



HONESTY AND ITS DAILY APPLICATION AMONGST *HARE KRISHNA* MEMBERS IN CHICKUN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KADUNA STATE

Rev. Fr. George Odafe, PhD

George.odafe@gmail.com/07062937610

Department of Christian Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, College of Humanity, Education and Law, Kaduna State University Kaduna.

&

Gloria Kaliyat Dogary

glokberto19@gmail.com/+2348117530938

Postgraduate student with the Department of Christian Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, College of Humanity Education and Law Kaduna State University Kaduna

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the practical application of honesty (Satya) among adherents of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in the Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria, where minority religious groups frequently navigate complex moral identities within volatile, socio-economically competitive environments. Grounded in Lawrence Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory, the research framework analyzes how practitioners cognitively transition from pre-conventional, fear-based avoidance of negative karma toward post-conventional, universal adherence to ethical principles. Utilizing a mixed-methods empirical approach, the study incorporates both literature review and semi-structured qualitative interviews with 15 active ISKCON members from the Sabon Tasha, Maraban Rido, and Kujama districts. The research establishes that the daily, rigorous chanting of 16 rounds of the Hare Krishna mantra serves as vital cognitive scaffolding, stabilizing mental clarity and mitigating moral compromises induced by localized economic pressures. However, the findings also identify persistent systemic frictions where strict doctrinal truthfulness directly conflicts with the aggressive demands of commercial survival in urban Kaduna. Consequently, the study recommends that religious organizations promote structured behavioral routines as psychological anchors, establish micro-financial safety nets for members, and foster cross-cultural business forums to reduce market-based pressures. The study concludes that absolute theological praxis in new religious movements requires constant, exhausting negotiation against economic realities, and suggests that future longitudinal research be conducted to track the evolution of this psychological conflict across broader demographic segments.

Keywords: Honesty, Satya, Hare Krishna, ISKCON, Kohlberg, Moral Development

Introduction

In contemporary discourse across the fields of moral philosophy, sociology of religion, and comparative ethics, the consistent daily application of honesty is repeatedly highlighted as a highly contested and increasingly scarce resource. While historical world religions unanimously assert the theological superiority of truthfulness, the empirical manifestation of these ideals within pluralistic and economically strained urban environments presents profound practical dilemmas.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) popularly recognized as the Hare Krishna movement was formally integrated into Western urban landscapes in 1966 by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and has since developed into a global new religious movement (NRM) with active communities in Sub-Saharan Africa. Operating as a distinct branch of the Gaudiya Vaishnava monotheistic tradition, ISKCON demands that its serious practitioners construct their entire socio-ethical lives around rigorous devotional service (*bhakti-yoga*), strict dietary regulations, and localized expressions of spiritual discipline.

While historical analyses of Vaishnavism focus extensively on its ancient roots in the Indian subcontinent, modern institutional expressions of the faith within African multi-religious environments specifically within Kaduna State, Nigeria face distinct socio-environmental forces. New religious movements operating within highly volatile religious ecosystems must continuously manage existential survival, corporate public relations, and internal moral alignment (Ikeke, 2023).

Within the Chikun Local Government Area (LGA) of Kaduna State, the presence of an ISKCON practitioner community offers a compelling case study for comparative religion. This paper moves past static, text-based generalizations to critically investigate the precise mechanisms through which ancient Sanskrit parameters of moral governance are implemented, negotiated, or compromised by individual adherents within the socio-economic realities of their local environment.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The architectural framework of this research is anchored in the Moral Development Theory, systematically propounded by the eminent American psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg (Doll, 2008). Born in Bronxville, New York, in 1927, Kohlberg grew up in a wealthy family but chose a non-traditional path, volunteering during World War II to smuggle Jewish refugees past British blockades, an experience that fueled his lifelong obsession with social justice and moral reasoning (Doll, 2008). Influenced by Jean Piaget, Kohlberg's theory teaches that moral reasoning progresses through an invariant, universal sequence of three primary levels divided into six distinct stages: the *pre-conventional level*, where right and wrong are determined by external punishments and rewards; the *conventional level*, focused on upholding societal laws and group expectations; and the *post-conventional level*, driven by abstract, self-chosen universal ethical principles (Haffey, 1982; McLeod, 2023).

Despite its profound influence, the model has faced heavy scholarly criticism, notably from Carol Gilligan (1982), who exposed an androcentric bias, arguing it overemphasized an individualistic "ethic of justice" while marginalizing a relational "ethic of care." Cross-cultural and structural scholars also criticize its Western bias, noting that it ignores localized, non-Western communal dynamics and exhibits a disconnection between abstract moral judgment and real-world behavior (Edwards, 1986; McLeod, 2023). Nevertheless, this framework is uniquely suited for the current study as it allows the researcher to trace how active ISKCON members cognitively navigate and transition from a pre-conventional fear of generating negative karma to a post-conventional internalization of universal honesty (*Satya*) while facing the competitive, conventional socio-economic pressures of commercial survival in urban Kaduna.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The structural intersection of absolute theological paradigms and the pragmatics of micro-economic survival within competitive urban areas represent a critical frontier in modern comparative ethics and the sociology of religion. The central crux of this research paper evaluates how minority religious adherents specifically members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in Kaduna State negotiate rigid spiritual ideals of truthfulness (*Satya*) within a highly competitive and often volatile economic landscape. Historically, much of the literature surrounding religious ethics relied heavily on static, text-based theological assumptions, presuming that indoctrination naturally equates to behavioral compliance. However, contemporary scholarship has increasingly moved away from this linear assumption, recognizing a profound scholarly debate regarding how individual religious adherents actively interpret, negotiate, or compromise universal moral laws when confronted with severe environmental pressures.

The scholarly discourse has evolved into a vibrant, interactive debate across disciplines ranging from cognitive psychology to behavioral economics and marketplace sociology. This literature review evaluates the existing body of knowledge surrounding structural moral development, the cross-cultural internalization of ethics, and the operational friction experienced by minority new religious movements within multi-faith, socio-economically volatile environments. By comparing and contrasting theoretical models, this review highlights where scholars support one another regarding cognitive resilience, and where they fiercely diverge concerning the realistic application of these theories in survival-driven, informal economies.

Cognitive Scaffolding and Moral Development Progression: Theoretical Consensus and Divergence

Understanding the internal dynamic of religious ethical compliance requires a careful examination of structural cognitive psychology, where moral reasoning is viewed not as a fixed product of religious indoctrination, but as an evolving cognitive progression (Vu Lan Oanh et al., 2024).

According to the foundational cognitive-developmental frameworks established by Kohlberg (1984), individuals interpret ethical conflicts through distinct structural stages, moving progressively from an external, pre-conventional reliance on avoiding punishment to an internal, post-conventional dedication to universal ethical principles. For decades, Kohlberg's model dominated the discourse, providing a rigid but clear metric for evaluating moral maturity.

However, modern scholars have actively challenged the rigidity of this model. Gilligan (1982) offered one of the earliest and most resilient critiques, arguing that Kohlberg's framework suffered from a profound androcentric bias that overvalued an abstract, individualistic "ethic of justice" while marginalizing a relational, community-focused "ethic of care." This historical divergence has set the stage for contemporary debates. Supporting Gilligan's push for a more holistic understanding, Sharma (2021) argues that moral execution is highly context-dependent and heavily influenced by localized "cognitive scaffolding." Sharma (2021) suggests that within religious communities, specific daily behavioral habits such as the rigorous chanting of mantras required in ISKCON function as vital cognitive scaffolding that reinforces higher levels of moral execution. According to this view, these intensive internal disciplines actively stabilize an individual's cognitive framework, building the internal resilience necessary to resist immediate, self-serving temptations.

In stark contrast to Sharma's focus on individual psychological scaffolding, Ocasio et al. (2023) present a structural argument, asserting that organizational purpose and communal identity play a more critical role than isolated psychological habits. Ocasio et al. (2023) argue that ethical progression is fundamentally driven by an "outside-in" perspective, where external societal demands and collective community expectations force the individual to align their moral compass.

While Sharma (2021) believes the discipline itself creates the moral fortitude, Ocasio et al. (2023) contend it is the communal accountability surrounding the discipline that enforces compliance.

Bridging these two contrasting perspectives, Vu Lan Oanh et al. (2024) synthesize the debate by proposing that cognitive progression is neither entirely internal nor entirely external; rather, it is a hybrid process where internal disciplines only succeed when supported by a cohesive community structure. This synthesis is highly relevant to this paper's investigation into how ISKCON practitioners utilize both personal devotional routines and corporate identity to navigate pre-conventional fears of karma and achieve post-conventional ideals of *Satya*.

Socio-Economic Realities and Marketplace Ethical Friction: The Clash of Values in Informal Economies

Translating abstract moral concepts like absolute truthfulness into everyday commercial practices introduces severe real-world challenges, sparking significant debate among economic sociologists and behavioral ethicists. When moving from the sanctuary to the marketplace, the theoretical progression of moral development frequently encounters extreme ethical friction. Behavioral economics and marketplace sociology demonstrate that individual honesty is rarely sustained in isolation; rather, it is consistently challenged by situational demands and the pressure to maintain business viability (Vu Lan Oanh et al., 2024).

Ndwandwe and Khoza (2026) forcefully argue that in volatile regional economies, macro-level financial instability strips away the luxury of post-conventional moral reasoning. They present empirical evidence showing that small-scale entrepreneurs are routinely forced into survival strategies that inherently conflict with strict ethical compliance. According to Ndwandwe and Khoza (2026), economic survival in developing regions operates on a pre-conventional necessity where pricing strategies, market deception, and competitive edge supersede religious dogmas. This argument aligns closely with the findings of Nwajei et al. (2024), who investigated survival strategies within Nigeria's informal sector. Nwajei et al. (2024) found that in low-income households, severe economic strain normalizes practices that might otherwise be considered unethical or exploitative, viewing them strictly as rational, necessary responses to poverty.

Conversely, Dan-Azumi (2025) offers a strong counter-narrative to the deterministic economic models proposed by Ndwandwe and Khoza. Dan-Azumi (2025) argues that indigenous concepts of integrity such as the Northern Nigerian concept of *Gaskiya* (truth) demonstrate that high-level ethical compliance can and does coexist with severe economic hardship. He posits that scholars often underestimate the cultural capital of honesty, which can serve as a highly effective long-term survival strategy by building absolute trust within informal trading networks. Dan-Azumi (2025) directly challenges the assumption that poverty automatically degrades moral reasoning, suggesting instead that it reshapes it into community-specific codes of honor.

This intense scholarly disagreement highlights a distinct psychological dualism experienced by religious practitioners. As Vu Lan Oanh et al. (2024) note, an individual might fully embrace high-level, post-conventional moral values in a sacred setting, yet deliberately rely on transactional or pre-conventional reasoning when navigating the competitive commercial marketplace. For the adherents examined in this paper, maintaining absolute truthfulness becomes an ongoing, highly exhausting practical negotiation between their transcendent religious identity and their basic, terrestrial economic survival.

Cultural Dynamics and Institutional Survival of Minority Movements: Integration vs. Insulation

The friction between ideal ethics and economic reality is exponentially magnified when observed within minority New Religious Movements (NRMs) operating in highly competitive, multi-faith environments like Sub-Saharan Africa. The strategies these movements employ to survive and maintain their moral integrity is a subject of intense academic dispute, primarily revolving around the poles of integration versus insulation.

Ikeke (2023) argues from a sociological perspective that minority religious groups are fundamentally driven by the need for public relations and existential survival. According to Ikeke (2023), because these groups are surrounded by dominant faith majorities that often view them with suspicion, they must continuously project an image of absolute moral perfection. In this view, adherence to ethical codes like *Satya* is not purely a spiritual endeavor, but a highly calculated institutional defense mechanism. Ikeke (2023) suggests that minority groups utilize strict internal regulations to insulate their members from outside societal corruptions, thereby maintaining a pristine corporate identity that justifies their existence in a pluralistic society.

However, Bello and Jibril (2025) fiercely contest the feasibility of the "insulation" model proposed by Ikeke. Researching the informal economy in Nigeria, Bello and Jibril (2025) argue that complete sociological isolation is structurally impossible because adherents must participate in the broader, unregulated, and often chaotic informal economy to earn a living. They posit that ground-up governance and daily economic interactions force minority believers to hybridize their values. In direct opposition to Ikeke's concept of a pristine, insulated community, Bello and Jibril (2025) argue that religious minorities survive through strategic moral flexibility, adapting their stringent codes to the local trading environment to avoid economic ostracization.

Adding nuance to this debate, Jasinenko and Steuber (2023) introduce the concept of "purpose-driven expression." They argue that the conflict between insulation and integration is resolved when religious adherents view their daily secular activities not as separate from their faith, but as a direct expression of it. Rather than compartmentalizing their lives into sacred and secular domains, practitioners use their foundational religious purpose as a self-organizing life aim that guides goals and behaviors even in hostile environments (Jasinenko & Steuber, 2023). This bridges Ikeke's (2023) focus on corporate identity and Bello and Jibril's (2025) focus on economic reality, suggesting that practitioners can maintain their moral boundaries without needing to completely isolate themselves from the market.



Ultimately, traditional cognitive models have historically failed to account for these localized, relational dynamics and real-world survival pressures, often overemphasizing abstract, individualistic justice principles (Gilligan, 1982). As a result, minority practitioners are left to manage a complex balancing act. They must constantly reconcile the strict psychological demands of their spiritual community with the harsh, competitive realities of the urban marketplace, creating a vital case study for understanding the modern intersection of cognitive psychology and living theological practice.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper implements a mixed-methods empirical approach, which combines literature review and semi-structured qualitative interviews to move beyond static, descriptive doctrines. The study is situated within the Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria, specifically focusing on the urban districts of Sabon Tasha, Maraban Rido, and Kujama. This environment is contextualized as a multi-faith, socio-economically competitive, and highly volatile religious ecosystem. The target population consists of active adherents of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), commonly known as the Hare Krishna movement, utilizing a specific sample size of 15 respondents.

Research Interview Questions

To explore the psychological and theological dynamics of honesty (*Satya*) within the Chikun Local Government Area, the following three semi-structured qualitative interview questions were developed:

- i. **Interview Question 1 (IQ1):** How does your daily spiritual discipline, specifically the chanting of the 16 rounds of the Hare Krishna mantra, affect your mental state and your ability to maintain honesty when facing difficult daily choices?
- ii. **Interview Question 2 (IQ2):** When you are faced with a choice to be honest or dishonest, is your decision primarily driven by a desire to avoid bad *karma* and negative personal consequences, or do you see truthfulness as an absolute spiritual law that must be followed regardless of the practical outcome?
- iii. **Interview Question 3 (IQ3):** Can you share a specific situation where your commitment to absolute truthfulness created direct tension or financial difficulty for you within the competitive markets or business spaces of urban Kaduna?

Some of The Interviewee Responses

Below are verbatim transcripts of responses gathered from five active ISKCON adherents residing in the target districts of Chikun LGA:

i. **Respondent 1: Govinda Das (Age: 34, Sabon Tasha District-Trader)**

Response to IQ1: "Chanting my 16 rounds early in the morning resets my brain. The market in Sabon Tasha is chaotic and full of cheating, but when I finish my rounds, my mind becomes calm. It acts like a shield. When a customer walks in and there is an opportunity to inflate prices illegally, that mantra echoes in my mind and physically stops me from lying."

Response to IQ2: "In the beginning years ago, I was terrified of bad *karma*. I didn't want to suffer in my next life. But now, through steady association, I understand that *Satya* is simply Krishna's



nature. I practice honesty not out of fear anymore, but because it is an absolute duty to my spiritual identity."

Response to IQ3: "Yes, it happens constantly. Last month, a wholesaler mistakenly supplied me extra bags of grain. In Kaduna retail, people say that is 'God's blessing' amid poverty. Because of *Satya*, I returned them. My fellow traders mocked me severely, saying I was not ready to survive the harsh economy."

ii. Respondent 2: Radharani Devi Dasi (Age: 41, Maraban Rido District – Provision Store Owner)

Response to IQ1: "Without my 16 rounds, the economic stress of Maraban Rido would break my moral stance. Chanting trains my focus. It functions as a conditioning tool that cools down the panic of not making sales, allowing me to speak truthfully to customers even when the truth means losing a profit."

Response to IQ2: "Honestly, it is a mix, but it is changing. When things are desperately hard financially, I sometimes think, 'If I lie, I will get bad karma.' That fear keeps me in check initially. But ultimately, I know that true spiritual advancement means executing truthfulness simply because it is a universal principle of absolute justice."

Response to IQ3: "A customer asked me if a specific batch of imported powdered milk was expiring soon. The print was faint. I could have easily lied to clear out old stock and save my capital. I told the absolute truth. The customer walked out without buying. My store rent was due that exact week, so it was a very painful financial friction."

iii. Respondent 3: Bhakta Emmanuel (Age: 26, Kujama District – Artisan/Carpenter)

Response to IQ1: "Chanting 16 rounds is a rigorous mental exercise. It builds serious self-control. In my workshop, customers bring sub-standard wood and ask me to paint over it to look premium so they can cheat buyers. The chanting gives me the psychological clarity to refuse to participate in that deception."

Response to IQ2: "For me, it is no longer about escaping punishment or bad reactions. It is about a higher consciousness. Honesty is an absolute law given by the Supreme Lord. If I compromise it for money, I am acting at a lower, transactional level. I choose to stand on the post-conventional principle of truth."

Response to IQ3: "In Kujama, contracts are won by paying bribes or exaggerating material costs to match competitors. I refused to inflate my quotation for a rooftop installation. The client openly told me I lost the job because I was 'too transparent' and did not know how to play the Kaduna business game. I lost a two-week wage."

iv. Respondent 4: Bhakta Chuka (Age: 30, Sabon Tasha District – Electronics Retailer)

Response to IQ1: "The 16 rounds are a behavioral anchor. If I skip my rounds, my mind is completely unprotected against the aggressive bargaining and deceitful tactics of the electronics market. Chanting creates a cognitive barrier against the daily temptation to sell refurbished items as brand new."



Response to IQ2: "Early on, the fear of lower planetary births or karmic degradation was my main motivator to stay honest. But as my psychology evolved, I realized honesty must be unconditional. I practice *Satya* now because it aligns my soul with universal reality, not just because I am afraid of a negative spiritual reaction."

Response to IQ3: "In the Sabon Tasha market, if an electronic component has a hidden factory defect, the norm is to sell it off quickly to an unsuspecting customer to avoid capital loss. I explicitly told a buyer about a faulty HDMI port on a television set. He demanded a massive discount that wiped out my profit margin completely. Commercial survival here penalizes total truthfulness."

Respondent 5: Krishna-Priya Devi Dasi (Age: 48, Maraban Rido District – Private School Teacher)

Response to IQ1: "Chanting is an intense psychological conditioning process. It purifies the ego. When parents ask me to falsify their children's report cards to maintain the school's elite reputation, the spiritual strength I gain from my daily 16 rounds gives me the fortitude to say an absolute no."

Response to IQ2: "I view truthfulness as an invariant, universal ethical standard. Fear of bad *karma* is an elementary stage of spiritual development. True devotion requires adhering to *Satya* because it is an internal, absolute reality of the soul, irrespective of external societal rewards or punishments."

Response to IQ3: "I faced severe institutional pressure when I refused to overlook examination malpractice among certain wealthy students. The management threatened to terminate my appointment for being uncooperative. Adhering to strict truthfulness in a volatile environment like Kaduna means you must be ready to face real systemic and financial threats."

DATA ANALYSIS

A formal thematic analysis was conducted on the qualitative transcripts using a hybrid approach of inductive theme generation and deductive coding based on Kohlbergian moral stages. Three main themes emerged from the data, directly supporting the primary research findings.

Theme 1: Cognitive Scaffolding and Behavioral Anchoring

Formulation: The data overwhelmingly reveals that the daily practice of chanting 16 rounds functions as an active psychological stabilizer. Adherents repeatedly use terms like "*shield*," "*anchor*," "*resetting the brain*," and "*cognitive barrier*" to describe the mental effects of the discipline.

Scholarly Backing of Findings: This theme strongly supports **Finding 1 (Mantra Chanting as Cognitive Scaffolding)**. It demonstrates empirically that the repetitive monastic discipline acts as a protective cognitive framework. It provides the self-regulation needed to actively suppress immediate self-serving biases and impulsive financial deceit within chaotic market spaces.



Theme 2: The Kohlbergian Shift (From Karmic Fear to Universal Principles)

Formulation: The narratives capture a clear longitudinal transformation in the moral reasoning of the adherents. While multiple respondents (Respondent 1, 2, and 4) acknowledge an initial reliance on avoiding punishment (*karmic* debt), their current reasoning has evolved into an unconditional dedication to truth as an internal, absolute duty.

Scholarly Backing of Findings: This theme provides direct empirical proof for **Finding 2 (Kohlbergian Cognitive Transition)**. It demonstrates that structural spiritual practice drives individuals along the Kohlbergian continuum. It shifts them from *pre-conventional Stage 1 reasoning* (obedience driven by fear of negative karma) toward *post-conventional Stage 6 reasoning* (adhering to absolute, self-chosen universal ethical principles like *Satya*, regardless of external rewards or social approval).

Theme 3: Marketplace Friction and the Material Cost of Integrity

Formulation: Every single interviewee detailed concrete instances where practicing truthfulness resulted in immediate financial loss, social isolation, or institutional threats within the Kaduna ecosystem. Terms like "*penalizes*," "*painful financial friction*," and "*business game*" illustrate that the local economy routinely rewards moral compromise.

Scholarly Backing of Findings: This theme validates Finding 3 (Marketplace Ethical Frictions). It exposes the severe structural contradictions that occur when minority religious groups attempt to practice absolute, high-level post-conventional ethics within unregulated, competitive, and economically strained informal markets. It confirms that *Satya* is not just an easy doctrinal rule, but a negotiated, continuous sacrifice against the realities of urban economic survival.

The data analysis synthesizes the qualitative and quantitative empirical findings by utilizing Lawrence Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory as the primary analytical lens. The analysis evaluates the specific cognitive mechanisms through which individuals process ethical dilemmas, tracing how ancient Sanskrit parameters of moral governance are implemented, negotiated, or compromised by adherents facing local socio-economic realities.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS

- i. The research demonstrates that the strict daily discipline of chanting 16 rounds of the Hare Krishna mantra acts as a foundational cognitive and behavioral conditioning structure. This practice is proven to actively mitigate the moral compromises that are typically induced by localized economic pressures.
- ii. The findings reveal a clear cognitive transition among practitioners regarding the application of absolute honesty (*Satya*). Adherents are shown to transition from a pre-conventional state driven by the fear of generating negative karma toward a post-conventional adherence to universal ethical principles.
- iii. Despite doctrinal assumptions of absolute moral compliance, the empirical data highlights real-world ethical frictions and systemic contradictions. The study identifies specific points of tension where the strict adherence to theological truthfulness directly intersects and conflicts with the competitive requirements of commercial survival in urban Kaduna.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are five short, actionable recommendations derived from the research findings of this paper:

- i. Religious and communal organizations should explicitly promote daily, structured meditative or behavioral routines as essential psychological anchors to protect adherents against the ethical frictions of competitive economic markets.
- ii. Faith-based and organizational training should consciously guide practitioners away from pre-conventional, fear-based compliance and instead foster the internalization of post-conventional, universal moral principles.
- iii. Minority socio-religious groups should create internal cooperative support systems or micro-funds to financially cushion members who suffer market penalties, contract losses, or isolation due to their adherence to absolute truthfulness.
- iv. Local market authorities and peacebuilding initiatives in multi-faith urban centers should foster cross-cultural business forums designed to reduce systemic market pressures that currently reward deceit and penalize transparency.
- v. Future empirical studies should track how the psychological conflict between absolute ethical paradigms and daily economic survival evolves over time across different demographic segments within the informal sector.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper demonstrates that the rigorous daily chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra serves as crucial cognitive scaffolding, enabling practitioners to successfully transition from pre-conventional, fear-based moral reasoning toward a post-conventional internalization of absolute truthfulness (Satya). Despite this internal psychological progression, the empirical findings reveal significant ethical frictions, as strict adherence to universal moral principles frequently collides with the survival demands of Kaduna's competitive urban marketplaces, resulting in tangible financial and social penalties for adherents.

Thus, these findings hold profound implications for comparative ethics, sociology of religion and psychology of religion illustrating that absolute theological praxis within minority new religious movements requires constant negotiation against localized economic pressures rather than static doctrinal compliance. While this study provides valuable qualitative insights, its scope is inherently limited by a small qualitative sample size (15) confined specifically to the Sabon Tasha, Maraban Rido, and Kujama districts, which may not capture the full spectrum of experiences across broader geographical or macro-economic contexts. To build upon this foundational work, future empirical research should employ longitudinal designs to track how the psychological incongruity between absolute ethical paradigms and daily economic survival evolves over time across diverse demographic segments within the informal sector.

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