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Death on Campus: a Case Report of a Student Stabbed During Election on Campus

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ABSTRACT

Homicide from stabbing is the commonest cause of death all over the world and unwholesome activities such as cultism usually result into this in university environment. We present a case of 23 year old undergraduate who was murdered during election within the school premises. He sustained a deep laceration into the chest cavity with injuring to the main vessels resulting in massive internal bleeding, hypovolemic shock and irreversible organ failure and death. All hands must be on deck to prevent unnecessary death on our campuses.

Keywords: Death, on Campus, Case Report, Stabbed, Election on Campus

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INTRODUCTION

Murder which is also known as homicide is the premeditated or unintentional killing of an individual by another¹. Homicides as a result of stabbing are the most commonly presented homicidal cases. In both developing and developed countries, Stabbing with a knife is the most common means of murder and manslaughter². Stab wounds are normally deeper than they are long and so are usually fatal as they could cause damage to blood vessels or bodily organs^{1,3}. Cultism is on the rise in tertiary institutions in Nigeria and the easily accessible weapons of use by these cultist are knives and so most cult related crimes involve stabbing and the use of knives and sharp objects. Objects which could also be used to cause stab injuries include scissors, ragged edges of broken bottles, needles, nails pins and other sharp objects.

CASE REPORT

A male of about 23 years old, was brought to the emergency unit of the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH) with a stab injury on thoracic wall between the left 4th and 5th ribs. According to the eyewitnesses, he was stabbed by a group of young men supposedly cultists. He was rushed to the hospital but died before he could receive medical treatment. Upon external examination, a stab wound was seen on the chest wall. Internal examination revealed damage to the left lung, the knife had pierced the pericardium of the heart and there was large amount of blood in the thoracic cavity. Cause of death was diagnosed as an injury to the coronary vessels causing internal bleeding. Also he had several injuries on his legs.

DISCUSSION

Stabbing is the most common cause of homicide in various regions^{3,4}, it could be as a result of hatred, enmity, quarrel with friends or even for criminal activities. The most common areas of stab injuries are the chest, abdomen or sometimes the neck⁵. Although cultism has been in the university campuses in Nigeria for over fifty years, its involvement in violence became manifest only about two decades ago⁶. People get involved in cultism as a result of peer group influence, Parental Background, Fear or for social acceptance and low self-esteem.

Election violence is a common occurrence during elections at various classes and levels. It usually occurs among various factions participating in the election process. In several tertiary countries of the world, elections usually result in campus violence and conflicts. Many of these conflicts lead to unrest and pandemonium in these campuses, destruction of life and properties on the campuses and disorganization of academic activities⁷.

CONCLUSION

The practice of occultism in higher institution is a recurrent decimal and this has led to untimely death of our youth. There is need for massive campaign on the evil of this group especially during the election period.

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FIGURE I, II, III. Picture showing laceration to the left 4h intercostals space (figure I), haemothorax (figure II) and haemorrhage in the inner lining of the sternum (figure III)

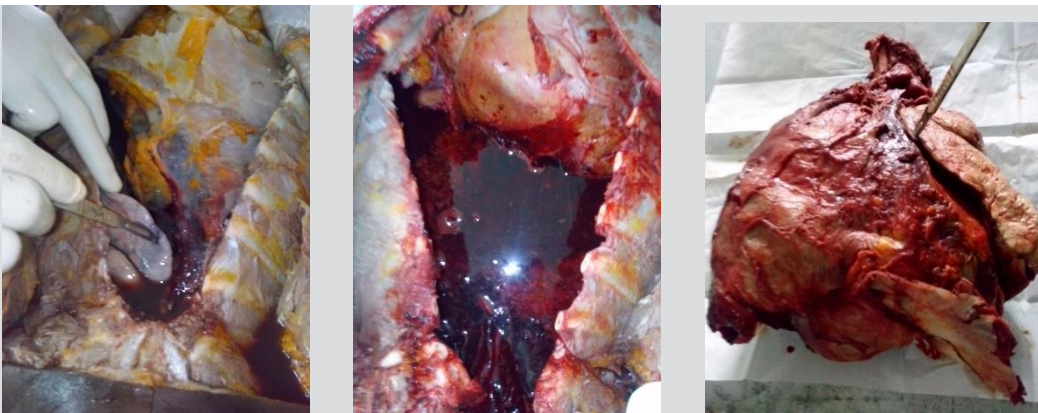


FIGURE IV, V, VI. Picture showing laceration to the lung, massive haemothorax and laceration to the heart



FIGURE VII, VIII, IX. The sections show the laceration on the heart and congestion on the lung due to haemothorax with pallor of the other side.