before they are born.

¹³⁹ Miguel, "Poverty and Witch Killing, 1166-1167

¹⁴⁰ Miguel, "Poverty and Witch Killing"1154.

¹⁴¹ Interview with 12th July 2012.

Informant Y who is an albino shares his experience how sometimes people unintentionally tend not to consider an albino as a normal person like other people with black skin, therefore you may hear them saying for example, there were three people and one albino. This informant is convinced that this practice of killing albinos in Sukumaland is a planned practice to eliminate them¹⁴²

Similar to that, informant G who is also an albino shares his experience that he was not considered for further education simply because he was an albino. Because of the nature of his skin, the society is aware that most albino die earlier because of the sensitivity of their skin as they normally suffer from skin cancer. So his family was convinced that, to consider him for further education was a wastage of time and money as well considering he was from a village and yet from a very poor family. As far as the killing of albinos is concerned, informant J is convinced that the killing of albinos has a purpose that is why the handling of such cases are taking longer and sometimes the killers are not identified or caught. For him, this motivates the killers to continue with their practice and attract others to engage in the killings. He is desperately saying that the practice is predominant and that it will also not end until all albinos have been killed.¹⁴³

In the line of the informant G, Chinenye P. Dave Odigie is of the same view that the belief in curses accounts largely for the killing of albinos in Tanzania because Tanzania herself is still largely steeped in traditional and superstitious beliefs despite the fact that many of her citizens adhere to the Christian and Islamic religious faith. With specific areas in Sukumaland, he cited Mwanza, Shinyanga and Tabora as an example and shared that the inhabitants of these regions are said to have been largely religious and adherents. The practice of killing albinos in Tanzania is a practice mostly steeped in witchcraft belief mostly done by Sukuma people. Together with other practice that is still happening in Tanzania, it is convincing that those practices are much related to the beliefs in witchcraft. to traditional, Islamic or Christian religions; but still most of them are said to have very rooted in superstitious beliefs i.e. they are also said to be notorious in the practice of killing albinos in Tanzania.¹⁴⁴

In addition to that, the investigation shows that there existed “a wrongful traditional belief as one said in many societies in Tanzania which in one way or another contributes to the sufferings that albinos face in Tanzania. Many societies believed that persons with

¹⁴² Interview with Y 14th July 2012.

¹⁴³ Interview with J 11th July 2012.

¹⁴⁴ Dave-Odigie, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 4.

albinism have been touched by the devil or cursed by god and that their birth is a bad omen. Because of that, many societies killed them when they were still babies. This practice is said to have been done mostly by the traditionalist pastoral communities like the Masai of northern Tanzania who also until today, are said to continue with this practice.¹⁴⁵

Similarly, another belief was about that a person with albinism does not die but simply disappears. Because of that, many societies in Tanzania were used to conduct a secret burial of an albino in order to prevent grave robbers from desecrating the deceased's grave. Because of that, albinos' burial events were treated quite different from other normal human being. In one way or another, these kinds of defining an albino created more attention to the entire society of Tanzania. Together with the belief of killing them so as one to get rich, today there are several beliefs which arose and continue to undermine albinos like the initiated belief that having a sexual intercourse with an albino cleanse one's health especially from HIV/AIDS and even bring good fortune. Because of this, albinos in Tanzania today are also being raped.

Therefore, the definition of who is an albino among Tanzanian societies plays a very big impact to the whole life of an albino in Tanzania today. The informant P who is also an albino shared his experience how his society normal call them as “*Enyamagoye* or *Omuniyamagoye*”¹⁴⁶ means something like “evil spirit.” In Swahili the name used is *Zeruzeru* which has almost similar translation like someone abnormal or who lack something to be full human. For such kind of societies it is easy for an albino to be mistreated. In addition to that, the informant Y shared his experience from what he has seen some women who have given birth to an albino child that they sometimes be accused that they have committed adultery to the evil devil particularly when the two parents are black in colour.¹⁴⁷ Hence, the former idea of killing them similar to rescue the society from curse or evils similar to the present idea of killing them to rescue the entire society from being poor for what is needed is being rich.

3.4.2 Poverty and Illiteracy

As far as Mwanza region is concerned, Dave -Odigie presents that, “Mwanza suffers extremely high rates of both poverty and illiteracy, with the people being rooted in traditional beliefs and more inclined to defer to the authority of witch-.doctors in explaining the sources

¹⁴⁵ Rashda Mgya (Ed.), What is Albinism in Understanding Albinism. Issue.No.1, May, 2012, 3.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with P 17th July 2012.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Y 14th July 2012.

of their hardships or misfortunes in their businesses.”¹⁴⁸ Poverty is another second major reason which is said to be the root cause for this ongoing practice of Killing albinos in Sukumaland, Tanzania. Regarding that Tanzania is known to be among the poor countries in Africa, the issue of poverty in this country is said to be a rural phenomenon. For example, it is said that about 85 per cent of the country's poor people live in rural areas and that they rely on agriculture as their main source of income and livelihood.¹⁴⁹ Mwanza, which is the area of study is said to have consisted of a largely rural region with little or no contact with the more modernization urban centres of the country. This situation is further said to have made this region to extremely suffered high rates of poverty as well as illiteracy and with most of her people being rooted in traditional beliefs which leads them to depend much on witch doctors to explain the source of their misfortunes in businesses when occur.¹⁵⁰

As it was shared by most informants, such kind of environment is where most albino killing practices are reported to occur. Likewise in Sukumaland, it is said that in running life most people depend on agriculture and small businesses like chewing-gum and cigarettes in the market place. In addition to that, very few people in this land are said to have little concern on matters about education.¹⁵¹ Depending on the weather in this part of Tanzania that it have a low and intermittent rainfall and predominant lateritic soils of no great fertility,¹⁵² the dwellers of Sukumaland particularly those who have engaged themselves in agricultural activities, have been experiencing challenges in cultivating the land and sometimes get low harvest, hence led them to have suffered from starvation and failures in running their businesses. This situation of an income shock is said to be the channel for the murders which are going on in rural area of Sukumaland like the killing of albinos.¹⁵³

In addition to that, many informants also shared that some Sukuma also engage themselves in fishing and mining activities as an alternative to business and agricultural activities. Sukumaland which is said to have been rich in minerals such as Diamond found in Mwadui mining and Gold found in Geita, Buzwagi, Kahama, Bulyanhulu and Tulawaka mines; this kind of project is said to have some connection to the practice of killing albinos in Sukumaland. As these informants shared, there are some cases of killing albinos which happened and people responsible were caught to have some albino body parts and they

¹⁴⁸ Dave- Odigie, “The Killing of Albinos,” 5.

¹⁴⁹ IFAD, “Rural Poverty in Tanzania.” Available from <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/country/home/tags/tanzania>,; Internet; accessed 7 April 2013.

¹⁵⁰ Dave-Odigie, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 5.

¹⁵¹ Wijsen, *There is Only One God*, 58.

¹⁵² Tanner, “Ideology and the Killing,” 229.

¹⁵³ Miguel, “Poverty and Witch Killing,” 1153.

confessed their intention to use them in the mines projects because they believed that the bones of an albino attract or diamond or gold in mines. Furthermore, as one reported the “skin and flesh” of an albino are always being dried out and set into amulets, and the bones being grounded down into a powder form; that the artisanal miners in the gold and diamond fields found in the south of Lake Victoria, are the main buyers of them. Similarly, the other body parts of an albino like hair is said to have been attracting fish in large quantity for those who are fishers¹⁵⁴ and that legs and feet said to have kept the business continue.¹⁵⁵ This is why these informants are convinced that the mines activities are also the main gate door for the practice of killing albinos particularly in Sukumaland. Because people responsible, aim at achieving higher success through getting quick money by the use of albino body parts. This situation in one way or another shows a sign of hunger.

Some researches done concerning killing of albinos in Sukumaland also have revealed that poverty is also one of the causes for this practice in Sukumaland .According to Edward Miguel in relating the issue of human killing in general which has been happening in Sukumaland, behind it there is an issue of income shock.¹⁵⁶

On the other hand, illiteracy is mentioned to be one of the factors which also contribute to the ongoing practice of killing albinos in Sukumaland. Some informants shared that Sukuma people particularly those in the rural areas mostly do not value the issue of education. As it is their experience in Sukumaland, a number of youth who are attending the primary education is higher than those who continue with further studies after the basic knowledge of primary education. As they are convinced, perhaps that is because of the education policy that have been implanted by the government of Tanzania that every child who have reached the age of going to school i.e. from the age between six to eight years has to attend school irrespective of him/her being coming from a rich or poor family; in this case primary education have been set free for every Tanzanian. Frans Wijssen in line of these informants, he presented clear the situation of education matters in Sukuma society. According to his research, about 50% of the Sukuma society is under 15 years of age and that the greater part of youth gets primary education, but those who join for post-primary education are very low about 10% only and that according to his informant, most of them are damned to return to the fields after primary education.¹⁵⁷ For him, this is a frustrating issue.

¹⁵⁴ Durand, “Albino Killings in Sukumaland,”8.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 10.

¹⁵⁶ Miguel, “Poverty and Witch Killing,” 1154.

¹⁵⁷ Wijssen, There is Only One God, 57.

Therefore, the informants see this gap that it leads to the consequence like the killing of Albinos because they see that education leads to liberation in many things including wrong traditional belief.

3.4.3 Fear of Death

Fear of death is another factor which was mentioned by some informants to be the factor which contributes to the continuation of the killing of albinos in Sukumaland. A case of one informant from Mwanza as presented by Alexander and his fellows displays a picture of people get fear in revealing the murderers of Albinos. The group present that:

Clarence Kipobota, a lawyer working with the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) and a representative of Tanzania Albino Society (TAS) from Mwanza, once they had an informant who has a specific information about individuals trading in Albino body parts in Mwanza. Though they reported to the Mwanza police, but no action was taken. Thereafter, the individuals went to the LHRC office in Mwanza with his intention to reveal the gold miners whom he claimed to know them that they are involved in the trafficking of Albino body parts. The LHRC contacted the Ministry of Home Affairs in Dar Es Salaam (a capital city of Tanzania), where the LHRC and the informant were assigned to contact the police in Dar Es Salaam for further steps. The police in Dar Es Salaam were provided with specific actionable information. Surprisingly, as this group reports, nobody from the police in Dar Es Salaam has travelled to Mwanza to investigate the killings further.¹⁵⁸

A case of Vicky Ntetema as reported by Makulilo is also in line supporting what has been share by Alexander and his group. According to Makulilo, “Vicky Ntetema after exposing Tanzania’s witchdoctors and their involvement in Albino killings is now hiding after receiving threats.¹⁵⁹ this idea was shared by many informants, some people have developed some kind of fear which have led them to be silent especially when they are in a position of being able to identify the killers when the killings occur. According to these informants, the way many murder cases have been handled out by the government does not assure security for the one who will identify the killers. According to them the murderers are found to have been released without any trial. In addition to that, there are also many cases where the murderers could not be either identified at all. As they see, this situation is what brings fear that the life of someone who will tend to engage on this matter will also be in danger.

However, the investigation reveals that, the government is being blamed by most of her members because of not being active in reacting to such kind of matters particularly those which relate to belief in witchcraft by simply relying that the government does not agree in

¹⁵⁸ Alum, (et al), Hocus Pocus, 23-24.

¹⁵⁹ Makulilo, “Albino Killings in Tanzania,” 21.

witchcraft matters. Vick Ntetema in her article, “*Has Justice been done*” presented that until 2012, there were 71 documented killing murders, 28 attempted murders and 13 grave robberies and that out of the total figure i.e. 112, only 10 cases were prosecuted.¹⁶⁰

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented and discussed into the whole practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. The findings signify that the practice of the killing of Albinos is still at stake in Sukumaland as well as to the whole country of Tanzania and her neighbouring countries. In Tanzania, Sukumaland is a leading area in this practice with her inhabitants Sukuma people being the leading in this practice by killing or organising the killings. The main causes for this practice in Sukumaland seem to be extreme poverty and illiteracy which is further deeply inserted under the umbrella of Sukuma traditional belief. In the process of eradicating this problem in Sukumaland, the church should also consider finding the solution to the problem of poverty and illiteracy among the Sukuma people.

In addition to that, the practice of the killing of albinos in Sukumaland is much associated with the Sukuma traditional belief. It is seen to be a tradition among the Sukuma that irrespective of education or intellect, their behaviour and patterns of survival which is part of their inherited knowledge, have been found to be very strong. Their tendency of visiting the diviners or traditional healers or witch doctors when they have problems is a good example.

¹⁶⁰ Ntetema, Quality Education: Key, 20.

Chapter Four

THE CHURCH RESPONSE TO THE KILLING OF ALBINOS IN SUKUMALAND

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the mission strategies used by the church in encountering the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. The main source for the materials in this chapter will be the findings from the informants that were achieved in the field and the advocacy department manual.

4.2 Evangelism

The church in Sukumaland being one of the affected tools in Sukumaland from the killing of Albinos, she has a planned strategies that she is using in encountering the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. As it was shared by the informant M who is working at the head office of the church as the assistant to the Bishop, evangelism is the major mission approach used by the church since this problem persisted in Sukumaland. According to this informant, evangelism is done through preaching and teaching of the Word of God to all people in Sukumaland.¹⁶¹ The informant Y who is also working at the church as a parish pastor states that, the work of preaching and teaching of the Word of God have been emphasised mostly by the church since the problem of the killing of Albinos arose in the area. Y adds that, there have been close follow-up from the church leadership to make sure that every minister at all levels of the church is implementing effectively and efficiently that work of preaching and teaching of the Word of God.¹⁶²

According to M, the work of preaching of the Word of God is done to non- Christians. M also adds that, in doing that the church aims at making sure that the non-Christians are also reached by the Gospel. M shares his experience from some of the cases he attended on the matters about the killing of Albinos that most of those who have been engaging mostly to this practice are non-Christians. M further referred to the Witchdoctors that are the ones who have initiated the idea of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. Therefore, M concluded that, the

¹⁶¹ Interview with M 17th June 2012.

¹⁶² Interview with Y 14th July 2012.

customers of these witchdoctors in this practice have been found to be followers of their religion., that is Sukuma Traditional religion. Therefore, the informant M insisted that the strategy of emphasizing preaching of the Word of God is to make sure that these non-Christian are also exposed to the Word of God and that they get to know its teachings which emphasises about caring and loving of one another.¹⁶³

On the other hand, the informant M also shared that the work of teaching of the Word of God is done to the church members. M further adds that in teaching of the Word of God to the church members, the church intends to strengthen their faith so that they don't get easily lost by the erupted idea of the killing of Albinos. M further shares some few cases where Christians were also found to engage in this practice of the killing of Albinos. Thus, M emphasised that the teaching of the Word of God not only that it will lead them not to engage in the killings, but also church members will be strengthened and be able to also share the message of the Gospel to others, hence the killing events will be reduced.¹⁶⁴ The informant Y who is an Albino and yet one of the church ministers in the church also shares his experience that there are many seminars about the Word of God that he is working on implementing them in his parish. According to Y, he has been implementing those seminars in the normal church schedule, that is through Bible study programmes, fellowships and prayer group meetings which normally are mostly done in the week days.¹⁶⁵

In line with the informant Y, most informants from the two groups of youth and women respectively, also shared their experience that they have been attending several seminars in the church where the emphasis on the teaching of the Word of God were mostly done. Some added saying that they participated in the open air meetings, Sunday preachings, fellowship and Bible study gatherings, and social group meetings where the teaching of the Word of God was much done. These informants further shared that, they also attended several special programmes which were prepared by the church like church camping and riots that were short term planned aimed at announcing to the public to have also joined in the fight against the practice of killing albinos.¹⁶⁶ As it is M's idea, by doing so, the church aimed at bringing awareness to her members and sensitizing the entire community to participate fully in all strategies that the church has planned in encountering this problem. M concludes that, as the church intends to address the issue to the entire society through these programmes, M

¹⁶³ Interview with M17th June 2012.

¹⁶⁴ Interview with M17th June 2012.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Y 14th July 2012.

¹⁶⁶ Interview with the group of youth and women on 17th July 2012.

believed that, the implementation of these strategies leads to the elimination of the practice of killing albinos.¹⁶⁷

The approach shared by the informants above is in a way justified by Nile who defined evangelism as a “conversion to discipleship” in holistic witness in the World. Nile further adds that evangelism aims at bringing back of the lost to their place in the economy of God, that is, the recovery of wholeness as he referred from the Gospel of Jn 3: 16.¹⁶⁸ In line with Nile's idea, as it is also stated by the formers informants, many informants also declared that after the problem of killing albinos arose in Sukumaland, the church prioritised and emphasised more on the preaching and teaching of the Word of God. From what is my perception from the informants, the church being aware of how largely Sukumaland is inhabited by traditionalists, she believes that conversion to the faith could help in combating all beliefs which accompany the Albino killings. It is the conviction of the church that those people who have been engaging in these killings could stop after knowing the truth of God's love through the Gospel.

In regard to that, the constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania states that every person has the right to live and to the protection of his/her life by the society in accordance with the law.¹⁶⁹ From this statement it is clear that every person in Tanzania including albinos are human being like other human being despite of their appearance. Through that constitution they also deserve to be protected by the government as well as the whole society of Tanzania at large. In other word, those who kill albinos violate this article. In considering that, the church in Sukumaland did not only concentrate on teaching the Word of God only, but also according to the research it is revealed that she has been engaging herself on empowering her people on issues about the right of human to live.

However, this mission strategy seems to be a major mission approach that the church in Sukumaland has been using, not only in encountering this problem of the killing of Albino, but also to the whole process of sharing the Good News to the entire society of Sukumaland. Therefore, the research shows that, evangelism approach came into use in 1960's when the Lutheran mission work was incepted in the Sukumaland. In addition to that, the research also shows that this evangelism approach was later adapted by the Lutheran church in Sukumaland area when she was formerly established in 1989.

¹⁶⁷Interview with M 17th June 2012.

¹⁶⁸ Niles, D. T, “Evangelism – The Church's way of Life,” in *Classic Texts in Mission & World Christianity: A Reader's Companion*, ed. Norman E. Thomas (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 156-157.

¹⁶⁹ “The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania” in <http://www.judiciary.go.tz/downloads/constitution.pdf>, accessed on 23rd March, 2013.

4.3 Education

Beside preaching and teaching of the Word of God, the church in Sukumaland is also empowering her people in all issues that are concerned about the whole practice of killing Albinos which she also uses as a strategy in encountering the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. As it was shared by the informants in a group of women, they are attending several seminars on human right issues in which they are taught and given some instruction on how to handle such matters like that of the killing of albinos when they appear. The informant J as one of the members from this group, shared her experience that she once was selected to represent other women from her local church to attend a seminar in the regional office of Mwanza. J further shares that from that seminar, she was taught on how to face the challenge that are arose because of the problem of killing Albinos. J also shared her task which she given by her parish pastor to share what she has learnt to her fellow women.¹⁷⁰

The informants N also shared his experience in tackling some of the issues that were are brought to him from among his church members who once encountered this problem ogf killing Albinos. As it is his experience, N shares that since this problem started in Sukumaland, he arranged for a session of debate and discussion specific on all issues about how to solve the problem of killing Albinos. As N shares, sometimes he comes across tough questions which he cannot answer, therefore he normally invites professional people on that matter such as human rights, advocacy and family laws who normally come and share the knowledge to his members.¹⁷¹

In line with the informant N above, the informant M also adds that the head office of the church is still making follow up to make sure that skilled people who are also well equipped on the areas on human rights and advocacy are being invited to provide the knowledge to whole church leadership starting from the church top management level to the sub-parish levels depending on the need from each group. M further shared about the meetings that were already conducted in which the issues on human right and advocacy was among the agendas for discussion. M further insists that, the church applies that method, believing that by equipping her members such matters, they will be able fight from that problem from different angles.¹⁷²

Similarly, one of the informants who is among the skilled people who have been

¹⁷⁰ Interview with J 11th July 2012.

¹⁷¹ Interview with N 18th July 2012.

¹⁷² Interview with M 17th June 2012.

invited by the church for such kind of teachings mentioned above he shared that, “they are so much encouraged to see that the church is also joining their team through making sure that her people are also being empowered in fighting against such kind of practice.” As he further commented, “they themselves are also playing their part to make sure that what is needed by the church to her people is being accomplished as expected.”¹⁷³

4.4 Diakonia Services

The church in Sukumaland also uses diakonia as also the strategy in encountering the problem of killing Albinos since it arose in the area. As it was shared by the informant in a group of youth, through church riots and campaign against the killing of Albinos, the church have been inviting people in the church to contribute in taking care for the victims like food, clothes and equipments for domestic use. The informant P who is a victim from the killing of albinos shared his experience that one of the church members is paying for his school requirements including the school fees for his boarding school where he was shifter after he survived from the attack.¹⁷⁴

The informant N is also in the idea that in his church, they have establish a special fund where they normally contribute money and materials things for taking for the victims of the killing of Albinos whoa are among their village. N further insists that, to some cases they normally go physically to the family responsible and discuss together with the family on how to help the children who are separated from their families because of this problem. As it was further shared by the informant N, this activity of fund raising for the victims of albinism, is always done when the church has a special occasion like in the women's prayer day, Sunday school services, youth services and diakonia offerings¹⁷⁵

In regard to that, one member from one of the affected families shared that the has experienced much comfort from the church side after his family lost their daughter who was killed because she was an albino. He further shared that there has been a number of church members who have been visiting his family several times for praying and sharing together the Word of God. He also shared that his family received some building materials after their house was broken and some parts being destroyed when the invaders invaded their house for the purpose of killing his daughter.¹⁷⁶ Similar to that, another informant who is also from one

¹⁷³ Interview with S 29th July 2012.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with P 17th July 2012.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with N 18th July 2012.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with X 22th July 2012.

of the affected families shared that she is still receiving a number of guests from the church who normally visit her for prayers after the killing of her husband who was an albino. She further stated that one of her children who is also an albino was taken to the boarding school by the help from the church.¹⁷⁷

Similarly, one informant who is a care taker from one of the camps for albino children declared that they have been receiving a number of guests and some help from different groups of people. According to her, groups of people like women, school children and others have sometimes visited them and brought some food, clothes, school needs, special oil for the skin of albinos to avoid sun burn and that some of those groups had spent time with kids, praying and sharing together the word of God, stories etc.¹⁷⁸ This was also part of my experience when together with my colleague, we visited one of the Albino camps where we spent a time together by sharing stories, singing, sharing the Word of God and eating etc.

Despite, the mentioned strategies above that were used by the church in addressing the issue of killing albinos in Sukumaland, the practice of killing albinos was said to have been still done. According to some informants, this situation made the church to have formulated another strategy that was specific focusing on human rights issues, thus the advocacy department was established in the church.

4.5 The Advocacy Department

The informant A shared that, the advocacy department was established in the year 2008 by the entire Lutheran church of Tanzania specific to deal with issues about human rights including the issue of killing albinos. This means, the head office of this department is at the ELCT- headquarters in Arusha region. As it was further shared by this informant, the purpose for this department as this informant argued, was due to the ongoing killings and oppressive practices which seemed to be prevailing in many parts of Tanzania because of traditional beliefs, witchcraft, customs etc. Among these issues are the issue of albino killing, old women whole are alleged witches which are mostly done in Sukumaland, issues on women violence, unjustly treaties and marriage laws. Therefore, the ELCT aimed at addressing and empowering her people and the entire society of Tanzania on such kind of issues throughout her twenty dioceses.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Z 12th July 2012.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with N 18th July 2012.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with A18th July 2012. K is one of the staff works at the ELCT head office- under advocacy department.

As far as the Sukumaland is concerned, the informant B shared that the advocacy department was introduced to the church in Sukumaland in the year 2011 and that it officially started working in 2012 whereby the implementation is done under women and children directorate. As it was shared by the former informant, this informant also added that the purpose of establishing this department is to address issues on advocacy and liberate the unjustly treated, the poor and the oppressed.¹⁸⁰ Generally, according to the informant B, the guideline prepared to be followed in implementing the mentioned activities was based on Lk 4: 16-21 that is, it seeks to sensitize all people of Tanzania to do what is just among each other regardless of gender, age, race and colour.¹⁸¹

As it was further shared by informant A, in fulfilling her planned activities as stated above, the ELCT- advocacy desk is further said to have prepared a guideline document which was officially inaugurated on 10th June 2011. According to this informant, this guideline document has all the directives concerning the activities that the advocacy desk is planning to do. He further informs that this guideline was first used by church in the Sukumaland in the year 2012 together with the formation of a team of about fourteen members who altogether were first given a seminar on the use of the guideline.¹⁸²

In regard to that, one of the members from this team asserts that, there are several phases which will be followed as the process of implementing this guideline. According to this informant, the first phase is already done, that is the formation of a team which is termed as “Training of Trainers” (TOTs) which consists of various church leaders from different areas of Sukumaland like teachers from church owned schools, pastors, head of departments, evangelists, lay people who works in the church etc. The second phase as this informant shared, which is said to be done as well, was to create awareness on the use of the guideline, therefore the TOTs were given a seminar on that. The third stage as the informant further asserts, is for the TOTs to share that guideline to some groups of people whom they serve and work together. This is also said to be already done as the informant A said.¹⁸³

In addition to that, the informant A who is also one of the TOTs members shared that, they attended another seminar from 7th to 12th of April, 2013 where it was a debriefing and sharing of experience from what every TOTs member has achieved in the field while implementing the third stage, that is sharing the guideline to some groups of people. As A

¹⁸⁰ Interview with B 5th July 2012. B is one of the staffs works at the ELVD head office- also dealing with issues on advocacy.

¹⁸¹ Interview with A 18th July 2012.

¹⁸² Interview with A 18th July 2012.

¹⁸³ Interview with A 18th July 2012.

further mentioned, this process seems to be successful. According to M's observation, about eighty percent of the result expected was achieved. As A concluded, the same procedure of sharing the guideline to more people is currently going on and that the emphasis is to the TOTs to continue motivating the already shared groups and emphasize them to further share that guideline to more people until to the family level.¹⁸⁴

4.6 Conclusion

The findings from the interview shows that the church as one of the institutions serving among the Sukuma society did not keep quite since the beginning of Albino killings tragedy in the area. As it is shown from the interviews presented in this chapter, evangelism is a major strategy which the church is using in encountering this problem. The implementation was and is through sharing of the word of God to the entire society of Sukumaland, empowering her people with different skills like human rights etc. and also through providing diakonia services to those who in one way or another, were affected by this practice.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with A 11th April 2013.

ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the response of the church to the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. This chapter analyses and discusses the mission approaches used by the church and proposed by the informants in encountering the killing of Albinos. For the purpose of analysing systematically, I have divided this chapter into three main sections. Section one (5.2) consists of the description and analysis of the mission approaches used by the church in encountering this problem. Section two (5.3) consists of the description and analysis of the proposed mission approaches by the informants. Section three (5.4) consists of a theological analysis and reflection of the mission approaches discussed in section one and two.

5.2 Description and Analysis of the Mission Approaches used by the Church in Encountering the Killing of Albinos in Sukumaland

5.2.1 Teaching and Preaching

In chapter 4.1, it was found out that the church in Sukumaland uses what she calls evangelism, as a major mission approach in encountering the practice of the killing of Albinos. In implementing this approach on the specific case of the killing of Albinos, the emphasis is on the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. These activities of teaching and preaching of the Word of God are directed to both, church members and non-church members respectively who dwell in the Sukumaland.

As far as the non-church members are concerned, the church in Sukumaland has emphasised the preaching of the Word of God. The church has arranged several open air meetings in Sukumaland in order to give people knowledge of the Bible and its main message. The church believe that the preaching of the Word of God to non- Christian members will give them the knowledge about God's love and hence a conversion to Christianity. It is further believed that after the conversion they will live according to the

word of God; showing love to each other and to all human beings. The church believes that the knowledge of the Bible will lead them to the change of their behaviour; hence they will also turn away from their evil and immoral deeds including the killing of Albinos. Therefore, it can be argued that by its practice of teaching and preaching, the church in one hand helps in fostering the discouragement of evil deeds among the people including the practice of the killing of Albinos, and on the other hand, to influence and encourage observance of good deeds among new converts. Through this approach, the church is playing a positive role in ending the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

In directing the teachings of the Word of God to the *church members*, the church in Sukumaland intends to strengthen the spiritual life of her members so that they may not be persuaded by the prevailing idea of the killing of Albinos that has spread in all parts of Sukumaland. Based on the Scripture, the church emphasizes that every human being is created in God's image; therefore every person is to be treated with equal respect by the whole society. The church emphasizes and encourages her members to continue loving one another, regardless of colour, gender, race and appearance. For the purpose of fulfilling that task, the church is conducting several seminars on the Word of God as guidance to her members against the killing of Albinos. In this way, the church plays a part in discouraging the ongoing practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. Further, she also contributes to a process of spiritual empowerment of her members by aiming at strengthening her members to stand firm in their faith and be able to encounter the practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

The church's activity of empowering her members spiritually seems to have gone together with the activity of empowering them in secular matters. As it is revealed in 4.1, the church in Sukumaland is also conducting seminars to her church members on issues about human right, advocacy, family laws and economics. Depending on the need from parish to parish, the church has invited qualified people from outside the church to come and share their knowledge to the church members. The aim of empowering her members in secular matters has been to create awareness, to sensitize and mobilize them so that they may be able not only to stop engaging in the practice of the killing of Albinos, but also may be able to address the issue to the society at large and help the society to overcome that practice.

5.2.2 Diakonia Work

Chapter 4.2.1 revealed that another important approach in the church's encounter with the

killing and maiming of Albinos is a diakonia work. The church in Sukumaland is engaged in providing diakonia services as another strategy in encountering the killing of Albinos. Diakonia services have been provided by the church to those people who happened to be in need after they became victims of the injury and killing of Albinos. Depending on how urgent the victim is in need, the church has intervened and provided for specific basic needs like food, clothes and shelters. In some cases the church has visited the camps for Children With Albinism (CWA). During these visits the church has provided some facilities like school materials, domestic use facilities, food and clothes.

Apart from that, through different church groups there have been some visits to the affected families from the maiming killing of Albinos. Depending on the situation of those affected family visited, the church has mobilized her members to contribute for the help needed by the affected families. The church has provided building materials for those families whose houses were destroyed during the attack process. In performing that, the church in Sukumaland believes that the responsible victims of the killing of Albinos will settle and continue to enjoy life. In this way, the church contributes to sustain the life of Albinos and affected families due the killings of Albinos in Sukumaland.

5.2.3 Advocacy Department

Furthermore, the activity of empowering the church members in secular matters seems to be of great importance to the church in Sukumaland. The church has introduced the advocacy department which is dealing with matters concerning human dignity, such as the issue of the killing of Albinos, violence in the society, gender issues, injustices etc. Through this department, the church has also managed to come up with a guiding manual that has all the procedures which could be followed by the church members in dealing with the above issues. As the initial stage in implementing this newly formed manual, through the advocacy department; the church has conducted seminars to both church members (including church leaders) and leaders from other institutions who in one way or another are working in serving the community of Sukumaland. Sukuma traditional healers have been part of this group.

Teachings from this guiding manual is on helping the community to participate in addressing issues pertaining human dignity to the whole society of Sukumaland and also be able to direct the entire society on how to solve conflicts which relate human dignity issues. The issue of the killing of Albinos is one of the prevailing situations in Sukumaland today. The guiding manual has also incorporated a part about the killing of Albinos. There are

several procedures indicated in that guiding manual which are specific on how to deal with all issues about the killing of Albinos. These procedures focus on sensitizing the society to speak against evil deeds which are done to Albinos.

Apart from the teaching to the church members on the use of this guiding manual, there are seminars which are going on by which Sukuma traditional healers are pointed out to be involved in Killings of Albinos. This shows that the church through advocacy department, not only empowers Sukumaland dwellers in tackling the issues on Albinos, but also brings the church and Sukuma traditional healers together for mutual understanding on the killings of Albinos. The two groups together with other community leaders participate in discouraging the maiming or killing of Albinos and also working on finding the solution to end this emerged behaviour. Such collaboration plays a role in the reduction and ending of the killing of Albinos.

5.3 Description and Analysis of the Proposed Mission Approaches by the Informants in Encountering the Killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

5.3.1 Mission through Dialogue

Y¹⁸⁵ is of the idea that, “In wiping out this problem, the church should focus further than teaching and preaching of the Word of God”. Y went further insisting that, “The church in Sukumaland has to consider a mission strategy that will bring the two parts together, that is the church leaders and the Sukuma traditional healers”.¹⁸⁶ As Y is also convinced, “This way of meeting to discuss the whole issue about the killing of Albinos, might have led to the end of this practice in Sukumaland”.¹⁸⁷ By saying so, Y is in a way insisting for a room of the church in Sukumaland to have a dialogue with Sukuma traditional healers. The same idea for the two parts to meet for discussion and finding the solution together on this problem was also stated by the two groups which I conducted discussions with, which are women and youth groups from the church. Most of the members from these groups were convinced that a room for the church to meet the Sukuma traditional healers can bring a solution to this problem.

The same idea is also presented by one of the Sukuma traditional healers who is in a way blaming the church for not calling them for the discussion on this issue of the killing of

¹⁸⁵ Y is an Albino and one of the church leaders in Sukumaland.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Y 8th July, 2012

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

Albinos. As T argues, “I always here the church announcing publically that we are the one's responsible in this practice, but no one who once came to me for discussion on this matter”.¹⁸⁸ This statement in one way or another reveals a need for the further step to be considered by the church in Sukumaland in her struggles of eliminating the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. As it is also recommended by the former informant, the meeting between the two parts might be a way forward to the solution to this practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

5.3.2 *Evangelism Approach*

N is convinced that the killing of Albinos will be ended if at all the church in Sukumaland will continue to implement evangelism mission approach but in a more different approach. N argues, “The strategy that will consider a house to house evangelism will be a best way of ending this practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.”¹⁸⁹ N is convinced that this approach will enable the church to have a wider room of meeting the outsiders specifically on the killings of Albinos. N adds that, this method will provide an opportunity for both Christians and non-Christians not only to meet, but also to be warned by the Gospel. According to her, this way will make those who have been engaging or who are planning to engage themselves in the killings of Albinos will in one way or another change their ideas after being touched by the Gospel. N finally concludes that, this plan can be concluded by an open air meeting.¹⁹⁰

The above N's idea can be compared to what is shared by M who insists that more emphasis should be given to the approach of home based evangelism. In insisting his idea M shares is experience that:

“Being one of the church elders in my church and the chairman in my *Jumuiya*,¹⁹¹ I once made a plan to do evangelism to one Sukuma traditional healer who was one of the members of our village. I started making friendship with him by visiting and sharing to each the funny things like watching of the football matches etc. Thereafter, I started inviting him to some of my family's ceremonies like confirmation of my

¹⁸⁸ Interview with T 17th July 2012.

¹⁸⁹ Interview with N 18th July 2012.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ *Jumuiya* is a Swahili word means community. *Jumuiya* are the local groups formed by the church by following the villages that are located in her geographical boundaries. *Jumuiya* are also considered as one of the mission approaches for the church to meet people who are found in those villages but they do not belong to the Christian community. Normally church elders and the church members found in that area are being empowered to be able to do the internal evangelism by making prayers and Bible study in rotation from house to house. Also, the church normally emphasizes and encourages them to widen the room of evangelism to other people in the society who are not church members by first being concerned with their life and showing compassion and take responsibility to their problems and sufferings

children. He also did the same to me. Sometimes, I supported him financially to some events he had like when one of his daughters got married. By doing so, our friendship was strengthened and slowly I started sharing the Word of God to him and his family until one day when he finally decided to be baptised. Together with his family they became Christians. Today his family is one of the best church members”.¹⁹²

5.4 Theological Analysis and Reflection on the Implemented and Proposed Mission Approaches in Encountering the Killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

The Lutheran World Federation documents on Mission in Context and Diakonia in Context will be used as bases for the theological analysis and reflection on the implemented and proposed mission approaches by the informants in encountering the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. The church and the proposed mission approaches by the informants will be discussed and assessed in the light of the mission approaches recommended by the LWF documents depending on how they fit according to the context of the killing of Albinos. Therefore, the point of departure will be from the approaches recommended by these documents depending on the situation which was not done by the church in Sukumaland in encountering the problem of the killing of Albinos. Those approaches will be later considered as my recommended approaches in chapter six.

The early emphasis given by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) on the whole process of doing mission work is that the church has to consider using a holistic mission in doing mission work. This use of a holistic mission is also considered as a part of Lutheran identity.¹⁹³ The LWF document has further developed that holistic mission into three major dimensions that is, empowerment, transformation and reconciliation. These three dimensions are said to have reflected in God's mission as creator, redeemer and sanctifier. Furthermore, their Missiological understanding are said to have based on the threefold way of Christ: the way of incarnation, the way of the cross and the way of the resurrection. Therefore, the three dimensions are assumed to have permeated all the endeavours such as proclamation, service, advocacy for justice, interfaith dialogue and care of creation.¹⁹⁴

5.4.1 Empowerment

Empowerment is said to have reflects on the words of Jesus that, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witness ...to the end of

¹⁹² Interview with S 16th July 2012.

¹⁹³ Jack Messenger (et al), Mission in Context: Transformation, Reconciliation and Empowerment. (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation ,2004), 5.

¹⁹⁴ Jack, Mission in Context, 32.

the earth". The LWF document defines empowerment as primarily deal with God sharing power (dynamics) with people for participation in God's mission. God Himself through the Holy Spirit is empowering His people (church) to be able to participate in His ministry, hence holistic ministry. Through different spiritual gifts that the church members have, the church is being enabled to perform the Holistic ministry. In empowerment, the church members are also being emphasised to love each other and also to share that love of God to others. Therefore, it emphasises on restoring the relationship between God and human being and also between human being and human being, hence it is an aspect of reconciliation. Thus, empowerment leads to a mutual up-building and encouragement.¹⁹⁵

Empowerment is also said to have not been an activity that is concerned about church members alone, but also it can be extended to the entire society at large where the church serves. Through the church services and diakonia ministries, the church sometimes provides a help for the immediate needs of people in distress such as refugees, displaced persons, victims of natural disasters etc. The church interventions and struggles to such kind of situations and let the concerned people relax and settle and continue to enjoy life regardless of their origin and creed, is also considered to be an activity of empowerment. Such kind of services provided by the church which are sometimes materially, socially, economically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually all are termed as a charity ministry. In other words, can be termed as the short term diaconal services; they are done after the sudden need has occurred depending on how the problem erupted.¹⁹⁶

Based on my findings described in ch 4, and the analysis in ch 5.2 and 5.3, I would like to argue that the church's approach can be regarded as an attempt to empower the Sukumaland society in encountering the problem of the killing of Albinos. Depending on the findings in 4.1, 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, it is evidently revealed that the church in Sukumaland considers empowerment as a major mission approach in encountering the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. This is seen from the fact that the church in Sukumaland is engaged mostly in the activities such as empowering her members spiritually by emphasizing the teachings of the Word of God, and also mentally, by conducting several seminars on secular education to the topics that are much connected to the whole practice of the killing of Albinos. In addition to that, the church concentrates on sharing the Word of God to the outsiders (non-church members). Diakonia services to the victims who are both church members and non-church members is also part of the strategy that the church in Sukumaland uses in encountering the

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 35-36.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 36.

practice of the killing of Albinos.

As it is also observed from the findings, the activity of empowering the church members spiritually is done by the church to emphasise the teaching of the Word of God through her normal services that she has planned in a weekly bases and camping and open hair meetings which she normally planned is a short term bases depending on the need and secure funds. The same approach is also used in empowering her people in secular matters those relates with the whole practice of the killing of Albinos. The findings also shows that the people required in empowering the church members in mentioned matters on human rights normally are invited by the church when the situation shows a demand. This shows that, there may happen that these people may not be invited for such service for a long period when the problem seems to be not at high risk.

The same situation also applies to the service of diakonia to the victims of this problem of the killing of Albinos. The findings show that this service is provided depending on the demanding situation of the victims. However, even the needed service when arose, there seems not to be a specific fund that can be allocated immediately to settle the matter. As it is also the result of the findings, this services seems to be accomplished by her respective church members to contribute to the needed service. This situation is not promising because the service required may not be met fully since the source depends much on how much has been contributed. This situation might be one of the factors which has made the church in Sukumaland not to have a special planned strategy of the diakonia services that are to be done to the victims

5.4.2 Transformation

Transformation mission dimension, through scriptures, is defined as an ongoing process of total reorientation of life with all its aspirations, ideologies, structures, and values. It is further said to be a continuous process of rejecting of what dehumanizes and desecrates life, and adherence to what affirms the sanctity of life and gifts in everyone and promotes peace and justice in society. This knowledge of transformation is said to come from the gracious will of God, that it is God who calls, justifies and empowers people through the Holy Spirit to be conformed to the image of God's Son, offering the self as the instrument of righteousness. Therefore, transformation as a church mission consists on matters about individuals, structures and relations in societies. Thus, transformation as a gift of justification empowers people to denounce wickedness and to “yield their members to God as instruments of

righteousness” (Romans 6:13) and to endure the way of the cross, even death, for the healing of others (2 Cor 4: 7-12).¹⁹⁷

Moreover, transformation deals in addressing and promoting issues about peace and justice among the whole society. Basing on the scripture, the activity of teaching and preaching of the Word of God engages the church automatically to share about the love of God and that society is also motivated to show love among each other. By doing so, the church affirms to the good deeds done by the society which also seems to contribute in sustaining the life of a human being as a whole. Therefore, through transformation, societies are encouraged to do righteousness, to live in peace with one another and to do justice among each other.

Similarly, in addressing structures and relations in society, mission as transformation is said to have entering deep into the context, identifying itself fully with the plight of the victims of injustice, exploitation and exclusion. By doing so, mission as transformation renounces and denounces unjust and violent practices and structures in public and domestic spheres as sinful and destructive to life in society. Through proclamation, service or diakonia and advocacy mission as transformation is expected to be carried out under the sign of the cross to strengthen solidarity and hope. Therefore, this approach emphasises the church to perform its mission as proclamation by witnessing to the Gospel through word, presence, and deed, and not to let political and social oppression and economic exclusion have the last word.¹⁹⁸

Therefore, transformation emphasises on not a mere token of faith, but rather its purpose is to have a sustainable community for all by which the church by being led by the Holy Spirit “makes a way out of no way”. In undergoing this process of making a way out of no way while in the midst of a broken and violent world, the church itself is expected to undergo a deep and often painful transformation. In other words, the church is being alerted that there may be some difficulties in achieving that goal of making a way for example in matters on liberation and reconciliation. As transformation necessitates “swimming against the tide” it may implicate making sacrifices, enduring persecution, or even facing martyrdom.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Jack, *Mission in Context*, 32-33.

¹⁹⁸ Jack (et al), *Mission in Context*, 34.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 34.

As regards to what the church in Sukumaland has been doing particularly on the whole issue of the killing of Albinos, part of the activities seems to have been fallen under this transformation dimension. I have observed that, the establishment of the Advocacy department is a step forward for the church in Sukumaland to undergo a process of transformation. Establishment of this advocacy department is also another step to have started her journey of participating fully in addressing all matters about justice and righteousness that the society in Sukumaland is to be emphasised concerning the killings of Albinos. I view this, as a very early stage of transformation. Therefore, as stated above that transformation is a continuous process of rejecting of what dehumanizes and desecrates life, since the practice of the killing of Albinos is still persisting in Sukumaland today, this indicates that the transformation mission approach is to be also considered as another means of dealing fully with this practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

In other words, the situation of this problem of killing Albinos being predominant and yet one of the major challenge in Sukumaland not only to the church alone, but also to the whole society at large shows a challenge that the church has to face particularly in her mission approaches used in encountering this problem. This shows a need for the church to plan for a strategy which will allow to undergo a continuous process of assessing and re-assessing her mission strategies to make sure that the approach she is undertaking or she will acquire in the future are appropriate and effective to deal with the practice of the killing of Albinos in different situations.

5.4.3 Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a third dimension of mission as explained by the LWF document. Basing on the scriptures on 2 Cor 5:19, reconciliation is considered to be one of the aims of God's mission in the World. Like God who is in Christ reconciling the world to Him and that He has also entrusted to us the message of reconciliation, the church as well through reconciliation is considered to be as an ambassador of God called to participate in God's reconciling mission. The church through mission as reconciliation is expected to restore the relationship between God and human beings. By means of proclamation and witness through Christian living and diakonia, individuals are brought to repentance and faith and rejoice in being accepted into God's communion of the "sent."²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Jack (et al), Mission in Context, 35.

Mission as reconciliation is further said not only to bring reconciliation between God and human beings, but also within a family, with other groups, in society and between nations. Some of the mission activities responsible in this approach are like mediation, restoring of peaceful coexistence, and the building and sustaining of relations. By following the threefold way of Christ, the church is insisted to take upon itself the pains of the victims and arrogance of perpetrators in order to make room for peace and reconciliation. In implementing this approach, liberation is also mentioned to be considered as a part and parcel of this mission approach. Therefore, this approach plays a part in restoring the human dignity where there oppressions and injustices. The two, liberating reconciliation and reconciling liberation are said to be the initial stages of the whole process of transformation, anticipating the final reconciliation of all things in God's eschatological reign.

Depending on the findings from 5.3.2, it is quite clear that the church in Sukumaland is to undergo a reconciliation process with the Sukuma leaders particularly Sukuma traditional healers whom the research revealed that are in a way complaining to what the society at large have been condemning them to be all responsible to this practice of the killing of Albinos. As it is also my observation, reconciliation process is needed between the two parts not only for the sake of Traditional healers, but also for the church to have a team work together in addressing this problem since the problem itself is now a complex. This signify that even her strategies to finish has to be in a way tough as well. Without reconciliation, there may not be successes to the other mission strategies as well since the problem now is to be addressed in collaborating with the responsible society of the killings, that is Sukuma. As I see, the only basic way to reach the whole society in addressing this problem is through Sukuma leaders including the Sukuma traditional healers.

Chapter Six

PROPOSED MISSION APPROACHES IN ENCOUNTERING THE PRACTICE OF THE KILLING OF ALBINOS IN SUKUMALAND

6.1 Introduction

In chapter five, I discussed and analysed critically the actual and proposed mission approaches in encountering the practice of killing Albinos in Sukumaland. In this chapter I will present my suggestions on the suitable mission approaches that could be considered by the church which I hope will work to the whole process of the church in encountering the practice of killing Albinos in Sukumaland. The concentration of my suggestions will take an advantage to the point of departure from the actual and proposed mission approaches in encountering this problem.

6.2 Mission in a Holistic Ministry

Once Mbiti states that:

“Unless Christianity and Islam occupy the whole person, as much as, if not more than traditional religions do, most converts to these faiths, will continue to revert to their old beliefs and practices for perhaps six days a week and certainly in times of emergency and crisis”.²⁰¹

The statement above can be compared to the late Jomo Kenyatta's²⁰² statement that:

“A man needs a good reason to convince him that he should be concerned with his neighbour instead of just looking out for himself and his own interests. In the past our clan and our tribe gave us that reason. But today our life goes beyond our clan and tribes. It is much more complex reason...we should be concerned with our neighbour and his welfare. Religion gives us that reason. The Holy Bible tells us God wants us to be able to say, “We spent our lives loving one another as He loved us.”²⁰³

The two statements above show clear what the church specifically in African context is invited to consider if at all she wants to succeed in the task of doing mission work. This

²⁰¹ Silvana Bottignole, *Kikuyu Traditional Culture and Christianity*. (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books (E.A.) Ltd, 18

²⁰² Jomo Kenyatta was a former president of Kenya

²⁰³ Bottignole, *Kikuyu Traditional Culture*, 18.

means, a church is called to a holistic ministry. The killing of Albinos in Sukumaland has become complex and predominant one today. By no means, the solution to this problem also needs strong reasons. Preaching and teaching of the Word of God, advocacy and the service of diakonia are to be made strong as well. In other words, these approaches have to go deep and have to have different angles in fighting against this problem. As the LWF document insists, the church in Sukumaland also through her mission strategies which she specifically has in dealing with this problem of the killing of Albinos, she has to make sure that no political and social oppression and economic exclusion have the last word.²⁰⁴

6.2.1 Mission through Empowerment

In fighting against the issue of the killing of Albinos, the findings show that the church in Sukumaland gives a priority in empowering the whole Sukuma society in both Christian and secular education. Victims of this practice are also empowered by being provided with some basic needs wherever the situation shows that demand. However, the emphasis given by the LWF document is that, the church is to go beyond a “hand out” or charity ministry to a mission of empowerment.²⁰⁵ Considering the sensitivity of this problem in Sukumaland, my first suggestion is that the church in Sukumaland has to give first priority in empowering Sukuma society mentally, physically and spiritually. Since the findings show that Sukumaland is leading in this practice of the killing of Albinos in Tanzania, this situation motivated me to see the need for this society to be liberated particularly from their cultural bondage. As stated by Bradshaw that “education is a tool for liberation and empowerment,”²⁰⁶ therefore, it only through prioritizing empowering Sukuma society in secular education, the church in Sukumaland will be able to deal with this problem. As it is further stated by Bradshaw that, “education empower people to take control of their learning by gaining and using a knowledge they have achieved to solve the problems they face in their current situation,”²⁰⁷ therefore, through empowering Sukuma society in secular education, the society by itself will be able to find the solution to those problems which lead them to engage mostly into the killing of human beings. The action to this mission strategy should be considered as a sensitive matter. The church has to give more attention on this strategy and start finding the ways of implementing it as soon as possible. While the implementation for this strategy is going on, the strategy of teaching and preaching of the Word of God can be used as well.

²⁰⁴ Jack (et al), *Mission in Context*, 34.

²⁰⁵ LWF, 36.

²⁰⁶ Bradshaw, *Bridging the Gap*, 93.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

In addition to that, the findings show that Sukuma members not only are the leading in killing Albinos, but also human killings in general. This situation displays a picture that the society itself is in a kind of conflict. Therefore it is evidently seen that an approach that will lead a Sukuma society into a mutual understanding is crucial for eliminating the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. As The LWF document states, “Liberation without due consideration of eventual reconciliation is self-defeating and that reconciliation without liberation is unrealistic and ideological”.²⁰⁸ Therefore, empowering Sukuma society in education matters will not only liberate them from their cultural bondage, but also it will also take them to another stage of reconciliation. Education will help them identify the evil ideas that have been simply imposed to them like that of the killing of Albinos. Therefore, the society itself will be transformed and get power to react against those ideas and will also help the whole society to fight against them.

In Tanzania there is a Swahili saying: “Vijana ni taifa la kesho” means *youth are the nation of tomorrow*. The scripture in 1Joh 2: 14c says on youth as being strong. In addition to that, another Swahili saying states that, “Samaki mkunje angali mbichi” means a *Fish has to be folded when it is still fresh*. Considering the findings that youth in Sukuma society are the majority and yet the research revealed that most of them have been engaging themselves mostly in the killings of Albinos, my recommendation is that this group should be given a first priority of being empowered in secular education. This is also from the fact that, the majority the research revealed that they normally do not join for further studies but simply go back to the field after primary education level. This trend has been seen to be predominant among rural youths. Therefore, empowering them today in secular education will have a great contribution to the future society of Sukuma. Bellagamba argues that, “mission is helping people who are unjustly treated, persecuted, oppressed by external forces, to liberate themselves, to experience the liberation, the salvation, and redemption brought to all by Christ”.²⁰⁹ Therefore, in order to have a promising future generation of Sukuma society that will be released from these ideas of killing including the killing of Albinos, Sukuma youth of today is to be considered for further education.

Similar to that, empowering Sukuma youth in secular education will not only benefit the Sukuma society alone, but also in one way or another, the church in Sukumaland will be helped to achieve her goals in mission work. Bradshaw states that, “Literacy is central to Christian education and an essential tool in empowering people to understand God's

²⁰⁸ Jack (et al), Mission in Context, 35.

²⁰⁹ Anthony Bellagamba, Mission and Ministry in the Global Church (New York: Maryknoll, 1992), 53.

redemptive work in creation.”²¹⁰ He added more that, “literacy empowers people to understand value and preserve the oral traditions of their culture”.²¹¹ This shows that empowering Sukuma youths will also give a room for these youths also to understand better about the will of God to their life. After experiencing the God's work through being empowered by the church, they will feel the responsibility of sharing that love to others in the community. Therefore, automatically the practice of killing Albinos will be in a way being discouraged and diminished.

Since the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland is a national problem, my recommendation is that in implementing all the strategies to empower the Sukuma society, the church in Sukumaland should collaborate with the government and other institutions that are working in serving the same society. From a Swahili saying, “Umoja ni nguvu” means *unity is power*, the church together with these organizations can reach a further in dealing with this issue of the killing of Albinos. The church as a catalyst has to make initiatives in implementing this strategy by establishing the non-profit educational projects as her first priority and introduce them to different stake holders in Sukumaland. These projects should begin with youths from the Sukuma society who have completed their primary education by being supported to be enrolled in secondary schools or vocational Training centres. The education will help them to lead their life instead of depending only on agricultural activities which has proved to be less profitable. I am convinced that priority to education in the Sukumaland will be one of the best tools to fight against all killing practices. After Sukuma youth are equipped in education matters, will also end up into having better jobs which automatically empower them economically. Therefore, this will lead them to know that being rich is not simply by killing a fellow human being.

In addition to that, for the Sukuma youths who completed their education some years ago and in one way or another are engaging themselves in agricultural activities or small businesses in Sukumaland, should be given opportunity to acquire the knowledge on how to improve their projects. For some who would like to go back to schools, they should also be equipped to fulfil their aspirations. For those who would like to continue with agricultural activities or businesses should be equipped in entrepreneurship skills as well as agricultural knowledge. Knowledge in the mentioned areas will help them to face life challenges and hence earn their living. The power of success will now lie on legal personal struggles. Therefore the tendency of visiting their traditional healers for the sake of seeking for “quick

²¹⁰Bradshaw, “Bridging the Gap”93

²¹¹ Ibid.

rich” by killing fellow human beings will have no power

“Frustration and anger are signs of unfulfilled expectations”. The statement “unfulfilled expectations” which is further mentioned as the “situation of being dissatisfied” can lead to people's confrontation with the authorities.²¹² This research has also revealed that the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland particularly by Sukuma people have some connection to the poor economic situation of the Sukuma people which they have been encountering it frequently. I would also recommend that, the church, NGOs and government should establish the credit associations to support Sukuma groups who are engaging themselves in small businesses and agriculture. These projects may also include Sukuma traditional healers who have involved themselves into this “profession” for just economic gain. This alternative way of support to these people can change the behaviour of those who opt for the killing of their fellow human beings as the source of their income. So, economic liberation will be used to liberate others from the killing behaviour and to save the lives of those who face threats of killings. In making sure that this goal of establishing credit associations is successful, the church should first work on identifying both the difficulties and challenge which face Sukuma people's daily life. Second, the church should create an alternative community that will be struggling specific with the diverse problems and show a way to overcome them.

6.2.2 Mission as Development

According to Magesa, “maximizing the legitimate joys and alleviating the sufferings of humankind are part and parcel of the mission of the church in the World.”²¹³ In line with Magesa's idea, the ecumenicals believe that God is active and yet He revealed Himself through the contemporary events that are happening in the world as one of the ways of God's revelation.²¹⁴ Depending on the nature of the killings of Albinos, the findings shows that majority of the attempted murders happened have left Albinos handicapped losing their legs and hands which were are chopped away. This situation led the majority of these victims to live in a very poor situation and most of them can normal activities that they were able to do before the attempted murder events. Therefore, most of these victims cannot take care of their own life, hence they become as a burden to the families and society.

Victims of attempted murders are not the only ones forced to live poor but also their families in most cases encounter the same situation. This research reveals that families of the

²¹² Pretorious, *Reflecting on Mission*, 63.

²¹³ Magesa, *Rethinking Mission*, 95.

²¹⁴ Pretorious, *Reflecting on Mission*, 51.

victims particularly those who have lost hands or legs, mostly are forced to draw much attention to the victims since most of these victims could not manage to take care of themselves. This situation has forced some family members to abandon their daily income generating activities. Therefore, they use most of their time in taking care of the victims. As a result, the economy these families is lowered. This situation leads me to suggest that the church in Sukumaland should also consider the establishment of projects which will develop these victims and their families from the hard situation they face because of this problem. Church ministers should be emphasised through their local churches, to first identify the victims of such kind. Second, the church leader has to create a special team that will be responsible in mobilizing the church members to participate in that task. In this line Magesa states that:

Mission as service to life mean that each Christian, since everyone who genuinely holds that name should be a missionary, must put himself or herself at the service of the given Christian community is called to the service of life. In the first place, to enhance all that increase life, promotes it, sustains and makes it blossom now and in the life to come...This impose on each individual, on the community and especially community leaders to invent means and ways of how to increase life, transmit it, improve it and defend it better, through better feeding, better housing, and clothing with other basic needs that make life blossom.²¹⁵

6.2.3 Mission through Dialogue

One Sukuma traditional healer says, “It is not fair to generalize all traditional healers as responsible for the killing of Albinos”²¹⁶ This statement signifies that the church in Sukumaland should consider a mission strategy which will give her a wider room to meet with the Sukuma traditional healers not only for reconciling the two parts, but also to have a mutual understanding as all concerned with the Sukuma society. As dialogue mission approach is proposed by some informants in the findings in 5.3.1, I am also convinced that dialogue mission approach is needed also for bringing a team work together in fighting against the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland since the practice itself has become complex. A famous Swahili saying, states “Kidole kimoja hakivunji Chawa” means “One finger cannot kill a Louse,” This saying which speaks on unity has to be implemented by the church in Sukumaland. All implementers in the church should work together for the sake of ending killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

²¹⁵ Magesa, *Rethinking Mission*, 117 - 118.

²¹⁶ Interview with T 17th July 2012

The LWF document defines interfaith dialogue as one of the tools which leads to the searching for peace and cooperation in society, for mutual understanding and for the truth.²¹⁷ In order for the church in Sukumaland to establish justice and remove discrimination and violence that is done in Sukumaland by killing Albinos, the church should invite Sukuma traditional leaders for discussing together concerning those the matters which affirms the life of her people in Sukumaland. As it is argued by Bervans, mission is not a matter of doing things for people, but it is first of all a matter of being with them, listening to them and sharing with them.²¹⁸

According to Magesa dialogue is an essence in mission and that through dialogue there is a room for sharing practical experiences, collaboration in development and advocacy, theological exchange and sharing of religious values.²¹⁹ Considering the reality that the church in Sukumaland seems not to have good relationship with the Sukuma traditional healers and that the Sukuma traditional healers view the church leaders as their enemies, therefore the use of dialogue in mission will lead to the good collaboration between the two. With no doubt, the gap between these two institutions may be one of the factors which contribute to the complexity of this practice of the killing of Albinos. The decision by church to meet Sukuma traditional healers will help in rescuing this worsening situation.

Mission through Dialogue not only brings collaboration among the teams, but also provides a room for the one to acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral truths that one found from others in their social life or culture.²²⁰ Lack of dialogue is also revealed in the statement of one of the informants that, “fake traditional healers” are the one responsible for this practice.”²²¹ This implies the church in Sukumaland has an obligation to meet and have a dialogue with different stake holders in the society and discuss on the killing of Albinos. The researcher is convinced that the church can make a good use of this approach. We read in the scripture in math 5: 13 -14 that the church is called to be salt and light of the world. So its prophetic voice should be used to bring about peace and harmony in the society.

In showing the importance of using dialogue in mission, Wijzen who considered dialogue as “a grounded theory,” quotes Max Warren idea on how to implement it:

²¹⁷ Jack (et al), *Mission in Context*, 40.

²¹⁸ Steven Bervans, *Prophetic Dialogue*, 20.

²¹⁹ Magesa, *Rethinking of Mission*, 118.

²²⁰ *Ibid*, 65.

²²¹ Interview with A 18th July 2012.

“Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion, is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy. Else we may find ourselves treading on men's dreams. More seriously still, we may forget that God was here before our arrival. We have then to ask, what is the authentic religious content in the experience of the Muslim, the Hindu, the Buddhist, or whoever he may be. We may, if we have asked humbly and respectfully, still reach the conclusion that our brothers have started from a false premise and reached a faulty conclusion. But we must not arrive at our judgement from outside their religious situation.”²²²

Because of the dominant practice of killing albinos in Sukumaland, there is a need for church to implement dialogue mission approach where through the mentioned steps, she may acquire a deeper knowledge of what is going on within this society and be able to solve it.

The need for the churches in Africa to consider the use of dialogue particularly when doing mission to adherents of African Traditional Religion (ATR) was discussed and seen as a necessary approach. The findings show that, the meeting was held in Rome from 10th April to 8th May 1994 conducted by Pope John Paul II consisted of Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Priests and other representatives from African countries of 242 members in total, had a theme of “*The Church in Africa and her Evangelizing Mission Towards the Year 2000*” and had one of its sub-theme on “*Dialogue*”. The meeting found out that the ATR is very strong in Africa and that in East Africa in particular there have been about 23 million people who are adherents to ATR. In addition to that, it was revealed that Christianity and ATR have many values which are in common though there have been no recognition by the church to ATR.

Generally, because of that situation, the church agreed that, the use of dialogue in doing mission has to be emphasized and that church leaders should be equipped on the knowledge about ATR. In addition to that, leaders of ATR are to be recognized, respected and given cooperation in values which the church have in common with the ATR. Furthermore, those common values are to be considered as a “stepping-stone” to introduce the adherents of ATR to the Good News.²²³ Therefore, this situation shows the importance of considering dialogue in doing mission especially to those churches which seemed to have challenged by the practice of ATR like the killing albinos in Sukumaland which may also be termed as religious. According to Frans Wijsen, in the African world view the sacred and the profane

²²² Frans Wijsen, *Seeds of Conflict in Haven of Peace: From Religious Studies to Interreligious Studies in Africa* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 177.

²²³ The Special Synod of Bishops for Africa, “The Teaching of the Special Synod on Africa”; available from <http://www.afgen.com/atr2.html>; Internet; accessed 31 March 2012.

are distinguished but not separated. He further adds that it is not clear what is religious and what it is not.²²⁴

However, for the church in Sukumaland, one of the Tanzania law states that “Tanzania is a state which adheres to the principles of democracy and social justice accordingly with her primary objective on the social welfare of the people.”²²⁵ This means that Tanzania is not affiliated to any religion in running her government. The way I view it, this can be a base for the church in her strategy to meet the Sukuma Traditional healers. In meeting with the Sukuma traditional healers, an agenda can be on matters about Sukuma social welfare. Together, they can identify problems that face the Sukuma society and find the way forward solve them. The issue of killing albinos can be also one of the identified problems whereby the church can have an advantage in insisting that the effect of killings and cutting of body parts leads to heavy burden in the family as well as the community at large. These killings create orphans, widows and widowers. Also albinos who are not killed sometimes are left with their hands or legs cut off thus remaining impaired in addition to their albinism which is inborn impairment.

6.2.4 Community Conversation Groups

This approach is a social one used by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which is used to face a given problem or situation in a given context. The approach provides a platform for people to think through all the repercussions of a situation - the way their individual values and behaviours, and those of their family and neighbours, affect people's lives.²²⁶ So when we look at the killing of Albinos, the findings show that this idea has its origin within the Sukuma society. Furthermore, it has been found that these killings are mostly done by the Sukuma people and the Sukuma people are the one mostly affected by this practice. Therefore, as it is said in Swahili “siri ya mtungi aijuaye kata” literary means *a secret of the pitcher is known by the a dipper*, since the killings are done within the Sukuma society and it is the Sukuma who mostly face the impact of these maiming or killings, people in the Sukumaland, if willingly, are in a better position of providing a better solution to this problem of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

The church can facilitate the Sukuma to form conversation groups in their community.

²²⁴ Wijsen, *Seeds of conflict in a Haven of Peace*, 151

²²⁵ The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 13, accessed on 23rd April, 2013.

²²⁶ Moustapha Gueye (et al), *Community Capacity Enhancement: Handbook: Leadership for Results-UNDP's Response to HIV/AIDS*, (UNDP, 2005), 4.

For the purpose of sensitizing them, these groups can be empowered through seminars to let them know well the problem and then they by themselves to come up with some proposed solutions to this problem. The proposed solutions also include the identification of the root causes to this problem and behaviours which contribute to the problem and which could also be abandoned to end the problem. In this way, the groups will have an opportunity to undergo a mutual learning which will later result for them to have participated in bringing new perspectives on the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

Furthermore, community conversation approach plays a part in reshaping relationships in line with transformed values.²²⁷ From the finding that the killing of Albinos is done by people within the Sukuma society, it is of no doubt that some of the effects which this society encounter is misunderstanding and conflicts between them. Therefore, in the whole process of fighting against this problem in Sukumaland, the church has to play a part in reconciling members from this society. Through community conversation groups approach, they get an opportunity to accomplish that task. It is stated that this approach also includes processes for enhancing the capacity of all groups in the community including the victims,²²⁸ therefore, through implementing this approach, the empowered groups will by no means required to meet by almost all members in their respective community, hence they will have a room for reconciliation.

Community conversation groups approach also makes use of transformative tools and processes that generate hope through the exploration of concerns, possibilities and opportunities for addressing the complex challenges of the Problem. Furthermore, this approach creates clarity on what needs to be done.²²⁹ As the Sukuma groups empowered will be going around the society for the implementation as well as for supervision of the proposed solutions for this problem, they will be building a mutual understanding between these two parts. Due to the fact these parts will be meeting several times for examining the proposed solutions and re-assessing the implemented solutions, this situation can at the end lead to a harmonious community with peace and love among each other.

However, the community conversation groups approach needs to undergo several stages for the implementation. It must be accomplished within a methodological framework with specific steps.²³⁰ As it is observed above, there are several stages to be followed like

²²⁷ Gueye, Community Capacity Enhancement, 4.

²²⁸ Ibid, 4-5.

²²⁹ Ibid, 5.

²³⁰ Ibid, 5.

formation of the groups, empowering of the groups to the problem, making some practices etc. In addition to that, considering that the problem of the killing of Albinos is a complex problem in Sukumaland and it has existed for a number of years therefore, the process of stopping it will also not be a very easy, task. The church in Sukumaland has to consider the fruit of the holy spirit of being patient. The LWF document further insists that, in undergoing a transformation process, the church has to also to be aware and be ready to undergo a painful experience as well.²³¹

6.2.5 Mission as Transformation

The LWF document defines transformation as a continuous process of rejecting that which dehumanizes and desecrates life and adherence to that which affirms the sanctity of life and gifts in everyone and promotes peace and justice in society.²³² The killing of albinos in Sukumaland dehumanizes humanity and rejects the gifts of life which God Himself has given to His all people in Sukumaland including albinos. The church as an instrument of God, in fulfilling her task of being sent to the World (Math 28: 19-20), has a mandate to condemn such evils of maiming the killing of Albinos.

Through her mission strategies of evangelism and all public speaking opportunities that she will acquire. Bishop, Pastors, Evangelists and all Christians should be a voice to Albinos. The church should continue to condemn and rebuke those who are involved in such an evil act against albinos in Sukumaland. The church is the hand of God, in such speaking the church will be confronting those who are killing Albinos. Such as confrontation will always bring tensions, but the church should not stop. The church carries a prophetic voice which must not seize against all injustices in all structures.

As God heard the cry of the sons of Israelites and intervened, the church is also required to hear the cry of albinos in Sukumaland and intervene to rescue their life. This should be a continuous process until this kind of crime is finished in Sukumaland.

²³¹ Jack (et al), Mission in Context, 34.

²³² Jack (et al), Mission in Context, 32-33.

CONCLUSION

7.1 General Conclusion

This study is a critical analysis of the mission strategies which are used by the church in encountering the problem of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. These killings have brought to the attention the church in Sukumaland to adapt to new mission strategies so as to eliminate the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. In the light of the mission strategies that are recommended by the LWF document, the church in Sukumaland is called to work on the holistic ministry in order to be in a better position of fulfilling her mission work in encountering the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland.

From the findings, it is revealed that the mission strategies used by the church in encountering this problem in Sukumaland seems to have not been successful in eliminating this problem. Despite the use of those approaches, the problem is still persisting. This shows a demand of revising the church mission strategies in Sukumaland that of preaching and teaching of the Word of God, diakonia services and advocacy.

Therefore, through a discussion and a critical analysis on the mission strategies used by the church in Sukumaland in encountering this problem, I underwent different stages. In chapter I explained the procedures I used while in the field and also I showed the general aim of doing this study. In Chapter two I presented the general information about the Sukuma people which the research found that Sukuma is the largest ethnic group in Tanzania. The chapter revealed that majority of the Sukuma are followers of their indigenous religion. Sukuma also believe in Supreme Being and at the same time they venerate their ancestors and retain a belief in witchcraft.

Chapter three has presented the explanation on the whole practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. It has displayed the whole picture of the whole practice of the killing of Albinos as it is conducted in Sukumaland. Therefore, the background information of this practice is explained here together with how this practice is being conducted in Sukumaland. The chapter has presented the investigated root causes of this practice by different scholars.

In addition to that, it is revealed in this chapter that Sukuma people are the ones mostly engaging in this practice particularly in Sukumaland. Together with that, the current situation of this practice in Sukumaland is seen that the practice of killing Albino is still conducted in Sukumaland.

Chapter four has presented the mission strategies used by the church in Sukumaland in encountering this problem of the killing of Albinos. Therefore, the strategies of preaching and teaching of the Word of God, Advocacy and Diakonia as they are used by the church in encountering this problem are carefully presented here. In chapter five I analysed critically the church mission strategies used in encountering this problem in Sukumaland and together with the mission strategies proposed by the informants. The mission strategies used by the church and those proposed by the church are discussed here in the light of the theological perspective as it is proposed by the LWF document under empowerment, transformation and reconciliation mission dimensions.

Chapter six is my recommendation on the mission approaches that the church in Sukumaland has to consider in being successful in finishing the whole practice of the killing of Albinos in Sukumaland. In this chapter I came up with some mission strategies such as mission through empowerment, mission as development, mission through dialogue and community conversation groups. These methods as I found them to be more conducive depending on the nature of this problem, many informants also suggested them. These methods demand the church in Sukumaland to discern her environment by learning the context and learn to sit together with other activists against this practice of killing of Albinos and together find the solution. This also requires her to empower the Sukuma society by itself and motivate the Sukuma people to be the ones to identify and find the solution to this problem.

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APPENDIX NO. 1

Map Tanzania:



Sukumaland:



APPENDIX NO. 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE

QUESTIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENTAL & NON-GOVERNMENTAL LEADERS

1. Have you ever heard about the issue of the killing of Albinos in Tanzania? Can you share a bit about what it is and how it started? What do you think might be the reasons for the killings?
2. Do you know how biggest is this problem? Which is the most affected area for the killings in Tanzania and what do you think might be the reasons?
3. Who are the most affected people from the killings? What do you think might be the main factor for this situation?
4. Are there any measures which were taken by the government to meet these challenges? Did your office also played any role to stop this problem? Do you know how is the situation of the killings today?
5. From the measures taken to meet the mentioned challenges, do you think the problem has been reduced or stopped?
6. Who participated a lot in reducing/increasing the problem? What do you think is the position of the church in this challenge?
7. Which way do you think is the best way to be used in eradicating this problem in the society? How?
8. Do you think these measures (mentioned above) were the appropriate ways to eliminate the said challenges?
9. If no, what are to be improved to eliminate these challenges? And who do you think should be given a bigger room to assist in eliminating this problem?
10. Did you personally played a role to eliminate the challenges? Are you satisfied with what have been achieved as far as the challenges themselves are concerned? What are your comments?

QUESTIONS FOR THE CHURCH LEADERS AND OTHER CHURCH MEMBERS

1. Have you ever been exposed to the issue the killing of Albinos? Can you share a bit about your personal experience on this problem? Do you know what it is?
2. What do you think are the reasons for the killings?
3. How was it encountered by the church? Was it often discussed at the church level? What are the strategies made by the church to meet this problem?
4. From the strategies mentioned above, what has been done and what is left undone? Are there any challenges that contribute to the delay in implementing the undone strategies?
5. As far as the church mission is concerned, is there any specific strategy to meet the mentioned people who initiated this idea of the killing of Albinos? How far is the implementation?
6. Is the planned strategy above sufficient to meet this problem? What do you think should be added or removed?
7. How do you evaluate the current situation of the killings? As far as the strategies are concerned, do you have any idea about what should be improved or applied to meet this challenge?
8. How do you see the position of the society around in solving this problem, were they given a room to participate fully in eliminating this problem? What were the outcomes?
9. Was the Government aware of this problem? How do you see about the strategies used, were they convenient to meet this challenge? What are you opinion on the strategies used?
10. What is your motivation in dealing with this problem?
11. Do you think these measures (mentioned above) were the appropriate ways to eliminate the said challenges?
12. If no, what are to be improved to eliminate these challenges? And who do you think should be given a big room in eliminating this problem?
13. Did you personally played a role to eliminate this problem? Are you satisfied with what have been achieved as far as the challenges themselves are concerned? What are your comments?

QUESTIONS FOR THE SUKUMA TRADITIONAL HEALERS

1. Can you share a bit about yourself?
2. What are your roles in the society?
3. Have you ever been exposed to the issue of the killing of Albinos? How did you come to know about it? Do you know what might be the reasons behind these killings?
4. Do you think this problem can be stopped? If Yes, How? If not, why?
5. I heard people relating this issue with traditional belief? What do you think about it?
6. What do you think should be informed to the society especially for those who connect the killings with your work?
7. What are the measures you think if they would be taken would stop the killings?
8. Have you personally participated in any way to eliminate this problem?
9. Who do you think should be given the priority to assist in eliminating this problem?
10. Do you think the church can be of help to this problem? How?
11. Do you have anything to comment?

QUESTIONS FOR THE AFFECTED FAMILIES

1. Can you introduce yourself briefly?
2. As far as the killing of Albinos is concerned, can you tell a bit on how this problem has affected your family? What do you think are the main reasons for this problem?
3. Is the society around also aware of this problem? How has it reacted to eliminate this problem?
4. What do you see from the strategies used by the society to eliminate this problem?
5. Are there any changes after the implementation of the strategies above? What is the situation now?
6. Was the Government also reacted on this problem? How do you see the strategies used, is there anything to improve/add?
7. What do you think about the role of the church on this problem? Have you observed any reaction from the church in eliminating this problem?
8. Do you think the church can be of help from this problem? What do you think the church should do?
9. Do you have any suggestion on the strategies to eliminate this problem?

List of Interviewees

Interview with N 18th June 2012.

Interview with X 22th July 2012

Interview with K 18th June 2012

Interview with Y 14th July 2012.

Interview with J 11th July 2012

Interview with P 17th July 2012

Interview with M 17th June 2012

Interview with N 18th July 2012

Interview with S 29th July 2012

Interview with Z 12th July 2012

Interview with A 18th July 2012

Interview with B 5th July 2012