

Impact of Prosperity Gospel on the Political Aspect in Selected Neo-Pentecostal Movements in Karingani Ward, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya

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Abstract

This study sought to investigate how prosperity gospel influences the political aspect of followers. The prosperity gospel is a teaching that is highly taught in neo-Pentecostal movements, finding acceptability and adaptability in the world, attracting many in neo-Pentecostal movements, hence, how does the gospel influence adherents' political aspect? Neo-Pentecostal movements have increased in numbers over the past decade in Karingani Ward, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. The Functionalism Theory guided the study to analyse the influence of prosperity gospel on the political aspect of its followers. The study applied the descriptive survey design. Yamane's formula was applied to obtain a sample size of 281 respondents. In addition, six pastors were selected from the churches, and the total sample was 294 respondents. The research instruments utilised were questionnaires and interviews. The study's findings revealed that prosperity teachings in Neo-Pentecostal movements had positive and negative impacts on the political aspect of followers, which is, voting and supporting specific political leaders and a given political party. On the other hand, the teaching of prosperity in these movements resulted in disunity in the church, ethnic tension, members leaving the church, and fights extending to communal daily living. The study concludes that the involvement of prosperity gospel preachers in political discussion in church significantly influences the political conviction, choices, voter turnout, and social interaction of members of these movements. Therefore, a policy formulation should be recommended that controls direct clergy influence on politics.

Key terms: Adherents, clergy, movements, neo-Pentecostal, politics, prosperity gospel.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The prosperity gospel originated in America in the 1940s and 1950s. It had many proponents such as Oral Robert, William E. Kenyon, Kenneth Hagin, Osborn, Kenneth Copeland, Gordon Lindsay, Bill Graham, F.F. Bosworth, A. Allen, T.D. Jakes, Creflo Dollar, Prince Osteen, and others. According to Anderson (2005), the prosperity gospel was an offspring of the Azusa Spiritual Revival of Los Angeles that focused on speaking in tongues (Hunt, 2000; Bowler, 2018). Prosperity gospel developed, thrived, and adopted the American culture of consumerism that led to a belief that God was to reward those who gave in church with material and health blessings; many followers of the prosperity gospel viewed material blessings as indicators of God's favour (Hartwell, 2021). The gospel spread to other parts of the world. In Africa, the gospel has gained acceptability, as everybody seeks solutions, and the prosperity gospel promises solutions to poverty, poor health, injustices, and other issues facing Africa. This has influenced all aspects of human life. This paper handled the impact of the prosperity gospel on the political aspect of its followers within the Karingani ward.

The prosperity gospel is derived from the Bible, where material and health success is seen as God's desire for his followers. In addition, wealth and good health are evidence of God's blessing. Such teachings have biblical grounds to enhance believers' faith; for instance, King Solomon was visited by many world rulers, and all brought him gold and other valuables. Such visits influenced their loyal relationship. Every person God blessed in the Bible had some political influence, and individual wealth indicated God's favour. The Bible portrays a heavenly store full of treasures to be rewarded to faithful followers through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:3-14). Material wealth is the central teaching in neo-Pentecostal churches, and the prosperity gospel cannot be separated from politics. Hence, this study sought to investigate how prosperity teaching influences its followers' political aspects: voting, having political party alignment, supporting and disliking some leaders, having no interest in politics, and how social interaction is affected in the church and outside the church.

In Africa, religious and political leaders are very influential in political matters. According to Haynes (2019), clergy have played a key role in influencing and shaping African politics. Church leaders, such as the Catholic Bishops, significantly influenced African democracy; their voices were never ashamed to push for a democratic Africa. Religion in Africa has a transformative feature in African politics. Most African clergy leaders have utilised the church as a mobilisation tool to change policies, roles, and human rights movements. In addition, the political class has, for a long time, used religious movements to create its identity and mobilise its support. This paper determined how the prosperity gospel influences its followers on political matters in six selected churches based on teaching, pastors' reactions, and money given in church by politicians.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Politics and neo-Pentecostal churches are inseparable. Asamoah-Gyadu (2006) indicates that African Neo-Pentecostal churches act as tools to promote African politicians into leadership. Neo-Pentecostal churches are known for large followers who seek the prosperity gospel; hence, Politicians use this to their advantage through church leadership by enticing the technique of church giving and rewarding pastors with national positions to obtain political alignment and support of church members. In addition, Asamoah (2017) asserts that neo-Pentecostal clergy had a role in educating and advising followers of the prosperity gospel in making choices and praying for a conducive political environment in a country. Despite this, these

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studies neglect how the clergy had a role in ensuring a successful and peaceful environment during and after the campaign, which influenced their adherence, which this paper tends to address.

In addition, Pentecostals and other denominations feel obligated to pray and declare positive things over their countries. Prayer meetings, fasting and praying, and state breakfast prayers are organised to dedicate the nation to the hands of the Lord for good leadership, a peaceful environment, development, and overcoming poverty, corruption, poor services, and other vices. Haynes (2015) indicates that believers are confident that their prayers are essential for the nation's stability. Additionally, the prosperity gospel movement influences political outcomes by discussing and analysing citizens who admire and wish to secure political positions to ensure that the elected have a godly character that compels the nation's success.

Subsequently, a study by Frahm-Arp (2018) indicates that prosperity gospel movements emphasised that it was their duty to pray for the country, especially for leaders and other civil servants, to fight corruption and provide good social services. Furthermore, prosperity gospel followers are encouraged to pray, portray a good example, and never participate in anti-government activity. There is a call for members to engage in progressive prosperity, where one could participate in social activities such as helping the poor and needy by introducing institutions that promote the common good for all. Accumulating finances through hard work and self-employment is essential since they create more jobs and assists in governance by creating opportunities.

The church is always in a transformative mission that is under question. Mwongera (2023) states that one tenet of the prosperity gospel, the doctrine of seed planting, hinders the mission of the church. According to Wariboko (2012), prosperity gospel preachers influence the political arena by utilising the prophetic mandate accrued in the Bible, by being the salt and light of the world. He adds that the desire to have god-fearing Christians in national politics compels adherents in the neo-Pentecostal movements to participate in civil acts such as voting. Wariboko (2012) indicates that pastor Tunde of the Latter Rains Assembly in Nigeria influenced the followers of the prosperity gospel to stand against injustices witnessed in the country. This motivated political activism in many neo-Pentecostals.

For years, Pentecostal movements held an apolitical stand that was highly influenced by the biblical teaching that Jesus was coming soon, and it was their responsibility to spread the good news while avoiding worldly enticements. Politics was considered a sinful and corrupt worldly issue that could despair with Christ's second coming (Asamoah, 2017). Humble origin and background demotivated Pentecostals from engaging in politics, and a lack of social recognition and connection demotivated them from pursuing political ambitions. Vlas and Sav (2014) indicate a change in belief in Jesus coming soon as a hindrance to Pentecostals from politics. The apolitical stand was changing in the 21st century when Pentecostal movements were turning into political shapers and movers. The followers of the prosperity gospel could support a political leader, a political party, and a time stand or seek political positions they either win or lose. Kavulla (2008) lists politicians who utilised neo-Pentecostal positions to push their political ambitions. He lists Puis Muiro, Moses Ole Sakuda, Mike Brawan, Margarete Wanjiru, and others who utilised the pulpit to gain political popularity. This study intended to determine if followers of the prosperity gospel are influenced by the prosperity gospel to have some political stance and actions.

Neo-Pentecostal pastors extend their influence beyond their congregants to the political arena. Pastors in neo-Pentecostal movements utilise their soft power capabilities to attract the attention of the political class, for instance, peace-building initiatives, humanitarian activities, national cohesion, and leadership training programs (Parsitau, 2019). Such acts lead to survival. According to Deacon et al. (2013), neo-Pentecostal narratives enable ordinary people to have some control over their lives, yet with minimal social, economic, or political transformation. Prosperity gospel teaching detracts or diverts the political well-being of a country since they are always quiet about structural violence and restricted to participation in protests against inequality, corruption, and oppression. Therefore, the study intended to determine whether the property gospel positively or negatively impacted its followers politically within Karinaga ward.

On the other hand, politicians have influenced the church to act and perceive some issues differently. For instance, the late President Moi organised a commission to investigate matters of devil worship by forming a commission to conduct an investigation (Deacon et al., 2013). The report seemed to be accepted by the neo-Pentecostal movements concerned with prayers against witchcraft and spiritual forces and their impact on the lived experience. This created a base of fear in the nation and legitimised a failing government that seeks a blame game for sinful life and not the government's incompetence.

In conclusion, the neo-Pentecostal and politics are inseparable. For a long time, the church has been used as a tool that transforms society. However, the political class have utilised the neo-Pentecostal movement to gain popularity with the help of prosperity pastors who use biblical insinuation to justify political occurrences and political leaders to be elected. In addition, religious leaders are the most influential people to influence political outcomes and social relationships in and outside the church.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey design involving qualitative and quantitative data. Data was collected from a selected sample, and through its findings, an assumption or a conclusion was made to describe the actual situation (Daniel, 2006). Manjunath and Naik (2021) note that descriptive survey design is used to answer a question in research; one has no control over independent variables. In addition, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) expound further that a descriptive survey design is more suitable where the researcher will engage in a field survey targeting a specific population or group for information.

The target population for this study was 1049. The research applied purposive sampling to obtain a sample of six churches and church pastors. A cluster random sampling technique was employed to obtain a suitable sample size. Yamane's (1967) sampling formula was used to obtain a sample size from an estimated population. The participants of this study included the six pastors from the six Churches, who were purposively selected, and members in the selected churches who were selected using a cluster sampling procedure.

Therefore, the following sample size was obtained from the six churches of study using Yamane's (1967) sampling formula:

$$n = N/(1+N(e)^2).$$

Where n = Sample size

N = population of the study

e = marginal error

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Therefore, the sample size (n) for this study was;

$$= 1049 \div 1 + 1049(0.0025)$$

$$= 1049 \div 3.6225$$

$$n = 288.47$$

Therefore, the sample size was

Table 1: Sample Frame

Churches	Target Population (N)	Population Sample Size	Pastors
Deliverance Church	180	49	1
World Harvest	289	79	1
Kingdom Evangelical, C. C	215	59	1
Grace Chapel	152	42	1
Breaking Limitation	109	30	1
Jesus Winner Ministry	104	29	1
Total	1049	288	6

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study intended to understand how the prosperity gospel influences congregants' political life. This objective was achieved by first establishing whether prosperity preachers in the six selected neo-Pentecostal movements were involved in politics. This was very important to determine pastors' political attachment. Respondents had the following views.

Members Involvement in Politics

Table 2: Involvement in Politics

		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	No	89	32.1
	Yes	188	67.9
	Total	277	100.0

From Table 2, the majority of prosperity gospel followers were involved in national and county politics, having a distribution of 67.9 per cent (n=188), and 32.1 per cent (N=89) did not participate in National or County politics. The majority indicated that they participated in voting, campaigns, and tax paying. During a focus group discussion, the researchers found that the majority who participated in politics believed that they had a duty to ensure that their country was in the hands of the right leaders who had their interests at

heart. Despite salvation and faith being personal, the morality of a society rouses Christians to participate in politics. This agrees that there is God's blessing and favour to those participating in political activities, as promised in the Bible. Additionally, Manza (1997) indicates that religion is a good predictor of voting, where church attendance, church involvement, belief system, and denomination grouping determine the vote outcome. All this depends on the pastor's convincing powers and the material benefit promised by God. This was in accordance with Kavulla (2008), who indicates that pastor Margrate Wanjiru became a member of the parliament of Starehe Constituency through a biblical insinuation that pastor Tod made, reassuring church members and residents that Wanjiru was the chosen one and her being in power could transform lives of poverty to better lives. Pastors play a role in influencing the election outcome; in Kenya, during the 2023 general election, the clergy were used as tools to popularise the bottom-up slogan (Saumu News Ke, 2021). This means that the clergy and the political group utilise the prosperity gospel as a political tool to influence political outcomes.

Pastors Talk of Politics on Non-Campaign Days

Table 3: Pastor Talks about Politics

		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	No	121	43.7
	Yes	156	56.3
	Total	277	100.0

The study found that pastors usually talk about politics during regular days and campaign times. The majority of 56.3 per cent indicated that church leaders are always talking about national politics. During an interview, pastor 6 (O.I 2024) indicated that politics was a day-to-day happening and that the church could not remain silent when some issues were happening. He proceeded to say the clergy would not be honouring the Bible if they lacked a voice, indicating good examples highlighted in the Bible, both in OT and in the New Testament. He quoted prophets such as Jeremiah, Elisha, and Amos. In the New Testament, Christians emulated Christ. Historically, the church has been taking moments where implications from the Bible have been employed to push for revolution in societies where the majority lack a voice. A good case is the Black Theology that emerged in the United States of America (Calhoun-Brown, 1999). Currently, in Kenya, the church is facing accusations from the public of lacking the voice of the masses. A group of the young generation known as Gen Z have requested the church to break the illegal marriage with the state and adopt a stand of the Holy church against the evil carried out by the state.

Influence of Pastors on Political Stand

The study sought to understand whether pastors' biblical insinuation had some impact on followers of the prosperity gospel in the selected neo-Pentecostal churches; the majority, 58.8 per cent, indicated they were influenced, and 41.2 per cent indicated that they were not influenced.

Table 4: Pastor Influence on Political Stand

		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	No	114	41.2
	Yes	163	58.8
	Total	277	100.0

Respondents indicated that political discussion with biblical grounding by the pastors influenced them in the following: campaigning and voting for given leaders, alignment with some political parties and supporting them, while in other instances, they were influenced to dislike or campaign against other political parties. In previous years, several heretical “prophesies” emerged regarding the suitability of each candidate as a political leader among Christian churches. This was evidenced in 2022, during the presidential election campaign, where the current president, William Samoei Ruto, was rivalled by Raila Odinga. Many echoed the existence and use of demonic powers by political leaders to lure supporters while arguing that godliness was a viable merit and winning card for a deserving candidate (Owino, 2021). “What is bad with a witch doctor...” were words that aroused debate in the churches and were used to influence people in the choices they ought to make when electing a leader.

Churches in metropolitan areas are comprised of people from different communities, levels of education, social classes, cultures, and ethnic groups, which can result in internal conflicts during political seasons. During a group discussion, there was a conclusion that when pastors in these prosperity gospel movements discussed political issues, some members found the discussions unfriendly. Adherents in these movements had different political views and political philosophies and supported different leaders. Such pastoral persistence in popularising a given political party or leader polarised relationships in the church. Such pastoral stands could spread beyond the walls of the church to the community, as churches are more communal groups. This study is in line with Djupe and Gilbert (2003), who state that the clergy are very influential when it comes to the political decision-making of the adherents. The education levels of the congregants also determine the influence. This research found that those with higher levels of education indicated their pastor’s political discussion had not influenced them in and outside the church. The influence is more hooked on the relationship between the clergy and an individual in the church and their perception of their pastor engaging in politics.

During a group discussion, members indicated that their church pastors could repetitively mention a politician during a service, making some members uncomfortable. Orogun and Pillay (2023) indicate that prosperity gospel preachers, in most cases, are utilised by politicians to gain popularity. A philosophy of scratch my back, and I will scratch yours guides their relationship, through support to the church or the pastor himself. He proceeds to say that prosperity gospel churches make up one-fifth of voters, a number that no politician could ignore. As a result, pastors in these churches encourage their members to vote for a given politician.

In other instances, pastors utilise such teaching for their political interests. They visualise those moments to grow their political dreams and desires to join politics or support a given leader who has promised political reward when elected. Orogun and Pillay (2023) indicate that in most cases, followers of the prosperity gospel are frustrated in the long run when their trusted politician gets into power, and the pastor becomes the only beneficiary. In Kenya, such an instance happened during Moi’s era when the late President Moi divided the National Council of Churches of Kenya and formed the Evangelical Fellowship of Kenya to maintain his political power since the church was the leading criticiser of the government. Kavulla (2008) indicates a list of pastors who utilised prosperity gospel teaching to popularise their political ambitions: Pius Muiro (Maximum Miracle Centre), Pattin (Hand of Hope), Moses Ole Sakunda, and Jack Ndegwa, but failed.

This study found that pastors in neo-Pentecostal movements sometimes used Bible verses to justify the political occurrences in society. During an interview, pastor 4 (O.I 2024) indicated that the Bible contains explanations of all happenings in society. Adding that it was vital for Christians to cultivate political meaning from the Bible and make it relevant to current situations. The finding supports Kavulla's (2008) research, which indicated that during a church service at Jesus is Alive ministry, before prophetess Todd pronounced Margaret Wanjiru as the anointed one who would bring change in Starehe constituency, there were political insinuations with constant Bible quotations to deliver the intended message. Todd illustrated Wanjiru as a shepherd who would silence the wicked, as indicated in the book of Isaiah, and her effort could uplift the church, too.

Paraphrasing of Bible verses to have political meaning is commonly witnessed during campaigns. Deacon (2015) articulates that mainly during the 2013 Kenya elections, Bible verses were utilised in a neo-Pentecostal manner to convince electorates that aspiring leaders were God's chosen. He indicates that the book of Romans 13 was the most quoted.

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ² Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. (Romans 13:1-2) NIV

To illustrate how the prosperity gospel, especially God's Chosen People, Repentance, God's Anointed, and God's Chosen Statements, influences followers of the prosperity gospel. Kavulla (2008) and Deacon (2015) indicate that biblical insinuation is highly applied to eliminate any doubtfulness of prosperity gospel followers. Politicians are given biblical names, as Margret Wanjiru was regarded as a good shepherd during the 2007 general elections. 'Moses', 'Saviour', and 'Man of God's voice' were names referring to Uhuru, while Raila was given the name 'Solomon' during the 2013 general elections. Politicians adopt the neo-Pentecostal approach of repentance, forgiveness, and peace, which leads to prosperity and God's favour. Prosperity pastors are very influential since the majority are readily available to pray and lay hands on the political class to bless and declare victory over them. Such techniques are very effective.

Pastor Invites Politicians to Church

Table 5: Pastor Invites Politicians

		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	No	135	48.7
	Yes	142	51.3
	Total	277	100.0

The majority of the respondents indicated that their pastors invited politicians into their churches (51.3%), while (48.7%) indicated 'No'. This was because they were not informed of the invitation, and not all pastors in the neo-Pentecostal movements invited politicians. Pastor 2 (O.I 2024) said that he did not invite politicians during church services nor request them to support any church or individual project. He added that all political candidates and leaders who visited were given a platform to address the congregants after the church program. As indicated by Deacon (2015), neo-Pentecostal movements created an arena for politicians to woo adherents who later made some donations to the church. In most cases, this is a strategy used by Neo-Pentecostal churches and other denominations to raise money for church projects. In

addition, church clergy were the beneficiaries of such donations. During a group discussion, it was concluded that, after the donation, there was less follow-up of donated money by the followers of the prosperity gospel. Therefore, this indicates that pastors ended up benefiting more from the fund since they were not accountable to any member but themselves. Deacon indicates that politicians had identified a means of popularising themselves, and the neo-Pentecostal movement was one of the ways. He concludes that this is manipulation, where one takes advantage of the followers of the prosperity gospel.

Meanwhile, politicians woo the church and tend to lie in the same bed. The Gen Z of Kenya, accountable for the 2024 anti-government protests occasioned by irresponsible governance, have called upon the church or the clergy to be the voice of reason in society. Gen Z feels the church has been reactive instead of proactive (Nzwili, 2024). They accused the church of ignoring when corrupt politicians embezzle public funds and still donate them to churches, and the church remains silent, yet those funds could be utilised to solve social problems. While church political engagement in Kenya is not limited, the situation is quite different in the United States of America, where churches are considered tax-exempt organisations that are not permitted to participate in influencing political outcomes in any way. In addition, churches are not to give platforms to politicians or pulpits to popularise themselves. The act is the "Johnson Amendment, under the International Revenue Service."

In the process of probing the clergy's reaction to the invited or visiting political leaders in these churches, it was considered that Kenyan clergy are not restricted from making any political influence, such as civil education and registration of voters, as in the United States of America. In Kenya, the clergy can influence voters' choices when they do not maintain a neutral position by inviting politicians to their churches. The study found that;

Table 6: Pastor Remains Neutral

		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	No	129	46.6
	Yes	148	53.4
	Total	277	100.0

Most adherents in neo-Pentecostal churches (53.4%) indicated that pastors maintained a neutral stand when they invited a politician to their churches. This did not influence their political preference in any way. After evaluating their pastors, a good number indicated that they lacked neutrality when they invited politicians into their churches, 46.6 per cent (n=129). This indicated that the movement had different opinions depending on their perception. During a focus group discussion, it was determined that when their pastors lacked a neutral stance towards a politician in the church, it influenced many adherents in neo-Pentecostal churches. In addition, it was reported that division was witnessed in these movements due to differing political stands among members who did not like a given politician and the political party that the preacher promoted. Some followers left the church and sought other movements or remained at home.

Pastors' neutrality in politics was an issue that led to political disunity among members of these movements. Adherents who had different opinions from those of pastors felt offended when pastors insisted that their preference was the best. This resulted in disunity and a lack of confidence in their relationship, and in most churches, members left the church, breaking the relationship between members

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and the pastors. During an interview, a member reported leaving a church because a pastor could not just remain neutral and avoid supporting a specific political leader. The pastor indicated that if they were not comfortable with his choice, they could leave the church.

An instance where clergy influence congregants depends on the church. In churches where clergy have more say over the church, they are likely to influence them politically as opposed to cases where church members are in absolute control over their clergy job position (Djupe & Gilbert, 2003). They still indicate that it is not easy to change adherents concerning specific political stands. However, any action they take, either in church, in their publication, or outside a church, influences members' line of view before they get to the voting station. During an interview, pastor 5(O.I 2024) indicated that it was their responsibility to help the church have a biblical point of view before voting for a given political leader. Pastors are seen to be setters of the agenda since they are both social and political activists in their capacity. Djupe and Gilbert (2003) indicate that clergy are potent leaders who influence the opinions and moral stands of their followers through church teaching and actions.

The issue of neutrality of church leaders, in some instances, could be viewed as “thermostats” testing political support on behalf of a preferred politician that they support. During an interview with pastor 5 (O.I 2024), he said that political support is a personal choice; pastors also vote. Therefore, they could act as a “spy” to inform their preferred candidate if their opponent had much support in their churches. This could be to influence the opinion of their followers. Several members indicated that they found their church leaders to be cunning and untrustworthy, destroying the good relationship and respect they had for them. On the other hand, some members were highly influenced by the pastor's political support. This was contrary to what happened at Meru when Idah, wife to presidential candidate Raila Odinga in the 2022 general elections, visited a region that was an opponent's backyard. The Meru Diocese Catholic Women's Association fellowship leader failed to observe neutrality by offering their desired guest an opportunity to address the congregation at the expense of other guests from rival political parties. Women resorted to booing her, denying her a chance to talk (Muchui, 2022). On the other hand, Pastor 1 (O.I 2024) said that he maintained a neutral stand when he invited political leaders to his church. He indicated that his responsibility was not to influence congregants to support or vote for any politician since the church was of another kingdom that was higher than the worldly kingdom. He guides people in making choices, giving cues that lead to action and praying for the results. Emphasising the power of voting was the main thing they did (Roso et al., 2024). This maintains a united congregation. That is peace, love, and unity.

According to Roso et al. (2024), clergy engagement in political activism was different depending on the denomination. He indicates that different government policies triggered the clergy differently. In Kenya, we have seen different clergy influencing their members differently. Catholic and other mainline clergy are concerned with National policies that influence the majority in a country, for instance, abortion, LGBTQS+, family law, and election outcomes. Other denominations seem to be missing in the limelight of Kenyan newspapers (Mayaki, 2022).

Many factors determine the Political influence and participation of the clergy. These include biblical values, moral values, and other monetary gains associated with politics. During the 2022 general election campaigns, the deputy president invited the clergy group from Tharaka Nithi county to popularise his bottom-up political agenda (Saumu News Ke 2022), while, recently, during the Gen Z anti-government protest, the Kenyan President invited a group of clergy to the Statehouse to utilise their influential power

to call for national dialogue. Therefore, this study intended to understand whether the invited politicians donate money to these churches. This was essential since, in Kenya, politicians are overgenerous with the church, whereby after visiting any church, they give monetary donations, which the clergy accepts. This was one of the triggering factors of the anti-government protest witnessed.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion: This study established that the prosperity gospel is very influential on its followers. Politicians' invitations to the church and pastors' neutrality to the visiting politicians in church influenced the majority. The study concluded that pastors used biblical insinuation to convince followers of the prosperity gospel of the right political leader to elect. This resulted in disunity in the church, fights and political enmity. This was impactful as many perceived their church pastors as authority figures, and others were disappointed with their pastor for changing the church. It was concluded that followers of the prosperity gospel were not bothered when they did not have a share of monetary gifts donated to the church as long as church projects were in progress. Therefore, this study suggests that a study should be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness and effects of removing politicians from the church pulpit.

Recommendation: This study recommends that there should be policies that regulate the clergy's direct political influence on national and county politics.

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