



Poverty Covenant-Breaking Principles and the Realities of Hard work in Nigeria

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Abstract

The increasing rate of prosperity preaching in Nigeria is posing serious challenges to the realities of hard-work. Poverty remains a persistent socio-economic challenge in Nigeria despite the country's vast human and natural resources. The complexity of poverty in Nigeria is compounded by various socio-cultural and economic factors, including prevailing principles that may influence individuals' attitudes towards work and success. This research examines covenant-breaking principles and the realities of hard work in the Nigerian context, explores the Church contribution to curb misleading theologies of poverty covenant-breaking, and examines the destructive Pentecostal approach to poverty covenant-breaking. This research also explores how covenant-breaking principles influence individuals' perceptions and experiences of poverty in Nigeria, the perceived effectiveness of hard work in improving economic outcomes among Nigerians facing poverty, etc. This research adopts a historical method with descriptive approach and involves a review of socio-economic literature, as well as data from Journals and Textbooks. This research highlights the need for value reorientation and supportive economic policies that reward diligence and integrity. This research recommends that Church should always encourage hard work in the society, advice the government on matters concerning capacity building and human development and partner with the government on skill acquisition programmes.

Keywords: Church, Covenant-Breaking, Government, Hard Work, Nigeria, Poverty, Principles

Introduction

Poverty Covenant-Breaking in Nigeria is taking a dimension that draws the attention of scholars. The increasing rate of prosperity preaching (in bid to address poverty covenant-breaking) is alarming and posing serious challenges to realities of hard-work in Nigeria. For example, poverty covenant-breaking principles have been explained by Akinyemi (2019) as rooted in various religious and cultural doctrines; often dictate personal and societal expectations regarding success and failure. In many Nigerian communities, there are deeply held beliefs that one's prosperity or lack thereof is closely tied to adherence to moral or spiritual covenants. In Nigeria, poverty remains a pervasive issue despite significant economic growth over the past few decades (Dauda, 2017).



The complexity of poverty in Nigeria is compounded by various socio-cultural and economic factors, including prevailing principles that may influence individuals' attitudes towards work and success (Akoh, 2020). Historically, Nigeria has experienced persistent poverty, with over 40% of the population living below the poverty line (World Bank. Nigeria Poverty and Equity Update. Retrieved from World Bank, 2023). This economic challenge is often attributed to factors such as inadequate infrastructure, corruption, and economic mismanagement (Ogunleye, 2021). However, the interplay between cultural and religious beliefs also plays a critical role in shaping individuals' economic behaviors and perceptions. These principles can influence how individuals perceive their economic conditions and the perceived morality of hard work and success. For instance, some religious teachings in Nigeria suggest that poverty may result from failing to uphold certain spiritual or moral commitments, while others may view hard work as a means of fulfilling divine promises (Ojo, 2020). These perspectives can significantly impact how individuals engage with economic opportunities and challenges. Studies have shown that such beliefs can affect people's work ethics and economic behaviors, sometimes leading to resignation or fatalism when faced with economic hardships (Adegboyega, 2022).

The realities of hard work in Nigeria are often juxtaposed with these covenant-breaking principles. On one hand, there is a cultural emphasis on industriousness and perseverance as key to overcoming poverty (Ezeani, 2021). On the other hand, the disillusionment with systemic barriers and the perceived futility of hard work in the face of pervasive corruption and socio-economic inequalities can undermine these values (Adebayo, 2023). The tension between the idealization of hard work and the actual socio-economic barriers presents a complex picture. While hard work is widely recognized as a pathway to success, the effectiveness of this approach is frequently questioned due to the harsh economic realities faced by many Nigerians. This research aims to explore the intersection of poverty, covenant-breaking principles, and the realities of hard work in Nigeria, seeking to understand how these factors influence individuals' economic outcomes and societal perceptions. By examining these dynamics, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how cultural, religious, and economic factors interplay in shaping poverty and attitudes towards work in Nigeria. This research is crucial for developing more nuanced policies and interventions that address both the material and symbolic dimensions of poverty.

The bases of the research problem are the impact of poverty covenant-breaking principles on the reality of hard-work in Nigerian society which has led to laziness in the Nigerian society. This research identified and resolved some of the background problems as reduced to the following research questions:

How do covenant-breaking principles influence individuals' perceptions and experiences of poverty in Nigeria?

What is the perceived effectiveness of hard work in improving economic outcomes among Nigerians facing poverty?

What are the main socio-economic barriers that limit the effectiveness of hard work in alleviating poverty in Nigeria?



What policy measures can be recommended to address the gaps between cultural beliefs and economic realities to better support poverty alleviation efforts?

This research adopted a historical method with descriptive approach, and also involved a thorough review of existing literature in the library and on the internet, as well as data from primary and secondary materials such as Journals and Textbooks.

Poverty Covenant-Breaking Principles and Realities of Hard Work

Covenant-Breaking Principles

Covenant-breaking principles refer to a set of cultural and religious beliefs that associate an individual's socio-economic outcomes with their adherence to or violation of certain moral or spiritual commitments. In many Nigerian communities, these principles are deeply intertwined with religious doctrines and traditional values, which can significantly influence how individuals perceive their economic circumstances and the causes of poverty (Akinyemi, 2019). In Nigeria, a diverse country with numerous ethnical groups and religious traditions, covenant-breaking principles manifest in various ways across different communities. For instance, in many Christian communities, adherence to religious teachings and moral codes is believed to be linked to one's economic prosperity. Failures to uphold these spiritual commitments may be interpreted as reasons for personal or familial economic struggles (Ojo, 2020). This belief aligns with the broader theological notion that divine favor is contingent upon moral behavior and spiritual purity.

Covenant-breaking principles significantly impact economic behavior and perceptions in Nigeria. Individuals who believe that their economic hardship results from failing to uphold spiritual or moral commitments may experience feelings of guilt, shame, or resignation. This can lead to a phenomenon where individuals might not actively seek economic opportunities or improvements due to a belief that their situation is a consequence of spiritual failings rather than systemic issues or personal efforts. Moreover, these beliefs can shape how communities respond to poverty and economic challenges. For example, individuals and families might engage in specific religious or spiritual practices aimed at "restoring" their covenant with the divine, such as increased religious observance, charitable giving, or ritualistic actions (Akinyemi, 2019). While these practices can provide spiritual solace and community support, they may not necessarily address the structural and economic factors contributing to poverty.

Realities of Hard Work

Hard work is often viewed as a fundamental principle for overcoming poverty, but the realities of hard work in Nigeria reveal a more complex picture. The majority of Nigeria's population works in the informal sector, where wages are low, job security is minimal, and working conditions are often poor. Despite long hours and physical labor, many Nigerians remain trapped in cycles of poverty (Adebayo, 2023). This highlights the disconnection between the principle of hard work and the structural realities that prevent upward mobility.

In Nigeria, hard work is frequently encouraged as a virtue, and many religious leaders, politicians, and educators promote it as the key to personal and national success. However, a significant portion of the population works hard without experiencing significant economic improvement due



to systemic factors like corruption, lack of infrastructure, and poor governance. A significant portion of Nigeria's labor force is engaged in the informal sector, which includes jobs like street vending, small-scale farming, and artisanal work. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reports that about 65% of Nigerian workers operate within this sector (NBS, 2019). The nature of informal work in Nigeria is characterized by long hours, physical exertion, and a lack of job security, but these efforts often fail to translate into substantial economic gains. For instance, many small-scale farmers in rural areas work hard daily, yet remain trapped in poverty due to poor access to modern agricultural inputs, fluctuating prices, and inadequate infrastructure. The realities of hard work are also shaped by Nigeria's broader structural challenges. Corruption, for instance, erodes the economic environment by diverting resources meant for development projects, thereby limiting the impact of hard work on poverty reduction.

This research on "Poverty Covenant-Breaking Principles and the Realities of Hard Work in Nigeria" holds significant importance for several reasons. Poverty in Nigeria is a multifaceted issue characterized by significant economic, social, and political challenges. The country, despite its substantial natural resource wealth, has one of the highest poverty rates in the world, with over 40% of its population living below the poverty line (World Bank. Nigeria Poverty and Equity Update. Retrieved from World Bank, 2023). Economic theories on poverty often highlight the role of systemic factors such as inequality, lack of access to education, and economic mismanagement in perpetuating poverty (Oguleye, 2021). In Nigeria, these factors are compounded by corruption and ineffective governance, which hinder equitable economic development (Adebayo, 2023).

Another critical factor is the unequal distribution of resources. The wealth generated from Nigeria's oil and gas sector is often concentrated among small elite, while the majority of the population remains marginalized. This economic disparity is reflected in regional inequalities, with oil-rich regions and urban areas typically exhibiting higher levels of wealth compared to the impoverished northern regions (Adebayo, 2023). Nigeria exhibits significant regional disparities in poverty levels. The northern regions, particularly the Northeast and Northwest, face higher poverty rates compared to the South. This disparity is attributed to factors such as lower levels of economic development, fewer educational opportunities, and limited access to healthcare in the northern regions (Ezeani, 2021). In contrast, the southern regions, which are more industrialized and urbanized, generally have lower poverty rates but still experience pockets of poverty due to economic inequalities.

Poverty in Nigeria is not solely an economic issue; it also has profound social dimensions. Understanding the concept of poverty in Nigeria has significant implications for policy and development. Effective poverty alleviation strategies must address both economic and social factors. Policy measures should focus on reducing corruption, improving resource distribution, and enhancing access to education and healthcare.

Destructive Pentecostal Approach to Poverty Covenant Breaking

Having large numbers of Churches does not conclusively prove effectiveness or truthfulness of a ministry but it is an indicative of a passion well known to the minister. Prosperity Theology is a theology that came to exist as a reaction towards the poverty theology that was promoted by a great number of evangelicals. Prosperity Theology advocating Churches continue to penetrate



every sphere of society in Nigeria. It is unfortunate that many reformed and evangelical Churches have abandoned their involvement in missions and Church planting and have left that to Prosperity Theology advocating Churches while they remain in their comfortable buildings in the main towns.

Adeleye writes of an example of an advert for an evangelistic crusade in Zaria, one of the major cities in Nigeria, which read something like this: “Are you barren? Come to Jesus”; “Are you a failure? Come to Jesus”; “Are you poor and want prosperity?”; “Are all your plans not working out?”; “Are you sick?”; “Are you being attacked? Come to Jesus”; “come and be healed”; “Claim your inheritance and prosperity”.

The essence of evangelism is to start by preaching the law; and it is because the law has not been preached that we have so much superficial evangelism” (Holmberg, 2011). In the case of Prosperity Theology preachers, it is not just a matter of the law not being preached but a matter of adding new elements to their evangelistic strategies which altogether alters the message of the cross. For example, Creflo Dollar makes an invitation of salvation to his readers and concludes that “Complete salvation includes your health, wealth, soundness, protection, and deliverance from every curse, including death.” Because we are children of the King when we believe, physical death has no victory over us because we live eternally with the Anointed One”. This sort of evangelism portrays Christianity as a solution to suffering, poverty, sickness, death; but in so doing they minimize or dilute the message of the cross by making it appear as if these things are primary to salvation. The poor who are often the recipients of this message are lured into believing a message that is greatly altered in its content such that what is paraded as the gospel is a proclamation of another Jesus. It is with this background that many evangelical theologians have come to term the proclamation of Prosperity Theology (PT) as a different gospel. The difference doesn’t lie in the conviction that God can and does bless His people with physical healing or material prosperity (as this has always been accepted as biblical); the difference lies in the conviction that Christians ought to expect God to bless them physically and materially here and now.

In as much as Prosperity Theology attempts to address the needs of people, it does so at the expense of abusing Scripture. The gospel ought to be at the forefront in the lives of those who are suffering. Because Scripture has a specific storyline (redemptive history), it is a requirement that those who interpret it need to know this storyline and it needs to be reflected in every other area in which they engage (Goldsworthy, 2006). The influence of modern materialism is evident in Prosperity Theology. The slogan “do not be so heavenly minded that you are of no earthly use” indicates how Prosperity Theology advocates have freed themselves from the imminent reality of the new heavens and new earth towards which the whole of human history is directed. The assumed contextual relevance of Prosperity Theology is in reality not relevance in the biblical sense, because biblical contextualization is grounded in the truth of Scripture. True relevance can only be a reality when the proclamation of the gospel is given its primacy, because the Church is not commissioned primarily to reform society but to evangelize the lost. That is, if Christians are to make any significant impact to bring about change in their society, it should be on the basis of the gospel of Christ. It is true that Prosperity Theology appeals to Scripture but one cannot overlook the reality of its systematic destructive methods, which appear to have little regard for Scripture.



Prosperity Theology is unbiblical in that it claims that Christianity is a religion that ought to improve one's economic standards. This claim ignores the reality of the suffering that the majority of Christians around the world are faced with and it is not practically helpful in the cause of helping the poor both in the Church and outside the Church. Prosperity Theology fails to differentiate God's covenant with Israel that entailed some material blessings and the New Covenant (NC) which entails spiritual blessings and makes no specific promises of material blessing. Even in the Old Covenant (OC), the material blessings were not given to every individual and the Old Testament (OT) is full of passages revealing to us that there were many poor people amongst the physical descendants of Abraham (Ex. 23:1-6). The very narrowing of the essence of Christianity to living a life of unlimited material abundance and physical wellbeing is a serious distortion of the Biblical message. True Christian theology requires that Bible passages be treated with a clear appeal to the entire canon of God's revelation and not merely a citation of favourite portions.

Prosperity preachers not only tend towards reading and interpreting Bible passages without a focus on context (*sitzim leben*) but also introduce several dangerous assumptions in their approach to Scriptures, consciously or unconsciously (Kigame, 2010).

Prosperity Theology is a this-worldly theology, which encourages its members to be this-world focused and have a very low view of the afterlife. This kind of theology misses the point of Christianity. A Christianity that has little to do with eternity or minimizes its importance cannot be called Christianity in the biblical sense of the Word. While many of its proponents use Christian and biblical lingo to advocate their theology, they sadly give the impression that godliness is a means of gain (1 Tim. 6:5). "Too many prosperity preachers not only give the impression that they 'peddle God's Word' and make 'godliness a means of gain' but actually develop a bogus theology to justify their extravagant displays of wealth.

Prosperity Theology at its best only benefits those who teach it. The congregants, especially the poor are not assisted in any meaningful way, instead they are told to serve their leaders with the little they have in the hope that their own lives will improve. Yet in the final analysis, the lives of the poor do not improve. It should be accepted that Prosperity Theology advocates acknowledge the reality of suffering, however, acknowledging the presence of suffering is rendered obsolete if unhelpful answers are provided that rely on quasi-magical-faith, positive confession, and sacrificial giving to escape poverty or suffering in general.

The controversy is the use of the Bible in Prosperity Theology. Probably the worse form of trivializing human suffering is that which happens when the Bible is used to foster ideas, which will in the end destroy people's trust in God. Various passages are used to promote the idea of prosperity, for example, III John 2; II Pet. 1:3; Is. 53:5; Luke 6:38. None of these verses promises that God will make one rich and prosperous in this world, yet they are some of the key passages used to advocate Prosperity Theology. This theology dashes the hopes of people and fails to offer real answers to the issue of poverty. Propagating a theology that taunts the poor is inhuman and unchristian. The prescribed principles of Prosperity Theology, which are said to catapult the followers into wealth, are making light of the condition of the poor who work hard at keeping up with those principles but achieve nothing at the end, except disappointment and further suffering. Prosperity Theology overlooks all the warnings Jesus gives concerning riches and instead, it



encourages people to pursue riches. What makes prosperity gospel particularly dangerous is its propensity to claim innocence of any motive other than fulfilling God's will for human beings, given the ideology that people have opportunities to make life better and the only reason some people remain poor is because they do not exert enough effort to promote their own success. They are considered lazy, ineffectual or misdirected and, therefore, unblessed.

Theological Errors Requiring Correction

Before strategies can be evaluated, the specific doctrinal errors must be clearly named. Scholars have identified five principal areas of theological distortion common to poverty covenant-breaking theologies (Jones & Woodbridge, 2011; 9Marks, 2025):

Misappropriation of the Abrahamic Covenant

Prosperity teachers such as Kenneth Copeland contend that since God's covenant has been established and prosperity is a provision of this covenant, you need to realize that prosperity belongs to you now! (Copeland, 1974, as cited in The Gospel Coalition, 2018). This misappropriates the Abrahamic covenant, which Paul in Galatians 3:14 specifically frames as a spiritual inheritance, the promise of the Spirit, not a charter for material entitlement. Jones (as cited in 9Marks, 2025) argues that this blessing is spiritual and should already apply to all Christians in terms of reconciliation with God, not financial reward.

A Distorted Doctrine of Atonement

Sarles (1986) in his landmark article documents how prosperity theology claims that both physical healing and financial prosperity have been provided for in the atonement. Copeland states that God put our sin, sickness, disease, sorrow, grief, and poverty on Jesus at Calvary (Copeland, 1996, as cited in 9Marks, 2025). This atonement theology reduces Christ's salvific work to a mechanism for material comfort, detaching the cross from its central soteriological significance. As the Lausanne Consultation (2014) charged, this amounts to a parody of grace.

Proof-Texting Hermeneutics

A defining methodological flaw of prosperity theology is its proof-texting hermeneutics holding a position on issues and looking for biblical passages to justify it regardless of context (Lausanne Movement, 2024). This approach leads to the neglect of sustained New Testament teaching on suffering, persecution, and self-denial (2 Tim. 3:12; Phil. 1:29; Rom. 8:17). The result is a selective canon within the canon that systematically silences passages that challenge materialist assumptions (Bible.org, as cited in Factually.co, 2025).

Authoritarian Ecclesiology

Prosperity Churches typically reject presbyterian polity and the accountability of pastors to elders; it is common for the pastor to be the highest organizational authority (Wikipedia, 2025). Critics including Sarah Posner and Joe Conason argue that prosperity teachers cultivate authoritarian organizations in which leaders claim divinely bestowed authority to control adherents' lives (Wikipedia, 2025). This structural problem both enables and perpetuates doctrinal error, since there is no institutional mechanism for correction.



The Spiritual Stigmatization of the Poor

Spadaro and Figueroa (writing in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, as cited in Wikipedia, 2025) note that prosperity theology generates a tendency of believers to lack compassion for the poor, since poverty is seen as a sign that they have not followed the rules and therefore are not loved by God. This directly contradicts the Christian tradition's sustained preferential attention to the poor and constitutes a profound covenant-breaking theology ironically attributed not to God but to the poor themselves.

The Church Contribution to Curb Misleading Theologies of Poverty Covenant-Breaking

Modern evangelicals know that poverty is not bliss nor it is a sign of godliness. Leaving behind the faulty hermeneutics of Prosperity Theology. In as much as evangelicals decry the claims of Prosperity Theology, this should actually lead them to search Scripture to teach what Scripture has to say about wealth and poverty. Moreover, there should be a biblical way of encouraging believers to escape poverty rather than just criticizing Prosperity Theology and its methods.

Prosperity Theology advocates are often criticized for their proof-texting techniques. That is, the practice of using isolated Bible text to establish a specific doctrine. Only when Scripture is used correctly can it serve a remedial purpose and lead believers in truth. While proof-texting uses Scripture, it is often used only with the purpose of promoting subjective preconceptions. The Church's response to misleading theologies of poverty covenant-breaking has operated across three primary domains: hermeneutical and educational correction, ecclesial governance reform, and holistic missional engagement. Each domain has generated distinct documented strategies:

Hermeneutical Correction through Expository Preaching and Theological Education

The most foundational strategy is hermeneutical: training both clergy and laity to read Scripture in its literary, historical, and canonical context. The Lausanne Movement's 2014 Consultation explicitly called on seminaries to engage these issues in their curricula so that future Church leaders and theological educators develop an informed Christian critique of prosperity theology (Cape Town Commitment, as cited in Lausanne, 2024). This recommendation was already embedded in the Cape Town Commitment of 2010, which had singled out greed encompassing the prosperity gospel as one of four idolatries that Disciples of Christ must reject (Lausanne, 2024b). Specifically, hermeneutical correction strategies include: the recovery of expository preaching systematic exposition of whole books of Scripture to prevent selective proof-texting; teaching the theology of the cross and the normative Christian experience of suffering as integral to discipleship (2 Cor. 4:7–12; Phil. 3:10); formal courses in biblical hermeneutics at theological seminaries; and accessible lay-level Bible study resources that address prosperity claims directly.

Governance, Accountability, and Denominational Oversight

A second major strategy addresses the structural conditions that enable prosperity theology to flourish unchecked. Because prosperity churches typically reject external accountability (Wikipedia, 2025), the Church's response involves both internal governance reform and broader denominational or ecumenical oversight. The African Journal of Religion Study (2025) identifies pastoral accountability as one of four essential pillars for repairing damage caused by prosperity preaching alongside biblical literacy, ethical theology, and holistic discipleship. Williams (2022)



specifically argues that the communal ethics of ubuntu emphasizing shared prosperity, compassion, and accountability provide a cultural and theological framework within African Christianity for checking the individualism and opulence of prosperity preachers (cited in African Journal of Religion, 2025).

Self-recantation by some major prosperity preachers has also created pastoral openings for institutional reform. In 2019, Benny Hinn repudiated key aspects of his own prosperity teaching, stating that the blessings of God are not for sale. Joyce Meyer similarly apologized for teaching that faith automatically produces financial and physical health (Britannica, 2022). While such personal recantations do not automatically reform institutions, they demonstrate the persuasive power of sustained theological engagement with those inside the movement. At a regulatory level, some nations have introduced civil oversight of religious organizations' financial conduct. The Nigerian Federal Government's proposed Charity and Non-Governmental Organisations Commission has been discussed precisely in the context of unchecked financial exploitation by prosperity preachers (Obadare, 2018, as cited in African Journal of Religion, 2025). While Church leaders remain cautious about state intrusion, they increasingly acknowledge that self-regulation must be robust to forestall external imposition.

Holistic Discipleship and Social Engagement as Counter-Witness

The third strategy is perhaps the most theologically constructive: modeling an alternative Christian vision of covenant, poverty, and material life through holistic discipleship and tangible social engagement. This approach recognizes that poverty covenant-breaking theologies gain traction partly because they address real and pressing human experiences of deprivation. A purely academic refutation is insufficient; the Church must demonstrate a better way.

Jesus's own covenant economics described by Horsley (as cited in Kairos Center, 2021) emphasized that with the coming of the kingdom of God to the poor, justice will be realized for them, with sufficient food, clothing, shelter, and so on, for a basic livelihood. The call for genuine discipleship and a life of generosity that disposes believers to share material possessions with the poor was at the centre of Jesus' ministry (St Andrews Encyclopaedia of Theology, 2024). Paul likewise recognized the importance of addressing poverty as a concrete expression of covenant community (Gal. 2:9–10).

Practical expressions of this strategy include: intentional Church planting in impoverished communities; diaconal programs providing economic empowerment, vocational training, and micro-finance that address poverty structurally rather than spiritually penalizing it; preaching series on the theology of work, vocation, and stewardship as alternatives to seed-offering frameworks; inter-Church solidarity networks that pool resources for community development without creating patron-client dependency. The Lausanne Mission Theology Working Group identified the Church's engagement with the poor as a central theme of genuine biblical discipleship that must replace the prosperity gospel's distorted covenant vision (Lausanne, 2016).



Findings

This research found that Poverty covenant-breaking theology in Nigeria is historically rooted in genuine social suffering but theologically distorts both the Abrahamic covenant and the doctrine of atonement, reducing both to mechanisms of material entitlement.

It discovered that the equation of poverty with spiritual failure actively harms Nigerian believers by inducing shame, discouraging structural economic engagement, and fostering financial exploitation through seed-offering frameworks.

The biblical ethics of work, rooted in vocation, diligence, honesty, and stewardship (1 Thess. 4:11–12; Prov. 6:10–11; 2 Thess. 3:10), provide the theological foundation for a genuinely transformative response to Nigerian poverty, one that affirms human agency without spiritually penalizing its limitations.

Structural realities, low-productivity employment, inflation, inadequate social protection, governance failure, and corruption are the primary drivers of Nigerian poverty. Hard work remains necessary but not sufficient in this structural context; public policy reform, job creation, and institutional integrity are equally essential.

Recommendations

- i. The Church should always encourage hard-work in the society and engage people in services.
- ii. The Church should advise and partner with the government on Skill Acquisition Programmes.
- iii. Nigerian seminaries and theological colleges must incorporate courses in biblical hermeneutics, biblical ethics, and the theology of work to equip pastors to counter covenant-breaking prosperity frameworks.
- iv. Churches should develop discipleship programs that recover indigenous Nigerian work ethics and align them with biblical vocation theology, replacing seed-offering dependency with economic empowerment strategies.
- v. Religious regulatory frameworks should be strengthened to prevent financial exploitation of the poor through prosperity preaching, as recommended by scholars concerned about pastorpreneurship.
- vi. The Nigerian government must address structural poverty through job creation, social protection investment, and anti-corruption measures, recognizing that no theological framework, however sound, can substitute for economic policy reform.

Conclusion

Realistically, Prosperity Theology has failed to live up to its claims and does not seem to have tangible solutions to the problem of poverty. The majority of its members, who follow it because of the benefits it promises, continue to be amongst the poorest of our society.



Prosperity Theology is an arrogant and self-congratulatory theology for the rich as it makes a mockery out of the less prosperous ones (Doss, 2011). Although Prosperity Theology has some relevant aspects which we can all learn from such as, evangelism, Church growth and seeking for better living standards, it fails in its biblical application of these areas. Thus, its positive aspects are overshadowed by faulty hermeneutics, preying on the destitute of their communities.

This research explored the relationship between poverty covenant-breaking principles and the realities of hard work in Nigeria. While religious texts and cultural proverbs promote hard work as a path to prosperity, economic reports indicate that structural barriers, such as corruption and poor infrastructure, often limit individuals' ability to achieve upward mobility. The research found that while hard work is highly valued in Nigerian society, its effectiveness in alleviating poverty is often undermined by systemic barriers and economic realities. The disconnection between religious and cultural teachings and the socio-economic context in which people work has led to widespread disillusionment, as many Nigerians find that hard work alone is insufficient for escaping poverty.

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