

Seed Sowing and its Socio-Economic Impact in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigerians are known to be "religiously" religious. Religion permeates the whole essence of every phase of life. Seed sowing, rooted in various religious teachings, emphasises the principles of giving, faith and abundance, often applied to financial prosperity and material blessings. The study critically examines the socio-economic impact of seed sowing in Nigeria. This research is built on a hybrid methodology of narrative, historical and theological analyses to examine the concept of seed sowing and the socio-economic impact of the concept. The researchers discovered that seed sowing has helped in providing a message of hope and an opportunity for a redemptive (and economic) uplift while avoiding problematic praxis. The findings also revealed that while seed sowing as a concept benefits few majority, the larger audience is left in penury and in some cases, they are unproductive while expecting the "blessing" that will come from the seed sown, expecting to be blessed in abundance. The researchers further found that seed-sowing theology aided pastors in garnering and gathering wealth. One of the basic implications of the findings is that the country's productive capacity is low and most productive agents in the economy are redundant and depend on God's blessing through seed sowing. Thus, it was recommended that the preachers should preach the gospel of Christ with decorum while believers should be productive as they give liberally to the church and also help in the growth of the national wealth.

Keywords: Seed sowing, socio-economic, Christianity, Religion

Introduction

Religion permeates the whole essence of every phase of life. Mbiti (1969) generalises the attitude of Africans towards religion and asserts that Africans are notoriously religious. He observes that there is no formal distinction between the sacred and the profane, the religious and the non-religious or the spiritual and material areas of life. In his words, "Africans are willing to sacrifice anything for the sake of their religion." These aforementioned statements became norm among most African countries' scholastic views. Idowu (1973) buttresses the assertions in his observation of Nigerians as "religiously" religious people.

In Nigeria, where religion plays a central role in society, theological framework intersects with economic activities, influencing individual behaviours, community dynamics and broader socio-economic trends. Seed sowing, rooted in various Christian teachings, emphasises the convergence of giving, faith and abundance, encapsulated in financial prosperity and material blessings as a principle. As the practice of seed sowing

impacts individual financial decisions and attitudes towards wealth accumulation (Lauterbach, 2020). Pentecostals hold that all born-again Christians who adhere to the fundamentals of prosperity have a covenantal right to prosperity (Kitause & Achunike, 2013).

Believers are encouraged to sow seeds, typically in the form of monetary offerings or investments to the church or ministries, with the expectation of reaping blessings and financial abundance in return. This mindset shapes consumption patterns, savings behaviour and investment choices, potentially influencing personal financial stability and economic resilience. While seed sowing promotes principles of generosity and abundance, its application within Nigeria's economic context also raises concerns about the exploitation by manipulations of followers by religious leaders and financial mismanagement in the administration of the religious organisations (Lauterbach, 2020).

Some individuals and religious organisations exploit religious teachings for personal gain, promoting prosperity gospel narratives that prioritise material wealth over ethical considerations or social responsibility. Lauterbach argues that this can perpetuate inequality and exacerbate poverty, particularly when vulnerable individuals are encouraged to give beyond their means in pursuit of elusive blessings. Furthermore, the influence of seed sowing extends beyond individual behaviour to impact broader economic structures and policies (Lauterbach, 2020).

The seed sowing has been classified by some scholars to be an "occult economy" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2004); a kind of belief that the economy and finance generation has the spiritual realm involved; whereby the invisible market force influencing everyday life, yet are out of one's personal control. It is fuelled by promises of material well-being judged as the outward sign of God's goodness; such an economy celebrates consumption, rather than production (Heuser, 2016). It then stands that the sower while expecting a harvest may likely do nothing, putting his trust on God's goodness to produce material blessing as promised by the preacher. With the uncertainty in the economy of the nation, this approach to life looks like a very safe haven for the poor masses.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria as a country is endowed with both natural and human resources; meanwhile, according to a study by UNICEF (2023), the poverty rate in Nigeria is approximately 37%, amounting to about 40.1% of the total population of Nigeria or 4 out of 10 individuals classified as poor (NBS, 2019). This translates to around 82.9 million people struggling with poverty (NBS, 2019). On the other hand, a Pew Study (2010) as cited by Heuser (2016) shows that in most African countries, more than half of Christians "believe in the Prosperity Gospel –that God will grant wealth and good health to people who have enough faith.

In a continent ridden with poverty, there is also a search by the heart of the people for a panacea, Comaroff & Comaroff (2004) put it better by saying "Prosperity Gospel expresses the largely irrational reaction to the invisible market forces of a globalising economy described as 'millennial capitalism.' The invisible market forces would have manifest effects on everyday life, yet are out of one's personal control which leads to a

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growing display of what they term 'occult economies'" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2004). In other words, seed sowing or prosperity gospel is a reaction to the ever-changing economy that people cannot control. In essence, this phenomenon represents a desperate attempt to reassert a semblance of agency and autonomy in a world where the dictates of the market seem to hold sway over the lives of individuals.

Seed sowing serves as a succour to the general populace. It then seems the best option to tackle the invisible force market is via the invisible force which in turn resulted in an occult economy. So God is called into the equation and the means of calling Him into the equation is seed sowing "sacrificial economy," thereby provoking an increase (harvest) that is heavenly-bound. Claiming this-worldly success and seeing material riches as a sign of God's blessing are central features of the seed sowing (Lauterbach, 2020). For instance, the Igbo people in Nigeria believe that everyone has a personal Chi (God/god), the deity considered to be the invisible force that influences an individual's destiny (Udechuckwu, 2021). Meanwhile, few scholarly works have been written on seed sowing and its effect on the socio-economic of the nation. However, dearth of studies that have investigated the socio-economic impact of seed sowing on the economic welfare in Nigeria. The essence of this prevailing issue in Nigeria stemmed from the argument of Kitause & Achunike (2013) argued that Nigeria is relatively having a relatively depressed economy. Most people believe that sowing bountifully to churches will increase their wealth and provide succour to the devastating situation. Therefore, the study tends to fill the gap and answer the pertinent question: what is the impact of seed sowing on the generality of the Nigerian economy?

Conceptual Clarification

In the paradigm of the Prosperity Gospel, the concept of seed sowing has emerged as a pivotal tenet necessitating a nuanced explication to delineate its contours and implications. Seed sowing, in this context, refers to the act of contributing financial resources to religious institutions or endeavours, with the expectation of reaping a bountiful harvest of material blessings and spiritual dividends. The idea behind seed sowing is that the amount of one's giving directly correlates with the size of the returns, which is reminiscent of the biblical proverb "as you sow, so shall you reap" (Galatians 6:7). This idea has been expanded to include a transactional view of divine reciprocity, in which the generosity of the believer is seen as serving as a catalyst to release a wave of wealth and abundance. Thompson argued that; in the church, "sowing seeds" is a common expression, particularly among preachers of Word of Faith and Prosperity Gospel. They mean when they use the phrase that someone is seeding their ministry or church with money. This could also be interpreted as a voluntary or mandated financial gift to a church because Christians believe that when they generously invest in the ministry they are a part of, they will receive a hundredfold return in blessings, particularly in the area of finance. (*Thompson 5*).

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resources to religious institutions or endeavours, with the expectation of reaping a bountiful harvest of material blessings and spiritual dividends.

Seed sowing comes in different forms and shades, in some quarters, with different names and tags; it is a concept deeply embedded in the prosperity theology paradigm, which posits that the Divine Being desires His adherents to flourish and prosper in various aspects of existences, including financial, material and spiritual realms. The so-called "faith gospel" or "health and wealth gospel," as some academics have labelled it, spreads the idea that it is God's intention for Christians to be prosperous, successful and healthy (Ukah, 2005; Coleman, 2000; Maxwell, 1998; Kintz, 1997). Seed sowing denotes the act of relinquishing resources, such as pecuniary assets, time or energy, with the expectation of receiving a multiplied return, often manifested in the form of copious financial abundance, divine benedictions and favour. Seed sowing constitutes a fundamental axiom for unlocking the Divine Being's benevolence and profusion.

Seed sowing as a teaching, has its origins in America (Niemandt, 2017; Obadare, 2016; Udechuckwu, 2021). Among the early proponents of the gospel were A.A. Allen, T. L. Osborn, Kenneth Hagin & John Avanzini; they contributed to the development of the gospel of prosperity in its present form (Anim, 2010; Young, 1996). The ideology is analysed in light of its past and perceived in *grosso modo* as a consistent, timeless and static system of thought that has been imported from one location to another (Lauterbach, 2020). Seed sowing became a global phenomenon with some of the above listed preachers having protégés from around the world.

The African continent proved a fertile ground for the expounding teaching/doctrine during the post-colony. This message resonated with many, particularly in the context of post-colonial Africa, where economic stability and upward mobility were highly valued. In seed sowing's preaching earliest recognisable phase, from the 1970s to 1990s, single individuals with large command of respect like Nigerian Benson Idahosa (1938–1998) or Ray McCaully (b. 1949) in South Africa were recognised as representative voices of this new kind of Christian theology (Heuser, 2016). The notion of seed sowing underwent a significant metamorphosis in its final form largely propagated in successful ministries of preachers like Nigeria's David Oyedepo and Ghana's Nicholas Duncan Williams (Udechuckwu, 2021). The iteration emphasised the idea that financial seeds sown in faith, typically in the form of tithes, offerings, or donations to religious institutions, would yield a bountiful harvest of material prosperity, spiritual growth and divine blessings.

Seed sowing has a theological construe of 'sowing and reaping' images of an intimate link between divine blessing and financial contributions to God and the church; it quantifies blessings by preaching that the more you sow the more you will reap (Heuser, 2016). The idea is embedded and illustrated by the "sowing and reaping" metaphor; it implies that church members must sow tithes and offerings in the church to reap a harvest of wealth and success (Lauterbach, 2020). Some scriptural verses are used frequently by the preachers to drive home their rhetoric; such scriptures include Mk. 11:23–23; Dt. 23–30; 3 Jn. 2; Mal. 3: 8–11; Phil.4:19; Ps. 91; Is. 53:4–5; 1 Pet.2, 24 and Mt. 9:27–31, which are utilised to support its acquisitive perspective.

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The Lausanne Theology Working Group (2010) as cited by Hauser (2016) defines the Prosperity Gospel as: "the teaching that believers have a right to the blessings of health and wealth and that they can obtain these blessings through positive confessions of faith and the 'sowing of seeds' through the faithful payments of tithes and offerings." Most of the prosperity gospel scholars have condemned seed sowing as a bad and misunderstood theology and a wrong hermeneutical interpretation of the concerned Bible passages (MacArthur, 1992). The preachers are seen as linking faith with material and this-worldly success, thereby promoting an understanding of people's relationship with God to be about receiving from God, rather than serving God (Lauterbach, 2020). Seed sowing projects a kind of giving that is not purely motivated by sympathy, love and care for members of the society or even the church, but a consumer-oriented and materialistic worldview; hence more in conjunction with secular, market-driven ideology than Christian theology (Lauterbach, 2020).

Several people think that churches that plant seeds are taking advantage of the underprivileged, calling their pastors impostor pastors and impeding the advancement of society (Lauterbach, 2020). Many allegations are always levelled against the seed-sowing preachers among which is the accusation that most of them are always found in fancy jets and cars around town living large on the resources of the poor that has been promised riches from God whom they have sown unto.

For Hauser (2016), seed sowing as gospel is the controversial claim of this – worldly success and material well-being as signs of divine grace. God becomes a vending machine from which believers can always draw blessings in the form of money, homes, cars, beautiful spouses, clever kids, good neighbours, big churches and plush vacations once they play their part (Udechuckwu, 2021). It kind of reinforces the idea that wealth and success are the primary measures of divine favour (Hinn, 2010).

Amos Yong views the prosperity gospel to have contributed to different aspects of the economic field (Yong, 2012). Seed sowing is seen in some quarters to encourage entrepreneurship and financial discipline (Bowler, 2018); it has been argued by some scholars to have made some people start to save and invest, leading to improved financial management and planning. Udechuckwu using Jean-Luc Marion's hermeneutics of pure gift, concluded; that God's blessings can be understood as a gift, but not as a 'thing' that is received because of good deeds or cut off because of sin or quantified per what the devotee can give in exchange, but as God's free and gratuitous love (Udechuckwu, 2021). In essence, God's blessings ought to be comprehended as an expression of His free and gratuitous love, unencumbered by the logic of reciprocity. This means that blessings are not earned through good deeds, nor withheld as a consequence of sin. Rather, they emanate from the boundless generosity of God, unfettered by human actions or offerings. This understanding signifies that the act of giving should not be a means of coercing or manipulating God into bestowing blessings. Instead, it should represent an opportunity for the devotee to participate in the divine economy of grace, where gifts are given without expectations of return, and blessings are received as unmerited favour.

As theologian John Milbank posits, "Grace is not a 'thing' that can be earned or received in exchange for something else; it is free from the gratuitous love of God"

(Milbank, 2006). The prosperity that is found in God should be noted as not reducible to a quantifiable entity that can be acquired or procured through human endeavour or reciprocity. Rather as from the unwavering and unconditional benevolence of God, which is bestowed upon humanity without expectation of remuneration or recompense? Udechukwu concluded that the 'non-calculable' nature of God's blessings comes to light in the Christ-event (Udechukwu, 2021).

African Religious Context of Sacrificial Gift-giving

Religion is deeply ingrained in every aspect of the culture of Africans, who dedicate their entire lives to the service of their deity and religion, and in return, expect their deity to show them favour by blessing and protecting them. Mbiti (1969) argues that Africans are willing to sacrifice anything for the sake of their religion. The African's dedication to their religion is seen in that nothing is expected to hinder them from the worship of the deity; full allegiance is given to their deity. In the worship of the deity, one of the expectations of the adherents is the use of sacrifice as a means of appeasing the deity or making requests.

While there are diverse forms of worship in Africa, Mbiti (1969) suggests that the dedication of sacrifices constitutes one of the commonest acts of worship among African peoples. It is an act and occasion of making and renewing contact between God, the spirits and human beings, that is, the spiritual and the physical world as well as 'a psychological device to restore an ontological balance between God and man.' The sacrifice as given by the adherents of the African Traditional Religion is for 'a moving equilibrium of forces' (Ejizu 1992). The Africans do not just sacrifice without a reason; they use the sacrifices to sustain and maintain equilibrium among the different forces of the earth. For instance, when the rain does not fall on time, the adherent may be asked to make sacrifices to appease the deity and even if one needs wealth, this also will be done.

The act of maintaining the interdependence between human beings and the gods entails a standard of moral ideal. This is achieved through compliance with the set of written and unwritten rules governing behaviour in this culture. The dedication of sacrificial offerings to the gods, which constitutes a vital core of African religious practice, is another means of maintaining this interdependence. Some scholars have argued that making sacrificial offerings is one of the oldest forms of communication between human beings and the deities in the African religious tradition. It is a means of establishing and sustaining mutually binding links and obligations between transactors (Mauss, 1967; Mbiti, 1969).

Udechukwu opines that "sacrificial offerings become the homeostatic control mechanism that helps the universe maintain constancy despite human activities or lack thereof that elicit consequential responses from the gods of the land" (Udechukwu, 269). Africans in accord with the phenomena of spiritual exchange that informs the African traditional religious cosmology are willing to make sacrificial offerings to the gods for a positive outcome (Udechukwu, 2021).

The phenomenon of seed-sowing-oriented churches operating within a 'sacrificial economy' of offerings and tithings exhibits a performative character (Coleman, 2011),

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wherein the ritualistic acts of giving and sacrificing are leveraged to negotiate a reciprocal relationship with God. This economy is predicated on the notion that the faithful's monetary contributions will precipitate a commensurate divine response, be it material prosperity, spiritual, enlightenment or deliverance from adversity. The act of seed sowing is elevated to a performative gesture, replete with symbolic significance of expectation. The seed sower, driven by the promise of divine recompense, engages in a transactional dynamic, wherein the magnitude of their offering is perceived to directly influence the magnitude of the divine response.

Heuser (2016) argues that in the specific connection with 'seed-faith' activity, tithing is a form of sacrificial giving. Like in the African Traditional Religion, the adherents are expected to give sacrifices to the deities to appease and secure their favour and blessing, the seed-sowing teaching portrays the Christian God to also have the tendency of getting their tithes as a means of sacrificial giving and in turn bless them. In the same vein, Droz & Gez (2015) perceive gift exchange in the form of 'tithing' in Prosperity Gospel milieus as a ritualised binding of both believer and God.

Undoubtedly, the revered African tradition of making sacrifices to god at the great festivals of seed-time and harvest positions African prosperity gospel ministers at a greater advantage of using the rhetoric of 'seed sowing' (a biblical concept suggesting that an individual will only reap if the person sows the seed of faith). The tradition of seed sowing is seen from this section, deeply rooted in African culture, has been leveraged by prosperity gospel ministers to promote their message of seed sowing in anticipation of abundant harvests, thereby aligning with the principle of reciprocity and divine retribution that are inherent to African religious heritage. By drawing upon this cultural legacy, African prosperity gospel ministers have successfully reframed the biblical concept of seed sowing, rendering it more relatable and appealing to their African audience.

Socio-Economic Effects of Seed Sowing

The phenomenon of seed sowing, ostensibly a benign religious practice, precipitates a profound socio-economic ripple effect, perpetuating a complex web of economic and social dynamics. As adherents invest their resources in the expectation of divine recompense, a culture of prosperity-oriented consumerism emerges, fuelling an insatiable desire for material acquisition. Ultimately, the socio-economic repercussions of seed sowing necessitate a nuanced examination, as they profoundly impact the social fabric and economic well-being of communities.

The seed-sowing preaching builds on the idea of faith as the starting point for receiving blessings, some scholars have argued that the language used to explain the principles of giving and receiving is often an economic one, underpinned by assumptions of calculated return. Giving is talked about as an investment and receiving is the fruit one harvests from that investment (Lauterbach, 2016). The Comaroffs opine that seed sowing rose as a result of the occult economy and that has become the new protestant ethic; it is seen as a resurgence to a new spirit of capitalism wherein spiritual rewards are bestowed instantly and take the form of material wealth (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2003).

In the argument of Lauterbach (2020), the seed-sowing gospel affects the people in all ramifications majorly in the processes of social, political, and economic change.

Meanwhile, she believes that the prosperity gospel must be looked at as a “singular theological message.” The seed sowing yields a multitude of positive socio-economic effects, fostering a culture of generosity, economic mobility, and community development. By investing in the expectation of divine multiplication, individuals cultivate a spirit of philanthropy, channelling resources towards charitable endeavours and community initiatives. This, in turn, stimulates local economics, creates employment opportunities, and enhances social services, thereby contributing to the betterment of society. Ijaola (2018) also lent his voice to this when he notes that Pentecostal preachers in Africa, as they strive to mitigate poverty, have always been found to encourage business and philanthropic engagements, though he concluded that the promise of seed sowing has not been fulfilled in the continent of Africa.

Certain seed-sowing churches have been instrumental in promulgating a paradigmatic shift in the theological discourse, wherein the hallowed halls of worship now resonate with the fervent exhortations of entrepreneurial zeal. These ecclesiastical entities, erstwhile bastions of spiritual succour, have metamorphosed into veritable incubators of business acumen, as they zealously disseminate teachings on the art of commerce, juxtaposing the sacred with the secular. Through the pulpit, charismatic pastors, donning the mantle of entrepreneurial gurus, regale their congregants with homilies on the virtues of innovation, risk-taking, and financial stewardship, all while deftly weaving scriptural narratives into the fabric of their discourse. The resultant synergy of faith and finance has spawned a new breed of Christian entrepreneurs, whose zeal for spiritual enrichment is now complemented by an unwavering commitment to material success.

Daniels III (2015) exemplifies one such joint venture between African and African-American prosperity-oriented mega-churches. The interchanges between American televangelist Bill Winston of Living Word Christian Centre (Chicago) and Nigerian mega-church ministry of Sam Adeyemi of Daystar Christian Centre (Lagos) support entrepreneurial ambitions by favouring business educational projects. This includes the founding of educational institutions with a priority on economics. Their mission statements stress personal responsibility for acquiring business skills and strategic business behaviour for realising material wealth. In such intentional cooperation between single African-American and West African mega-ministries, Daniels observes the move from consumption of wealth to entrepreneurship.

While the practice of seed sowing has undoubtedly yielded numerous positive socio-economic effects, it is equally important to acknowledge the dark underbelly of this phenomenon. Beneath the veneer of prosperity and promise, seed sowing has also perpetuated a myriad of negative socio-economic consequences, there are the economic exploitation, social manipulation and psychological coercion that have left countless individuals and communities vulnerable and disenfranchised. Although, one can argue that prosperity gospel pastors inspire a positive sense of disposition and blessedness in their adherents, in the actual sense, many of these faithful do not experience concrete benefits of these blessings in terms of financial gains or social mobility (Udechuckwu, 2021).

One of the negative socio-economic impacts of the seed sowing is found in the fact that some of the mega-churches have moved away from the original responsibility of the church which is the preaching of the gospel, they are now mere business empires, Ukah (2013) argues that some of the churches and their ministers are not more than

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‘prophets for profit,’ business-minded religious entrepreneurs. These ministers are found to have founded mega-churches, but ‘transform them into economic, financial and entrepreneurial empires which are completely controlled by their families’ (Ukah, 2013). What he basically describes is a Pentecostal kleptocracy.

Exploitation of the church members is a feature of the seed-sowing gospel. The unchecked pursuit of wealth and material success has fuelled a culture of greed, conspicuous consumption and entitlement, where the most vulnerable are exploited. Scholars have expressed concern over the wealth disparity between prosperity gospel ministers and their followers who increasingly make financial contributions to the church despite the lack of any concrete material progress in their economic and social situations. Togarasei (2011) and Dada (2004) describe this paradox as an impetus for delusion among believers whose gullibility is exploited by the pastors.

Seed sowing as a practice, has led many unsuspecting members down a treacherous financial path, culminating in the quagmire of debt. The fervent allure of reaping a bountiful harvest, coupled with the pressure to demonstrate faith and commitment, has convinced numerous individuals to surrender their financial prudence and succumb to the false promise of effortless wealth. As the seed-sowing narrative perpetuates the notion that wealth and success are divinely ordained, many members feel compelled to invest substantial sums, often beyond their means, in the expectation of a miraculous return. This reckless pursuit of prosperity has led to a culture of reckless spending, as individuals prioritise short-term gains over long-term financial stability.

Emphasis on individual prosperity and divine favour has inadvertently cultivated a culture of isolation and disconnection within its adherents. The fervent pursuit of personal wealth and success, as espoused by seed-sowing preaching, has led many to prioritise their solo endeavours over communal engagement and socialising. This laser-like attention on personal progress fosters a mindset of competition, where members view one another as rivals in the quest for divine favour, rather than as fellow travellers in a shared community.

Ilana van Wyk (2011) observes that "UCKG theology cultivates a utilitarian attitude to faith, strongly discouraging community and socialising aspect of its ecclesiology." All empathic motives of a believer to address the existential needs and desires of fellow believers or more so, of outsiders, are branded as strategic satanic weapons in subverting God's kingdom. The antagonistic perception of social outreach programmes negates offerings to poorer church members and strictly denies addressing poverty within society (Van Wyk, 2016).

This doctrine poses a significant threat to personal empowerment, undermining essential life skills and values. Achunike (2007) opines that the Nigerian religious space has been inundated by this form of preaching such that youths seem to believe in prosperity without hard work. It fosters a culture of dependency, where individuals rely solely on faith for solutions rather than taking proactive steps to address challenges. The fixation on external validation can result in a lack of self-esteem, as individuals tie their self-worth to their financial status. Paul Gifford concludes that the prosperity doctrine would subvert any effort ‘to promote self-help, self-reliance, self-esteem, self-determination, responsibility and autonomy’ (Gifford, 1991).

Seed sowing has swept through Christian communities, promising financial prosperity and material wealth; however, beneath the surface of this seemingly empowering doctrine lies a stifling effect on creative problem-solving and innovation.

Seed sowing has inadvertently discouraged individuals from harnessing their creative minds to address societal problems. Critical thinking and analytical skills, essential for developing innovative solutions, have been discouraged by the singular, formulaic approach to success. In a sermon by Kenneth Copeland, an American Televangelist, he notes that the church has closed its mind to innovation and scientific ideas and that has brought about the church not having relevance in society. The truth is the church would not have societal relevance if there is nothing that society can benefit from. Seed sowing exerts a multifaceted influence on Nigeria's economy, shaping individual attitudes towards wealth, fostering community solidarity and influencing socio-economic policies and practices. While it offers opportunities for social welfare and economic development, its implementation requires careful consideration of ethical principles, transparency and accountability to ensure equitable outcomes for all members of society. For Paul Gifford, the prosperity gospel hinders development in Africa, as it takes away individual responsibility and ignores the role of social structures when explaining poverty and unequal access to material wealth (Gifford, 2015).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This work examined how religion permeated the lives of Africans and determined their whole essence. The uncertainty of the globalising economy is noted as a factor for the resorting of the Africans to a "sacrificial economy" which is a system of using sacrifice as a means of securing economic benefit from a deity. The researchers note the seed sowing to be a part of the sacrificial economy which is embedded in the "occult economy." The transition of seed sowing historically was also explored in the cause of the research. The relationship between the seed-sowing gospel and the African religious context of sacrificial gift-giving was navigated and discovery was made of how there is a connection between both concepts.

Thus, as a recommendation, churches must at all-time prioritise the preaching of the gospel of Christ, while giving in church should be seen as a way to deal with the relationship between humans and God and with moral questions concerned with giving and receiving in a religious field. It must not be the peak of the discussion in the church. Christ must be adequately preached to the congregants as the only way to reach blessing from God, in this, the grace of God must not be seen as a "thing" but as a person. As the church continues to navigate the complexities of the 21st century, we must embrace a culture of innovation and problem-solving. By empowering individuals to think creatively and develop practical solutions to real-world issues, we can demonstrate the transformative power of faith in action.

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