



Research Article

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Burial and Funeral Rituals of Elderly Persons among Talensi of Frafra Subgroupings in Northern Ghana

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this research was to catalog the many funeral rites practiced by the Talensi people of Frafra subgrouping of Ghana. The goal was to establish the burial and funeral rituals for elderly persons who died among the Talensi people of Ghana's Frafra subgrouping. It concentrated on the rituals done during new funeral rites, such as the burial of a corpse, as well as final funeral rituals. To do this, the study employed qualitative methodology and participatory observation to collect data and analyze these rituals since this approach is appropriate for the study because the researcher had the chance to engage with the participants to collect data for analysis. According to the results, the Talensi group performs a series of rituals beginning the day following a death and ending with the burial of the body.

**Keywords:** Funeral, Rituals, Burial, Death, Talensi

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INTRODUCTION

The ways in which people grieve and the rituals and beliefs they practice when confronted with death vary greatly from one culture to the next. The subject of death throws into foreground some essential cultural norms in all countries, regardless of whether conventions demand overt shows of mourning or controlled behavior. An important goal of many rituals and ceremonies is to help individuals make sense of and make peace with the world they've created for themselves.

The rites and observances carried out by the living for the deceased are meant to symbolize the eternal bond that exists between the living and the dead. Everything works out for the best in a family when everyone, both alive and dead, does their share to fulfill their responsibilities. For instance, it is up to the living to ensure that the deceased are given a decent send-off by

carrying out the necessary rituals and ensuring that they are buried in an appropriate manner. Thereafter, as a mark of respect and remembering, the living provide sacrifices of food and drink to the deceased. On their own, the dead serve as a shield for the living. Different funeral customs are observed for people of different ages, sexes, and economic classes. The funeral of elderly person in the Talensi culture is the grandest and most ornate of all the funerals. However, people who pass away from one of the many stigmatized causes of death are not afforded the luxury of a stately funeral service, and in some cases are not even buried.

Funeral rituals are expressions and connections carried out by individuals, organizations, or communities as a means of establishing contact with the afterlife (Onu, 2019). This research is significant because it sheds insight on the observances surrounding the burial of the elderly among the Talensi ethnic group of Ghana.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Table 1. Summary of related studies

Authors	Year	Contents, Results
Alabi	2007	Claims that it is not just the relatives of the deceased but the entire community that must take care of the burial arrangements. This tradition is still followed today
Ossai	2016	It doesn't matter how old the departed person was to have a reason to grieve.
Ihechu and Uchechukwu	2018	The Igbo people believe that the deceased's happiness in the realm of the 'living-dead' depends on how successfully their burial ceremony was carried out
Mmuo	2014	In Igbo perspective of African Traditional Religion, especially in Nri districts which is also regarded to be the traditional origin of the Igbo people, the death of a person is visited by two sets of rituals and ceremonies which occur one after the other. These are the burial and funeral customs, and rites for introducing the spirit of the dead into the ancestral

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		society. The study asserts that there are differences in burial rites, determined by birth or age (adult or child), status in life (title or not) in what position did he die.
Ugwu and Ugwueye	2004	Are of the view also that the status of the deceased determines their burial rites. In their words, depending on the status of the deceased, there may be drumming, dancing, firing, of musket and guns and the pouring of libation as part of the funeral rites messages are given to the deceased during the dancing to deliver to the past relatives -ancestors.
Nweke	2020	Study concluded that, important to understand that every religion, depending on its cultural background has attitudes and language associated with death and bereavement, and the burial rite and funeral ceremonies express these attitudes. Since every society varies in its attitudes towards life after the life, funeral approach towards the preparation of the deceased, local traditions, cultures, religious affiliations, and style of life obviously influence this attitudes and beliefs to a great extent.
Kuukure Abasi Atinga	1985 1993 2006	All the three scholars that categorized death into normal or good death, abnormal and bad or evil death. A normal death is the death of an older adult.
Woma	2012	A study conducted among the Dagara, and in the survey, tradition holds that funeral rituals are the most important communal homage that the living can pay to their dead, and as such, occasions of funerals offer the opportunity for the people to make amends with their neighbors as well as their ancestors.
Atinga	2006	The study among the Frafra of Ghana found out that, for the Frafra, the ritual for the burial does not conclude the entire funeral rite. Their funeral ritual is in two parts; though a practice to dispose of the body, the burial ritual inaugurates the second part of the funeral, which is the post-burial celebration that must take place sometime after the burial

Source: Author Synthesis

### Theoretical Framework

Functional approach theory propounded by Smith, Burner and white in 1956 was employed as the theoretical framework for this study. The functional approach hypothesis says that ritual activity implies an attitude that is preoccupied with the holy and sacred deed and things; consequently, rituals are nothing more than symbolic depiction of society. Therefore, according to the idea of functionalism, the significance of a ritual is determined by the social role it serves. This theory attempts to give an account of rituals by relating them to the need of individuals and the maintenance of societal harmony. According to Salamani (2016), ritual is dependent on a belief system, often stated in the language of myth, and behavior that is symbolic in connection to its reference, and elicits feelings of reverence, wonder, intrigue, or fear in regard to the holy. Onyinye et al., (2022) adopted the functionalism approach as propounded by smith, burner and white in 1956 was used as the theoretical underpinning for this study of modernity and burial rituals in Igbo land: a paranormal communication approach.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

A qualitative approach (ethnographic research and participatory) was used to generate both primary and secondary data for the analysis.

### Sampling Method

Undertaking this study, non – probability sampling was adopted, including purposive sampling and snowball sampling.

### Study Population

In this study, the population of interest includes Chiefs, Tindans, Family heads, Clan heads, Bayaahs (undertakes), soothsayers (Bakolog), widows, widowers, Orphans, Magazias, Ritualists, and poayahs (dead person sisters), In-laws among Talensi people in the Upper East of Ghana.

### Data collection methods

Primary data was collected from (both males and females) in 20 communities in Talensi districts in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Data was collected with qualitative interviews, informal conversations, and participant observation at various events as described in the following. On the other hand, secondary data was obtained from published and unpublished reports, document reviews, journal, articles, institutional accounts, and relevant information were gathered in the field in various libraries and archives of other studies related to the subject's matter. The secondary data provided a theoretical and conceptual framework within the survey.

### Data Analysis

The method of analysis that I utilized was a hybrid thematic approach that integrated the two primary competing philosophical methods of reasoning: a top-down, deductive, theoretical process and a bottom-up, inductive, data-driven process as also used by Swain (2018).

### Findings

#### Fresh or Burial Funeral Rituals of Elderly Persons among Talensi

From the findings of the study with regards to fresh or burial funeral rituals stage among the people of

Talensi, participants gave explanations on the following themes developed.

### Theme 1: Ritual of Shaving and Bathing

Firstly, the traditional custom of the Talensi is that when a person passes on, especially the older person, the undertakers are the first to be contacted to perform the necessary rites. Usually, the most senior among them, the family member of the dead person, will arrive to inspect the body to confirm that they are dead. He would then instruct another matured undertaker to prepare the body for dressing before burial when it is confirmed.



**Figure 1.** Local clay bow used in bathing dead bodies.  
**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2022

### Theme 2: Announcement of the Funeral (“Kutoanti”)

After the performance of shaving and bathing, the death comes the announcement of the funeral to relatives (*“Kutoanti”*) performance. With the house head, you would send a message informing every relative related to the house head about the death of the head house.

A key informant explained that;  
*All the married daughters of the deceased are sent messages, as are all the relatives.*

Another key informant explained that;  
*They will send messages round to inform all relatives about the dead, and a date would be selected for the burials and its subsequent activities.*

Among the people of Talensi, except during the rainy season, when bathing a body is prohibited for fear of causing too much rain, the corpse is clothed and put in a native mat made of elephant grass called a (*“Monsoh”*). This mat's decoration should not include any red hues. The deceased is placed to rest in the first wife's room or, if unmarried, the mother's room. A lady who has died is resting in her room or the room of her husband's mother. Throughout this time, the deceased's name is used. While some mourn, others visit the

Among the Talensi people, senior undertakers and key informants explained that;

*When a person dies, and if they are to dig a new grave for the person, the first thing they have to do is to shave the corpse's hair. They will also have to cover the mouth with a very small calabash. If the person is a man, you have to cover his private part with a locally waved piece of cloth known as “Kpliali”, But if it is a woman, you cover her with a white cloth.*



**Figure 2.** A dead body is lying in a native mat made of elephant grass called (*“Monsoh”*) with a small calabash covering the mouth.  
**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2022.

cemetery to give gifts to the *“bayaah”* and express their condolences to the departed.

### Theme 3: Soothsaying is the Night (*“Woibakoloboa”*)

Among the Talensi people, during the wake keeping of the older people's funerals in the night, they will bring soothsayer to the funeral house to find out such things before the commencement of the funeral rituals.

A participant and elder among the Talensi study communities explained that;

*To ascertain whether the deceased demands a fresh house (grave) or the body can be buried in an existing house (grave) for the time being.*

### Theme: 4 Wake Keeping (*“Korgeilili”*)

On the night of the wake-keeping, there would be something known as *“Kukbigpniboi,”* meaning cover of water. The presents of a grandson and a granddaughter are needed. There has to be a *“Porkyamehi,”* meaning a woman from the dead person village or community but married to a different community to fetch water.

An elder and a key informant explained the rituals in the night like this:

*Before the announcement of the funeral to the public in the night called (*“Korgeilili”*), the grandson would carry a drum, and the*



granddaughter would be making a laudable noise known as “**Gpliki**.” The grandson would beat the drum, and the “**Porkyamehi**” would use a very small calabash to fetch the water that had been covered. When the grandson beats the drum, he will call “**Yamwoeye**,” means ancestor, and the grandson will repeat the “**Yamwoeye**” three (3) times if the dead person is a man and will repeat four (4) times if the deceased person is a woman and then they will announce the funeral formal in the form of lamentation. Then the war dance (“**Deyeyl**”) or archery culture dance starts by going around the house three (3) form man and four (4) for

women and do another rite known as division of flour. “**Kusuomme**” and also give a recount of history. In this community, we have six different responses to the rite. One of them is “**Tanli-pelsoenei**” which means we are in the middle of settled in the middle. We are surrounded by villages like Shia, Gorog, Buun and the rest. Another one too is “a water that does not move is a bad water,” meaning in Taleni (“**Kuotoedi – dihig – kuopbeoiku**”) and another one, but we use it mostly in the dead of chief and Tindan funerals which we respond like “if we insult you and you also reply are we co-equal” (“**Tianagbeltoi – yameartambei**”).



**Figure 3.** A small calabash is covering water in a big calabash and drum for funeral rituals.  
**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2022



**Figure 4.** A researcher doing an interview with key informants in Talensi land.  
**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2022

Under the Namoosi clan or group of Talensi, which include communities like Tongo Nayire, Sheag, in terms of wake keeping for elderly person funerals.

A senior undertaker and key informant explained the rituals as;

*In the middle of the night, the son would wear the “**kpeli**,” a locally woven piece of cloth tied around the waist, and a “**Naaokga**,” a hat with cow horns on his head. He would hold in his hands a bow and arrow. He will have fire and call out “father, father, father” (**Nbaah, Nbaah, Nbaah**) go round the corps three times.*

*At first, we called a diviner or soothsayer in the night to divide where to dig the grave, but now we do not do that again.*



**Figure 5.** An interview session with a senior undertaker in Talensi land  
**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2022.

#### **Theme 5: The Traditional War Dance (“Denyelr”)**

A participant and a senior undertaker from Gorog in Talensi land explained the traditional war dance in his community as;

*The second day is the day of burial; if we slaughtered any animal, especially a cow, the Baare people would come and take their share, one of the cow's front legs (“Noaboko”). “Benlibisi” and “Gorog – zuure” would share one leg of the animal. “Goro – zue” would take one front leg, and we would take the other.*

Another elder and key informant also explained that;

*If they want to slaughter a cow for the person, the war dance will perform before and afterward. When they are to bury the corps in the morning, the archery dance will escort them to the graveyard.*

#### **Theme 6: New Grave for the Burial of Older Persons (“Yibnbali,” Or “Yurpali”).**

Per the belief and world of the people Talensi, digging a new grave for the dead is not an ordinary hole digging but involves many rituals that need to be performed by the undertakers. The undertakers often go to the graveyard to clean the area we want to dig the grave. We always carry a bag with ashes inside it; we would remove the “*Phine*” from the hole.

A senior undertaker and key informant explained the digging of grave processes as;

*We will go with the “red bowl” ashes. We placed the red bowl on the grave and sprinkled the ashes around it three times. Suppose it is a man before we dig. And if it is a woman four times and start digging.*



**Figure 6.** Undertakers are at the graveyard digging a new grave for burial  
**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2022

Another senior undertaker and key informant explained that;

*Some undertakers also have a third or special eyes from normal eyes, but that one depends on the pot you are initiated to, which is different from normal bathing as an undertaker. It takes*

*a lot of items and difficult steps to become one with third eyes. When you bathe and still want to wash your face to have third eyes, sometimes you end up harming yourself, and one may behave strangely due to the washing.*



Among the Namoosi group where there is no Tindan, a participant explained the process as follows;

*We inform the chief of this community to give us the undertakers to go head. When we get to the graveyard, after we have located a place, we place the red earth bowl popular in Talensi as “Leizie” and sprinkle ashes around it, we sacrifice hen before digging, and these sacrifices (“Kliboko”) are normally made in the middle of the grave-digging or when the grave digging is at some level.*

#### **Theme 7: Nature and Direction of Burial Dead Persons**

Among Talensi people's worldview, the dead persons are not buried in the grave or laying anyhow in the grave, but the direction of the dead lay position depends on the gender of the person. They still know that the dead will live in the spiritual world in their worldview. They, therefore, will perform the same duties as they are living on earth here.

A senior undertaker and key informant narrated this as follows:

*When you are to bury a man, he lay faces where the sun rises or towards East. The sun rises and says it is time to go to a farm. The woman looks*



**Figure 7.** The undertaker is sacrificed at the graveyard during a new grave digging at “Takpkpline” in Talensi Land

An elder and senior undertaker also explained that;

*In terms of digging new grave rites that have to be performed, the chief undertaker would instruct the junior undertakers to take millet and fetch ashes from the kitchen. They would use a new calabash that was not used before to fetch grinded flour from millet. The relatives who have bought millet would come and add theirs to it. When they go and dig the grave, they would make a hole and “leowoi.”*

Another undertaker and informant explained that the rituals at the grave yard as follows;

*We will bring it back to the house for further rite. A person from the chief palace would pick*

*at the sunset or towards West and says that it is time for her to cook.*

Another senior undertaker and key informant also stated that;

*Before you become an undertaker, you to bury a woman first and follow by a man, and the senior undertakers will train how to bury a man by letting him look at the sun rises and say, it is time to go to the farm. Also, a woman looks at the sunset and says that it is time for me to cook.*

#### **Theme 8: Sacrifice during Grave Digging**

Among the Talensi traditional or culture to bury a dead person that requires a new grave like older people, there is the need to sacrifice to plead the land before the process can start. In this situation, mostly the Tindan have to give the undertakers a location to dig the grave for the burial to take place.

A key informant and a senior undertaker explained these rituals as;

*They will normally plead with the earth by making sacrifices with a hen and followed by a goat, but that will be after we have dug the grave.*



*a stone, and a person from the funeral house would also pick a stone, and they would throw it at where we are going to dig then before we then start to dig. We will then send for our flour. When they go, we would be given the flour and a goat and groundnut and hen. We do not cook the goat; we only roast part of the meat and later share the rest after burying the corps. All these rituals are for the house head in this community.*

#### **Theme 9: Burial in old Grave (“Yurkori”)**

According to the participants, there are situations where an older person passed, and they qualify to have a new grave. However, the children at that particular time cannot provide the items for that purpose,

and also the Tindan or the Chief said that this time of the season, nobody in this area will allow getting new grave because the people world vision is when the late millet is in the process of bearing fruit, they do not need noise. So, all people who died during this period have to be buried in old graves, and later they can dig new graves and remove them there.

One senior undertaker explained that;  
*When an old age dies, and they cannot create a new grave for the person, later they can create a new grave after all the necessary materials are provided. They remove the remains from the old grave to the new grave.*

### **Final Funeral Ritual of Elderly Persons among Talensi**

Final funeral rites or the second phase of the funeral are performed for those who are not older but young people and also married a big deal. You call the relatives and inform them about the second phase's intention. When they have gathered, the funeral owner will bring them water of calabash and a calabash of groundnut. This happened at the time there was no alcohol. Then they would assign the task to those who would go round to inform distant relatives. They will tell them where the relatives are found. A day is set for the second phase of the funeral.

#### **Theme 1: Pouring of Millet (“Kpwaya – Keri’ro”)**

This is a day that they collect millet to start preparing the “Pito” (“*Danzir*”) a local drink. If a person merits the sacrifice of a cow, they will slaughter one. If a goat, then so be it. This is done the same day. The funeral owner will supply us with “*kpwaya*”, a fermented but dry millet, to start with the funeral. When we pour the “*kpwaya*”, the elderly contribution has to be poured first before any other. If the person who died is an elderly person or house head, after the “*kpwaya*” had been poured, you would take what will accompany him and sacrifice. It will be an animal of your choice, depending on your strength.

A participant also narrated that;  
*The first day during the dry funeral called “Kpwaya – keriro”, that is when the elders in the community will gather at the funeral house to make provision for pito brewing and also to select a woman who will perform the final funeral rites called (Pokyamehis) that is the sister of the dead husband.*

#### **Theme 2: “Komzuzttroi” (People will visit the woman father community).**

Participants in this study explained that a woman's funeral is not usually a one-family affair, but that both the husband and the woman father family come together to perform woman funeral rituals because, in the second phase of the funeral rituals, the woman husband community will organize themselves with local

traditional drumming troops to travel to the woman's home. The objective of the visit is to persuade the woman's father community to donate to the funeral, such as millet, cooking supplies, and other goods to be included in the final burial ceremonies.

A participant explained the “*Komzuzttroi*” as;  
*They often go to the father's house of the married woman before the final funeral stage of the brewing of Pito day. They go will to the father's house. They will give them millet from the father's house to bring home.*

#### **Theme 3: Gathering of funeral firewood by women (“kudan”)**

The second-day rite is funeral firewood (“*kudan*”): The women would be instructed to go and fetch the firewood each and bring it to the house. According to participants contacted in this study, if the person is head of the house, it is done twice.

A participant explained that;  
*In the case of Tindan or Chief, the women in the community will go to a nearby bush and bring the firewood for time, and the following day, they will back and bring the firewood for the second time before the funeral process begins.*

#### **Theme 4: The Brewing of Funeral Pito (“Damkoadai”)**

The third day is the pito brewing, which is when another rite begins; a tiny mat made of sticks is utilized, and depending on the gender of the deceased, either the wife of the man sits on it. The mat is placed in front of the room's entrance. If the deceased were a woman, the pito would be brewed after the people returned from the woman's residence in a separate village (“*Komzuzttroi*”). The “*Pokyamehi*” will begin the rite's performance. The woman or husband would sit with their legs straight on the stick – mat or local mat.

A participant explained that;

*The next day is the brewing of pito. What happens this day is that all those who refer to the dead person as sons and daughters and wives would gather. Then they will wear their ropes.*

Another participant explained this ritual as follows;

*The “Pokyamehi” would pass a rope over the head three times for a man and four times. She would do the same for the sons and the daughters. It is done four times if the decease is a woman. The “Pokyamehi” would then wear the rope to the wife's neck. The rope would be wearied in the son's hands because he is a man. This is done on the second day of the funeral. This day that they would cook the Bambara beans.*

Under the Namoosi section or clan of the Talensi, a group of participants explained their final funeral ritual as;

*On the day of brewing of the pito, we slaughter a hen. At first, people (in-laws) could not prepare T. Z. We only depended on the bambara beans used for the funeral rite. It is now that they (in-laws) sacrifice animals and prepare T.Z. After the slaughter of the hen, they would cook for us. The food prepared would be kept down until 2 – 3 am. You look for "Slii" a big bowl made of clay and place the food inside it. The Bambara beans meant for the rite would be kept inside the "Slii" as well. The T.Z prepared is referred to as "Kpitamid – saabu." The "Pokyamehi" has designed this T. Z." The*



**Figure 7.** Preparation of pito for final funeral ritual at night  
**Source:** Researcher Field Study, 2022

Another special funeral ceremony cited by a participant was the night of the Bambara beans. That night was filled with traditions; for example, every house within the clan where the burial took place would prepare T.Z. and bring it to the funeral home. The T. Z. would be positioned in front of the home.

A participant explained this as;  
*After the "Doibenbi," those married to our village and connected to the deceased, completed cooking the Bambara - beans, the "Pokyamehi" would go for her share to execute the ceremony. The Bambara - beans used in the burial rites are known as "Gorsumah." "Gorsumah" refers to a binding bond between the deceased and their wife. If the woman had sex with another man before the*

*food and the "Slii" are kept inside the kitchen. There, we will perform the ritual. We will bring the food out the following day.*

#### **Theme 6: "Dampeio" and "Dandina" (a residue from the pito)**

The next day is known as "Dampeio" and "Dandina" (a residue from the pito). The "Dandina" (pito residue) will be placed in a calabash. The "Pokyamehi" will oversee the ritual." She will recover the "Dandina" and, for the third time, make a movement of and for to your mouth and on the ground, following which she will place it in your mouth, and you will spit it out. She will then hand you the "Dandina" calabash to eat.



*second portion of the funeral rites was completed, she would be unable to execute her husband's burial rites with the "Gorsumah." Otherwise, it will be a source of contention for her. Before she may administer the burial rites, the lady must confess.*

Another participant agreed with the first participant and stated that;

*After we finished eating the T.Z. and Bambara beans, the T. Z. from afar (in-laws, uncles, and so on) is stored at "Piri," a concrete roofed building that is generally round. Later that night, we shared the T.Z with the animals they had slaughtered. The sharing is done following the community's sections.*





**Figure 9.** Display of T.Z prepared by in-laws in Talensi funeral rituals  
**Source:** Researcher field study, 2022.

#### **Theme 10: The Soothsayer Day (“Kubanti”)**

The next day is the soothsayer day (“*Kubanti*”), where the main purpose of the soothsayer today is to find out whether the brewed pito is drinkable or not. If it is not drinkable in the past or old days, they will throw away the pito, but they only fetch a calabash and pour out and drink the rest.

A group of participants explained how soothsaying is normally done in their community as follows;

*The next day is (“Kubanti”) the soothsaying or divination day or processes. The soothsayer is invited to the house. His main task is to find out whether the deceased had eaten the food or not. If the diviner or the soothsayer says that the deceased did not eat the food, we have to throw the food away. In real terms, a portion of the food will be thrown away, and they will eat.*

A participant narrated this as;

*After the soothsayer had performed, they would go and bring brewed pito. They will call out all the relatives and shave relatives of the dead like orphans, widows, widowers, and brothers and sisters their hairs at the refuse dump “Tampugre.”*

#### **Theme 11: The Killing of Fowls for the Dead (“Noagletuku”)**

Many of the participants and informants reached throughout the research claimed that when a person dies in the Talensi area, the final funeral rites for the deceased must be performed, and the slaughtering of fowls for the dead is highly significant ritual that must be completed. They informed everyone in the community, particularly the clan, that the final funeral rituals were taking place and that the direct relatives of the deceased would be providing fowls as a form of farewell to the deceased.

Another participant explained that;

From 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm same day, we will perform another rite called (**"Noagletuku"**) where we slaughter fowls for the dead.

Another participant also explained that; On the same evening, another rite called in Taleni (**"Noagletuku"**) which all the house heads from that clan

will bring hen's to be slaughtered for the dead. If the deceased is a man, they will get three pots of Pito (**"Danzie"**), and if a woman, they will bring four pots of Pito (**"Danzie"**). They would be the addition of **"zom – kpelin"**. The **"Zom – kpelin"** will accompany by dry millet flour. But with Tindan funeral a T.Z. has to be prepared at the back of the house.



**Figure 12:** *"Naoagletuku"* rituals taken by a man under the Talen group. Source: Researcher field study, 2022  
Source: Researcher field study, 2022

A participant again said that; The following day after they slaughtered the hens, they would bring out three pots of pito. The pot that is meant for the sacrifice would not be consumed. Then in the evening, the rite of removing the ropes is known in Taleni as (**"Mehiyeiko"**).

#### **Theme 12: Washing of the Funeral House Gate (**"Zenoapurko"**)**

The next morning another rite washing of the gate known in Taleni as (**"Zenoapurko"**). The one who is supposed to wash the house entrance would come. He would be given cow dung (**"Naebeina"**) and a pot of pito to do the washing.

Participants in a study among Talensi people explained that;

But if the dead person is a woman, they do another rite known in Taleni as **"kubetarkoiku"** which applies to only women. The daughter of the deceased would take it to the **"Poasammah"**, the messenger or the man responsible for the marriage activities house. She would then return and bring a hen, flow, and money. She can bring the hen; fowl could be done either on that same day or days or even months later. After bringing the items, she will then carry the **"kubetarkoiku"** to her husband's house if she is married. The final funeral rite phase normally takes at least three (4) days to finish in this community

A group of participants explained how their community do (**"Zenoapurko"**) meaning cleaning of the gate as;

#### **Theme 13: Covering of Pot (**"Kuibiewo"**)**

If the dead is a woman, the next step is to **"Kuibiewo"** or cover pot. We'll grab a guinea fowl, preferably a male, and offer it to the woman to cover the pot. If the deceased lady was from **"Gurunsi"** country, you could offer them beans, and they would ground them to produce **"koosi."** T.Z., on the other hand, had been prepared by Talensi. They'll prepare the T. Z. and split it in half. One is for males, while the other is for women.

A participant explained these rituals as; They will carry the **"ku-piok"** to them (**"Poasumah"**), a man who negotiated and performed the marriage rituals of the dead woman's house. But with the pot, they go inside the funeral house and lament. They will break the pot and pass through the back of the house. They will send it to a path leading to the woman's father's house. People will go with pito to plead and bring them back.

#### **Theme 14: Breaking of Local Items for the Dead Rituals (**"Boasannah"**)**

Usually, the Namoosi group of Talensi performs very important rituals during the funeral ritual for the dead called which breaks local fruit rituals. Many of the participants and key informants contacted for this study said that the funeral has come to an end after this ritual.

A participant explained that;

*It is four (4) days we finish the final funeral rituals after bursting the fruit or "pom – skin."*

### **Theme 15: Breaking and Destroying the Dead Person "Kpalang," Arrow and Bow, Calabash, Pot, and "Veok."**

Another critical final funeral ritual, the key informants and participants stated during the study, another critical final funeral ritual is the breaking and destroying of items the dead were using when they were alive. Breaking and destroying the items will show that the person is not long been on the earth, and they believe that they will need these items to use in the spiritual world hence the rituals performed for them.

One participant explained that;  
*During the Final funeral ritual, we will break and destroy the deceased items like "kpa – lang", arrow, bow, calabash, pot, and "Veok" and put stones on them, and that is the last day.*

Other participants also narrated that;  
*Per the tradition, believes, world vision, and philosophy of Talensi, what makes you a man is "kpa – lang", arrow, bow, and what makes you a woman is "Veok," calabash, and pot. So, breaking and destroying these items means you are now more alive, and we perform these rituals on the last day of the funeral rituals.*

## **DISCUSSIONS**

In general, the findings show that the people of Talensi land organize funeral rituals for the depending on his or her age, and there various rituals perform both at the first stage that is the burial or fresh of the body and the second stage that the final funeral rituals for the dead and sometimes in performing the rituals for the dead affect their daily activities.

This implies that households, relative of the dead and the community lose some livelihoods.

These findings remain one of the few findings (Examples: Alabi, 2017; Ossai, 2016; Ihechu and Uchechukwu, 2018; Atinga, 2006, Absi, 1993) which showed that different groups of tribes have different rituals for different age and death affect every religion in Africa. Nonetheless, this finding corroborates with Mmuo (2014) the study that asserts that there are differences in burial rites, determined by birth or age (adult or child), status in life (title or not) in what position did he die. It also lends support to Nwke (2020) study that concluded that every society varies in its attitudes towards life after the life, funeral approach towards the preparation of the deceased, local traditions, cultures, religious affiliations, and style of life obviously influence this attitudes and beliefs to a great extent.

The finding further lends support to the observation on funeral rituals the findings are also consistent with the study of Kuukure , 1985 Abasi 1993,

Atinga 2006 studies categorized death into normal or good death, abnormal and bad or evil death. A normal death is the death of an older adult.

The above findings can have implications for the livelihoods of the dead person relatives, the community and organizer of the funeral rituals. First, loss of foodstuff and other livelihoods sources. Second, it affects productivity in the community because there use more than eight to nine days to organize funeral rituals for elderly persons.

## **CONCLUSION**

Different categories of the dead are given slightly different Funeral rituals. For example, children and adults, unmarried and married people and men and women: just as the chief, head of lineage or clan, the sorcerer, the soothsayer, the 'medicine man' and the first daughter are all given varying degrees of solemnity in their funerals. Funeral practices among the people of Talensi are very elaborate for older persons.

Men are buried facing east, while women face west, according to the depictions. Males are facing toward the rising sun, while females face toward the setting sun. This is a widely used burial method among several ethnic groups in northern Ghana. The practice reflects the ideology of Frafra. The Frafra believe that the realm of the living dead is an exact duplicate of our world, to the point that life exists just as it does in ours.

### **Recommendations**

- Excessive costs of performing traditional funeral rituals should be subject to regulation and oversight by the paramount chiefs, sub-chiefs, Tindans, clan heads, Assemblymen and women, unit committee.
- The influences of foreign cultures resulting in very expensive funerals should be mitigated by traditional authorities.

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