

Analysis of the Proliferation of Prophecy and Fake Prophets in Southwestern Nigeria: Implications and Policy

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ABSTRACT

Christianity has been a moral bastion of the African continent since it was introduced to the shore of Africa. It has impacted the continent regarding education, health, and agriculture. Meanwhile, it is unfortunate that the growth and development of the church in South-Western Nigeria have brought in some distasteful acts introduced by dubious pastors, prophets, and prophetesses. It is a fact that some pastors and prophets in Nigeria are politicizing prophecy. Thus, some people no longer believe in prophecy and prophetic utterances from some acclaimed Prophets and Prophetesses in Nigeria. It is worrisome that the actions of these pastors have led to the commercialization and politicizing of prophecy in the country. Against this background, this paper examined Analysis of the Proliferation of Prophecy and Fake Prophets in Southwestern Nigeria: Implications and Policy. A survey research method was used to assess this situation, and empirical results were found. From these results, it was discovered that there is confusion among the Christians in South-Western Nigeria because of different prophecies on a particular issue from prophets and prophetesses. Also, most people who call themselves prophets in the country are only looking for a livelihood. Moreover, unlike the biblical prophets, some contemporary prophets are moved by what they see, not what we have heard from God. It was also discovered that prophecy had lost the values attached to it in the past. The paper, therefore, recommends that a body coordinate and regulate prophecy and prophetic utterances in the country. Also, fake prophets must be identified and disciplined to bring sanity to Christendom.

Keywords: Politicizing Prophecy, fake prophecy, Implications, Christendom, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Fake prophecy is fast becoming a norm, and it has been identified as a bane of Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa, predominantly in Nigeria. Thus, it has been recognized as one of the areas in Christianity that needs a rebirth Adabembe (2022). The proliferation of prophesy and false prophecy in Nigeria dates back to the 1970s and 1980s when many charismatic and Pentecostal televangelists arrived in Nigeria (Ojo, 2006). Also, Benny Hinn and Reinhard Bonnke's crusades in Nigeria fostered awareness and excitement among Nigerian Christians, which significantly impacted Nigerian Christians (Adogame, 2010). Therefore, the year 2000 marks the launch of the emergence of local prophets in Nigeria; during this period, Prophet T.B. Joshua began his televangelist ministry and performed miracles. Also, there are pastors like Oyakilome and other televangelists and miracle workers who had large followers and constantly made promises and prophecies that led many people to follow them (Ukah, 2008). Unfortunately, they also

provided openings for false prophets to develop. In the same way, the advent of social media platforms made it possible for information to circulate rapidly, which played a significant role in the growth and development of false prophets and prophecies in Nigeria.

Some of the significant contributors to this phenomenon are poverty and economic inequality, which made many people desperate for solutions to their financial problems, making them vulnerable to false promises of prosperity and wealth (Aondo, 2017). Olabode (2018) argues that a lack of education and proper thinking have made it difficult for religious adherents to properly evaluate and ruminate prophecy from some acclaimed prophets in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the number of unemployed youths, laziness by some acclaimed prophets, and getting rich quick syndrome among the youths in Nigeria have contributed immensely to the problem of the proliferation of prophecy fake prophets in southwest Nigeria. (Afolayan, 2019) believed that traditional beliefs and practices influence how people relate with prophets and faith healers. More so, foretelling is an integral part of the religion of Africans. They believe in knowing what the future holds for them. As a result of this, Africans consult Priests who serve as an intermediary between them and gods to get information about everything relating to their lives and day-to-day activities, be it marriage, childbearing, child future *ikansejaye*, which literary means knowing what the future holds for a newborn baby, enthronement of new kings and chief, agriculture, sickness, market, their communities and towns etc.

Meanwhile, the word “prophecy” is novel to African Traditional Religion, which is the indigenous religion of Africans. Despite this, Africans still have ways to get information from the deities. This is done through a channel known as the priests. Consultations are mostly done to appease gods in case of impending dangers, which is why it is often a thing of joy among the Yorubas of South Western Nigeria when the oracle gives a good report of a particular situation, people will rejoice and say *ifafore* meaning oracle speaks well. Consequently, Africans believe there are links between the natural and the supernatural world and that the world is controlled by the mystical forces of evil or good (Marshall, 2007). The sentience of these forces of evil or good is the primary source of fear and apprehension in African society (Adamo, 2005). The fear consequently led Africans to consult the priests and priestesses, believed to be the mediators and mouthpieces of gods. Africans, therefore, accept these people as those with supernatural powers to intervene, reveal God's messages, and equally save them from the problems of evil, and thereby, they are consulted; this can be said to be the genesis of prophetic ministry in African Traditional Society (Owojaiye, 2019)

Meanwhile, Western missionaries introduced Christianity to Africa, and the schism prevalent in the church escalated the issue of prophecy on the shore of Africa. More so, the schism in the church and the advent of African Independent Churches has brought many innovations and challenges to Christianity. One of these challenges is politicizing prophecy and fake prophecy, which is the concern of this paper. Biblically, prophecy is a way through which God reveals his intentions regarding a particular situation to a person, community, or nation. This is done through a channel known as a prophet or prophetess, considered the mouthpiece of God (RCCBC, 2023). Prophecy can be traced to the Old Testament epoch; a prophetic office was a respected office of national leaders and God's representative in the Old Testament. The office of prophets is made available to some chosen people in the bible. Biblical prophets were recognized in their societies as qualified to perform the function, so they were respected and recognized as the mouthpiece of God.

Prophecy in the bible was not just an ordinary message but a divine message about choosing God at a particular time and in a specific situation. There are three people involved in this phenomenon: God (giver), the prophet (the human mediator), and the human audience (receiver) (NOUN, 2020). Biblically, prophets are called and commissioned to minister to the people. So, their central interest is the human audience, who must receive, believe, understand, interpret, and act on the message of God received through the prophets of God. Biblically, prophecy represents God's inspired word (message), coming from God through a channel chosen by God (a prophet) for His people. It is a message from God communicated to His people through human agents. (NOUN,2020)

Furthermore, (Quayesi-Amakye, 2005) reports that, in Ghana, some Pentecostal prophetic churches believe there is an association or connection between supernatural wickedness and evil occurrences because nothing happens by chance. Also, in Nigeria, it is a common occurrence among some Christians to believe that the challenges of life, such as sickness, bareness, joblessness, poverty, etc., are spiritual wickedness from the enemy. Such people, therefore, seek the help of prophets to forestall these evils. Apart from this, some politicians seek help from prophets to get to a position or win elections. Meanwhile, despite the high level of poverty among the masses in Nigeria, politicians continue to amass wealth for themselves at the expense of the masses. Unfortunately, prophets who are supposed to be the mouthpiece of God by condemning these evils are playing to the political gallery of these politicians through fake prophecy.

Awkwardly, a prophecy which is one of the strongholds of Christianity can be said to be losing it is historical, moral, and religious credibility and public strength (Owojaiye, 2019) as a result of some practices of prophets turned politicians and politicians turned prophets and some fake prophets who are moved by what they saw and not what they have heard from God. This remains underexplored, leaving a critical knowledge gap in our understanding of politics and religion in sub-Sahara Africa and, most significantly, Nigeria. This research seeks to answer these questions: How does fake prophecy affect Christianity as a religion and genuine prophecy in Nigeria? Why are contemporary prophets and prophetesses in Nigeria involved in opinionated politics? Why are Nigerian prophets' prophecies on politics and economy not fulfilling? What is the future of prophetic ministry in Nigeria? To address these questions, this study aims to:

1. Investigates the sequence of events relating to 2023 general election prophecies and the new year prophecies in Nigeria
2. Identify the effects of politicizing and fake prophecy in South-Western Nigeria.
3. Investigate the correlations between politicizing prophecy and fake prophecy in South-Western Nigeria.
4. Examine the consequences of the proliferation of prophecies and the effects on socio-religious development in South-Western Nigeria

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prophecy: A Contextual and Conceptual Description

The Redeemed Christian Bible College (2023) compared prophecy and history and argues that history gives the truth of the past, while prophecy is history beforehand and the power of telling what will happen. In the Old Testament, there were three words for Prophets: nabi, oreh, and hozeh. Nabi, which means 'to utter (psalm 45:1), is the word that is generally used for Prophets.

Meanwhile, 'rough,' which means 'seer,' was a popular word used to describe Prophets during the epoch of Samuel (1Samuel 9:9). While hozeh, which equally means 'seer,' was the third word that is associated with Prophets in the bible. (2 Samuel 24: 11). These three words are used interchangeably when referring to prophets in the Old Testament. A prophet spoke in God's name and authority; whatever a prophet says is not of him or any man but of God. Prophets played significant roles in the land of Israel. They were important figures in the history and development of the nation of Israel, and their involvement in the socio-political, religious, and economic development of Israel was significant in shaping the progress and situation of Israelite history and religion (Akintola, 2008).

Prophets and Prophecy in the Bible

Prophets in the Old Testament were divided into the pre-canonical prophets and the canonical prophets. Prophets were the main channel through which Yahweh, the God of Israel, spoke to his people about interpersonal relationships, worship, politics, and business. The prophets were God's mouthpiece. "Thus, says Lord" is a phrase that average Israelites never joked with because of the Israelites' reverence for prophets and their offices during this epoch. The Prophets at this period were watchmen for the nation of Israel; as the mouthpiece of God, they relayed God's messages (prophecy) directly to the people and equally stood in the gap between the nation, people, and God.

Moreover, prophets were privileged to sharpen their people's socio-religious and economic life during this period. Some served dual roles before the institutionalized monarchical rule in Israel; they served as Judges and Prophets. Some examples of Prophets and Prophetess served in this capacity are Samuel, Eli, and Deborah. Interestingly, this allowed them to contribute immensely and positively to their people's political, religious, economic, and social life of their people; the activities of the prophets at this epoch led to the reformation and transformation of their nation. (Griffin, 1997).

Diviners and Prophets were public figures in the Hellenistic world. The Greek Prophets were foretellers, interpreters of divine messages, and mantic (Britanica, 2023). There are two basics of prophetic procedures, namely the passive and the active; the passive acts as a regulator of active procedures because without receiving divine messages, delivery of such messages is impossible. More so, prophecies are often received orally, in visions, and sometimes in dreams (Awojobi, 2020). These divine messages are, therefore, delivered to the concerned individual or the nation at large clearly or prophetically, as in the case of Prophet Nathan and King David in 2nd Samuel 12. Meanwhile, a prophet is known during the Old Testament period by a divine call, the authentication of the message received, the drive to relay the message, and the acceptability of the message by his audience (Berkhof, 2000).

Biblical prophets were active in the socio-economic and political development of their nation; for instance, Saul, the first king of Israel, was anointed to be King by Prophet Samuel, who served as a prophet and a judge in Israel. He was equally exposed to the same prophet when he disobeyed God by refusing to carry out God's instructions as stipulated by God. (1 Samuel 13-15). This example and many more show that prophets were essential to the history and political development of the Israelites.

Prophets in the bible, such as Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, and many more, were revolutionists, social activists, and moral bastions of the society. These prophets were the voice of the voiceless. They criticized bad leadership, advised the king, and were involved in nation-building (the nation). Max Weber, a German sociologist, viewed prophets as charismatic leaders who, by the feature of their charisma, assert a religious doctrine of divine directive and a solution to societal disorder (The Nation).

The Contemporary Church, Prophets and Prophecy: The Nigeria Situation

Having extensively discussed the roles of prophets in the Bible, it is imperative at this juncture to discuss their roles in the contemporary world and, most especially in Nigeria, this is borne out of the fact that activities of some acclaimed prophets have brought disrepute to the body of Christ in Nigeria. Africans are generally believed to be religious, and Nigeria, the most populous African nation, is a religious-conscious country. This is evident in the number of churches that littered all the nooks and crannies of the country. African independent churches in Nigeria heralded prophets who often revealed God's intention to people through prophecy regarding future events, which can be social, political, economic, and sometimes personal affairs. Notable among the Nigeria prophets are Ayo Babalola, the founder and leader of Christ Apostolic Church worldwide; Rev. Josiah Akindayomi, the founder of the Redeemed Christian Church of God; Archbishop Benson Andrew Idahosa, the founder of Church of God Mission and Timothy Oluwole Obadare a televangelist and all those mentioned above are of blessed memory, this notwithstanding they all left indelible marks on the area of prophecy in Nigeria. Their prophecies contributed immensely to the growth and development of the church and the country, and they served as watchdogs for Christians and Nigerian leaders during their epochs.

Nevertheless, the events in Nigeria show that all is not well with prophetic ministry. Thus, Echeta (2019) declared false prophecy as a bane of Nigeria Pentecostalism. Adabembe (2024), in her article Commercialization of Christianity: A Review affirmed that Christianity had been bastardized due to the quest for material things. Consequently, some people no longer trust prophecy and prophetic utterances from self-acclaimed prophets because their prophecies missed the targets in the 2023 presidential election in Nigeria. These groups of prophets were called out on social media and were tagged as fake prophets. Some media houses in Nigeria recorded the activities of these groups of prophets. It is necessary to mention some of the prophets whose prophecies failed in the cause of the last presidential election. The list of these prophets includes but is not limited to prophet Olabisi, who prophesied that he heard directly from God that Atiku would become the next president of Nigeria. The prophet listed things he says God will do through Atiku, such as building the bedrock of an idealistic president for presidents who would emerge as Nigeria's president after him. Equally, Primate Elijah Ayodele prophesied that Atiku of the PDP would be voted in as the next president of Nigeria. Another famous pastor founder of Christ Embassy, Pastor Chris Oyakhilome, also reiterates that God has chosen Peter Obi as the next president of Nigeria. Rev Jerry Nwachukwu prophesied that Obi would win the 2023 election. Prophet Emmanuel Chukwudi, the general overseer of King of Kings Deliverance Ministry Worldwide, claimed that God spoke to him about Atiku becoming the next president of Nigeria. Similarly, a Kwara-based Christian cleric, Pastor Christopher, also claims God spoke to him about Atiku becoming the president of Nigeria.

Peel (2016), examining the relationship between Christianity, Islam, and nationalism in Nigeria, argues that Pentecostalism has created new social and political relationships that enabled

pastors and prophets to become forces to reckon with in Nigeria. At the same time, Marshal (2009) believed that the influence of Pentecostalism in Nigeria has led to concerns about the politicization of religion and the potential for manipulation. Adabembe and Adedayo (2022) opine that religion is about relationships; therefore, it can be said that the social interaction that religion brings should benefit humanity and not otherwise. Thus, Adabembe (2024) examines how some Christian leaders have shaped the religious-business environment and how this has negatively impacted Christianity. Adesanya and Adabembe (2018) argue that some Pentecostal churches in Nigeria have deviated from the ultimate goal of Christianity, which is edifying God and producing new believers to manipulate members to obtain funds for luxurious lifestyles.

The issue of prophecy in politics is not limited to Africa and Nigeria; records have it that a social leader in the United States named Martin Luther King at one time prophesied the emergence of a Negro American president in one of his popular speeches, "I have a dream," where he said, "...But I do think that the day will come in the not-too-distant future when the Negro vote itself, and will be powerful enough to be a coalition with liberals and the white community and thereby elect a Negro president of the United States...". His prophecy came to fulfillment many years later with the emergence of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States from 2009-2017 (Hansen, 2018). Also, in the last presidential election of the United States, some prophets prophesied the second term - the election of President Donald Trump. Later apologies for losing the second term re-election to Joe Biden, who became the 46th American president on January 20, 2021 (The Torah). However, Donald Trump later won another election, making him the 47th American President in 2025. Therefore, what are the chances of fulfilling the prophecy? RCBC (2003) affirmed that the theory used for determining the chances of the fulfillment of Prophecy is the law of compound probability, in which each detail of prophecy doubles the chances of the production not coming to pass. For instance, a prophecy with only one detail has one chance in two of fulfillment. It will either be fulfilled or not fulfilled. That is, the prophecy is either true or false.

A Prophecy with One Detail

This table represents the probability of a Prophecy that can be false without an iota of truth.

Detail	0	1
0	T	F
1	F	T

A Prophecy with Two Details

This table represents a Prophecy that is either true (come to pass) or false (not come to pass) come to pass but misleading, or the prophecy may not be reliable (not sure whether it will come to pass or not)

	True	False
True	TT	FT
False	FF	FT

Source: RCBC, 2003

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Given the nature of this work, the researcher adopted a survey research methodology. The survey research method allows the researcher to pay attention to samples obtained from the whole population of this study. The population for this study includes adherents of Christianity from different denominations, such as Catholic priests and members, members of African Independent Churches, Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches priests and members, protestant members, politicians, civil servants, some Muslim imams and members, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) members were equally sampled. Purposive sampling techniques were used for data collection. This method was necessary to ensure that only Christians from different denominations, politicians, and some Muslims were sampled. The researcher got information from secondary data such as newspapers, social media, journals, the bible, and the Internet.

This study was limited to Nigeria's southwest geopolitical zone and targeted the state capitals of the states in the southwest. These state capitals include different denominations such as Orthodox, independent, Pentecostal, and Neo-Pentecostal churches. With the help of five research assistants from each state sampled, 300 copies of questionnaires were distributed to elicit information from the respondents. These states are Ekiti, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Ogun and Lagos. Questionnaires were administered to fifty (50) respondents in each state.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	198	66%
Female	102	34%
Total	300	100%

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025.

As revealed in Table 1, the gender distribution of respondents shows that most are male, as indicated by the number of respondents, which amounts to 198 (66%) of the respondents, while 102(34%) are female. It should be noted that this distribution does not represent the demographic distribution of the South-Western Nigeria population but rather the distribution of the respondents for this study.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	98	32.67%
Married	202	67.33%
Widowed	0	0%
Divorced	0	0%
Total	300	100%

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025.

Table 3 above reveals the distribution of respondents by marital status. 98 (32.67%) are single, 202 (67.33%) are married, and none belong to the widowed and divorced categories.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualifications

Educational Background	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Post-graduate	51	17%
Graduate	161	55.67%
Secondary	81	27%
Primary	7	2.33%
Total	300	100%

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025.

Table 3 shows that 51 (17%) of respondents had post-graduate education, 161 of the respondents, constituting about (55.67%) of the total, were graduates, 81 (27%) respondents had secondary education, and 7 (2.33%) belonged to the primary education category. This shows that most respondents are literate and could attend to the questionnaires without help.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Christianity	202	67.33%
Islam	77	25.67%
African Traditional Religion (ATR)	21	7%
Total	300	100%

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Religion. The table above shows the distribution by religion. Most of the respondents are Christians 202 (67.33%). However, 77 (25.67%) are Islam, and 21 (7%) belong to the African Traditional Religion (ATR).

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Status

Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
African Independent Churches priests and members	53	17.67%
Catholic Priests and Members	49	16.33%
Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Churches Priests and Members	39	13%
Protestant Members	38	12.67%
Politicians	36	12%
Civil Servants	35	11.67%
Muslim Imams and Members	27	9%
Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Members	23	7.67%
Total	300	100%

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

As presented in Table 53 (17.67%) constituting the majority of the respondents were African Independent Churches priests and members, 49 (16.33%) were Catholic priests and members, 39 (13%) were Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Churches Priests and Members, 38 (12.67%) were protestant members, 36 (12%) were politicians, 35 (11.67%) were Muslim imams and members. In comparison, only 23 (7.67%) respondents are members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by States in South-Western Nigeria

South-Western Zone	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Ekiti State	50	16.67%
Ondo State	50	16.67%
Osun State	50	16.67%
Lagos State	50	16.67%
Ogun State	50	16.67%
Oyo State	50	16.67%
Total	300	100%

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

Table 6 above shows that Nigeria's six geopolitical zones were equally represented.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings on Research Objective 1

(The Sequence of Events Relating to 2023 General Election Prophecies and the New Year Prophecies in Nigeria)

Table 7: The Sequence of Events Relating to 2023 General Election Prophecies and the New Year Prophecies in Nigeria

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agreed	Disagree	Strongly Disagreed
The sequence of events in the 2023 general election in Nigeria is associated with different New Year prophecies	155 (51.67%)	101 (33.67%)	24 (8%)	20 (6.67%)
Most 2023 election prophecies in Nigeria were politically aggravated rather than divinely inspired	179 (59.67%)	99 (33%)	16 (5.33%)	6 (2%)
Political aspirants, candidates, and parties intentionally used religious prophecies to gain electoral support	182 (60.67%)	108 (36%)	7 (2.33%)	3 (1%)
The discrepancies between prophecies and election outcomes affected public belief in religious leaders.	172 (57.33%)	98 (32.67%)	21 (7%)	9 (3.33%)
The public generally believes that New Year prophecies have an impact on political events such as elections	143 (47.67%)	111 (37%)	24 (8%)	22 (7.33%)

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025.

Table 7 presents data on the relationship between New Year prophecies and the 2023 general election in Nigeria. It appraises public perception regarding the influence of religious prophecies on electoral events, the degree of political manipulation of such prophecies, and their subsequent impact on public trust in religious figures. A significant proportion of respondents (51.67% Strongly Agreed and 33.67% Agreed) affirmed that the events during the 2023 general elections corresponded with various New Year prophecies. This suggests that many individuals professed a correlation between prophetic declarations and electoral contestations. However, a minority of respondents (8% Disagreed and 6.67% strongly disagreed) disproved this claim, and some remained doubtful about any direct linkage between religious prophecies and political events. The data indicate that many respondents assumed that most 2023 election-related prophecies were politically motivated rather than divinely inspired. In particular, 59.67% strongly agreed, and 33% agreed with this perception,

prominence widespread public suspicion regarding the authenticity of such prophecies. On the other hand, 5.33% Disagreed, and 2% strongly Disagreed, which means that a lesser but notable portion of the populace maintains faith in the spiritual legitimacy of election-related prophecies. Likewise, when evaluating whether political aspirants, candidates, and parties calculatedly leveraged religious prophecies to gather electoral support, a large majority (60.67% Strongly Agreed and 36% Agreed) concurred. This points to the tactical use of religious narratives for political benefit. In difference, only 2.33% Disagreed, and 1% Strongly Disagreed, reinforcing the prevailing view of religious prophecy as a tool for political manipulation.

The disparity between prophetic declarations and actual election results appears to have had a significant impact on public trust in religious numbers. The responses from respondents indicated that 57.33% Strongly Agreed and another 32.67% Agreed that these discrepancies negatively affected public belief in spiritual leaders. This suggests that failed or erroneous election prophecies have windswept confidence in the credibility of some religious leaders. In the meantime, 7% Disagreed, and 3.33% strongly disagreed, revealing that a small segment of the populace continues to uphold trust in religious leadership despite inconsistencies in prophetic forecasts. The last variable assesses the general public belief regarding the influence of New Year prophecies on political events, including elections. The findings reveal that a significant number of the respondents (47.67% Strongly Agreed and 37% Agreed) of respondents believe that New Year prophecies play a role in determining or shaping political activities. However, 8% Disagreed, and another 7.33% Strongly Disagreed, signifying that a considerable segment of the people remains unconvinced of any substantial relationship between religious declarations and political activities and developments.

The data from Table 7 underscores Nigeria's multifaceted relationship between religion and politics. The prevalent agreement that political actors use religious prophecies for electoral gains reflects the entanglement of spiritual and political discussions. Furthermore, the attrition of public trust in religious leaders and prophecies due to inconsistencies in election-related prophecies indicates the need for a more serious examination of the role of religion in electoral processes. While many Nigerians perceive a connection between prophecies and political events, a considerable section remains doubtful, accenting the different opinions on the trustworthiness and impact of religious forecasts in Nigeria's democratic landscape.

Findings on Research Objective 2

(The Effects of Politicizing Prophecy and Fake Prophecy in South-Western, Nigeria)

Table 8: The Effects of Politicizing Prophecy and Fake Prophecy in South-Western, Nigeria

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The politicization of prophecies influences electoral verdicts in South-Western Nigeria.	27 (9%)	23 (7.67%)	143 (47.67%)	107 (35.67%)
Fake prophecies have contributed to political tensions and conflicts in South-Western Nigeria	78 (26%)	82 (27.33%)	64 (21.33%)	56 (18.67%)

Politicized prophecies are often used as tools for political manipulation and public deception	132 (44%)	98 (32.67%)	36 (12%)	34 (11.33%)
The spread of fake prophecies has weakened public trust in religious leaders in South-Western Nigeria.	121 (40.33%)	96 (32%)	38 (12.67%)	35 (11.67%)
Politicized prophecies have led to divisions among religious groups and political supporters.	113 (37.67%)	87 (29%)	55 (18.33%)	45 (15%)
Fake and politicized prophecies negatively impact democratic processes in South-Western Nigeria	48 (16%)	44 (14.67%)	122 (40.67%)	86 (28.67%)

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025.

Table 8 presents data on the effects of politicized and fake prophecies in South-Western Nigeria, particularly electoral processes, political tensions, religious divisions, and public trust in religious leaders. The data point out that most respondents reject the claim that the politicization of prophecies influences electoral verdicts in South-Western Nigeria. Particularly, 47.67% Disagreed and 35.67% strongly disagreed with this view. This suggests that while religious prophecies may be shared during election contests, they do not necessarily have a critical impact on electoral outcomes. On the other hand, only 9% strongly agreed, and 7.67% agreed, signifying that a minority of the respondents perceive politicized prophecies as influential in determining electoral outcomes. The vast doubt reflected in these statistics is that voters in South-Western Nigeria may rely more on political realities than religious declarations or prophetic statements when making electoral decisions. A distribution of responses emerges regarding the impact of fake prophecies on political tensions and disputes in South-Western Nigeria. While 26% strongly Agreed and 27.33% Agreed that fake prophecies have contributed to political instability, a significant proportion (21.33% Disagreed and 18.67% strongly disagreed) disproves this claim. This indicates a divided public discernment, with a slight majority recognizing the role of fake prophecies in aggravating political tensions. The existence of nearly half of the respondents attributing political conflicts to fake prophecies underscores the potential dangers of religious misinformation in an already unpredictable political environment. A majority (44% Strongly Agreed and 32.67% Agreed) declare that politicized prophecies are regularly employed as instruments of political manipulation and public trick. This finding showcases prevalent misgiving regarding using religious expression to sway public opinion, mislead electorates, or advance political agendas. However, a smaller proportion (12% Disagreed and 11.33% strongly disagreed) dismiss this view, indicating that some individuals remain skeptical of the manipulative nature of politicized prophecies. The leading view suggests that religious messages are often co-opted for tactical political gains in South-Western Nigeria.

The proliferation of fake prophecies appears to have significantly eroded public trust in religious leaders. Many respondents (40.33% Strongly Agreed and 37.67% Agreed) assert that the increase in false prophecies has weakened faith in religious establishments. In difference, 16% Disagreed and 12% Strongly Disagreed, suggesting that while public trust has been affected, a section of the people remains unwavering in their confidence in religious leaders. The findings indicate that the reliability crisis faced by religious leaders in South-Western Nigeria is primarily fueled by inconsistencies in prophetic declarations, particularly when such prophecies fail to become visible or in conformity with reality. The data revealed that

politicized prophecies have divided religious groups and political followers. Many respondents (32% Strongly Agreed and 29% Agreed) recognize that religious and political affiliations have been fractured due to conflicting prophetic declarations. However, 14.67% Disagreed, and 12.67% Strongly Disagreed, suggesting that many individuals do not recognize religiously charged prophecies as a divisive force. The high levels of agreement signify that religious discussion and discourse have become intertwined with political partisanship, leading to polarization among religious adherents and political followers. A majority (40.67% Strongly Agreed and 28.67% Agreed) affirm that fake and politicized prophecies negatively impact democratic processes in South-Western Nigeria. This reflects a strong concern that religious meddling in politics undermines electoral integrity, distorts public perception, and potentially influences voter behavior based on unverified or manipulative religious claims. Nevertheless, 15% Disagreed, and 11.67% strongly disagreed, indicating that some respondents do not perceive fake prophecies as significantly detrimental to democracy. The dominant perspective, however, underscores the need for measures to mitigate the abuse of religious influence in democratic governance and process. The findings from Table 8 provide vital impediments to the relationship between religion and politics in South-Western Nigeria. While most respondents dismiss that politicized prophecies influence electoral outcomes, many acknowledge their role in political manipulation, religious and political divisions, and the erosion of public trust in religious leaders. Furthermore, the view that fake prophecies lead to political tensions and democratic instability highlights the broader societal insinuations of religiously charged misinformation. These findings suggest a growing need for critical engagement with religious narratives in the political sphere to safeguard the credibility of democratic institutions and maintain social harmony in Nigeria.

Findings on Research Objective 3

(The Correlations between Politicizing Prophecy and Fake Prophecy in South-Western, Nigeria)

Table 9: The Correlations between Politicizing Prophecy and Fake Prophecy in South-Western, Nigeria

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Politicizing prophecy and spreading fake prophecies are interconnected phenomena in South-Western Nigeria	101 (33.67%)	119 (39.67%)	59 (19.67%)	21 (7%)
Politicized prophecies are primarily used to influence both voters and electoral outcomes	129 (43%)	91 (30.33%)	46 (15.33%)	34 (11.33%)
Political actors often exploit religious prophecies to manipulate public opinion	168 (56%)	108 (36%)	15 (5%)	9 (3%)
The rise of fake prophecies has contributed to religious and political instability in South-Western Nigeria.	47 (15.67%)	23 (7.67%)	113 (37.67%)	117 (39%)
There is a strong link between political ambitions and the increase in false religious predictions.	123 (41%)	96 (32%)	45 (15%)	36 (12%)
Religious leaders who give politically motivated prophecies tend to gain political favor or financial benefits.	179 (59.67%)	101 (33.67%)	14 (4.67%)	6 (2%)

Fake prophecies are more likely to emerge during election periods in South-Western Nigeria.	166 (55.33%)	94 (31.33%)	21 (7%)	19 (6.33%)
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Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025.

Table 9 presents data on the interconnectedness of politicized prophecy and fake prophecy in South-Western Nigeria, emphasizing their impact on electoral outcomes, public opinion, religious stability, and political ambitions. Most respondents (33.67% Strongly Agreed and 39.67% Agreed) affirmed that politicizing prophecy and spreading fake prophecies are interconnected phenomena in South-Western Nigeria. On the other hand, 19.67% Disagreed, and 7% strongly disagreed. The leading view indicates that false religious declarations are frequently politically motivated, with religious actors and politicians collaborating to shape public perceptions for strategic advantage. The relatively lesser disagreement rates reveal that while some respondents may view politicized and fake prophecies as separate issues, there is a prevailing agreement on their interrelated nature.

Many respondents (43% Strongly Agreed and 30.33% Agreed) affirm that politicized prophecies are principally used to influence voters and electoral outcomes. However, 15.33% Disagreed, and 11.33% Strongly Disagreed, reflecting a minority view that rejects the direct impact of such prophecies on election outcomes. The overwhelming agreement suggests that religious predictions are frequently deployed as instruments for political advice, potentially determining voter behavior based on divine declarations rather than policy considerations and manifestoes. A majority of the respondents, 56%, Strongly Agreed, and 36% Agreed that political actors often exploit religious prophecies to manipulate public opinion. Only 5% Disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed, indicating a near-universal acknowledgment of this practice. This finding underscores concerns that political figures strategically align themselves with religious leaders who give favorable prophecies, influencing the electorate and reinforcing political narratives through religious authority. The data reveal that 15.67% Strongly Agreed and 41% Agreed that the rise of fake prophecies has contributed to religious and political instability in South-Western Nigeria. In the meantime, 37.67% Disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed. The significant disagreement rate indicates that while a majority recognizes the undermining effects of fake prophecies, a substantial percentage of the respondents remain unconvinced of their direct impact. This difference may stem from differing views of how religious propaganda influences political and social tensions.

59.67% strongly agreed, and 32% agreed that there is a well-built link between political ambitions and the increase in false religious predictions. Only 4.67% Disagreed and 2% Strongly Disagreed. This result shows a prevalent belief that many religious leaders fabricated prophecies to align with political interests for influence or financial gains. The near-unanimous agreement underscores the perception that electoral cycles often witness a surge in politically motivated religious predictions. Most respondents (55.33% Strongly Agreed and 33.67% Agreed) affirm that religious leaders who deliver politically motivated prophecies tend to gain political support or financial benefits. In contrast, only 7% Disagreed and 6.33% strongly disagreed. These findings indicate that many religious leaders may engage in prophetic declarations not out of divine stimulation but for personal or institutional gains. This aligns with broader concerns about the commercialization of religion and its intersection with political patronage.

A substantial percentage of respondents (39% Strongly Agreed and 12% Agreed) recognize that fake prophecies are more likely to materialize during election contestations in South-Western Nigeria. However, 15% Disagreed and 6.33% Strongly Disagreed. While a majority recognizes election periods as an era of heightened religious manipulation, the level of disagreement suggests that some individuals do not remember a direct correlation between political timelines and the proliferation of false religious claims. The findings in (Table 9) exemplify a strong correlation between politicized and fake prophecies in South-Western Nigeria. The data indicate that religious prophecies are used for political gains, influencing voters' conduct and public view. Furthermore, respondents tremendously agree that political leaders exploit religious leaders, who, in turn, benefit from political and financial gains. The study also emphasizes the role of fake prophecies in fueling religious and political instability, especially during election seasons. These results underline the urgent need for greater public awareness and regulatory mechanisms to mitigate the abuse of religious influence in politics. Addressing this issue requires a multi-faceted approach, including ethical accountability among religious leaders, political transparency, and civic education to empower voters to make informed decisions independent of religious pronouncements and affirmations.

Findings on Research Objective 4

(The Consequences of the Proliferation of Prophecies and the Effects on Socio-Religious and Economic Development in South-Western, Nigeria)

Table 10: The Consequences of the Proliferation of Prophecies and the Effects on Socio-Religious and Economic Development in South-Western Nigeria

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The proliferation of prophecies has significantly influenced socio-religious practices in South-Western Nigeria.	121 (40.33%)	96 (32%)	38 (12.67%)	35 (11.67%)
The increase in religious prophecies has led to heightened religious tensions and divisions in South-Western Nigeria	119 (39.67%)	108 (36%)	39 (13%)	34 (11.33%)
The spread of false prophecies has contributed to the financial exploitation of individuals and communities.	162 (52%)	108 (36%)	21 (7%)	9 (3%)
Misusing prophecies for financial and political Gain has hindered socio-economic progress in South-Western Nigeria.	178 (59.33%)	99 (33%)	17 (5.67%)	6 (2%)
Fear-based prophecies predicting doom or economic collapse have affected many businesses and financial activities.	34 (11.33%)	33 (11%)	134 (44.67%)	99 (33%)
The proliferation of prophecies has contributed to religious fanaticism in South-Western Nigeria.	77 (25.67%)	83 (27.67%)	63 (21%)	57 (19%)
Government intervention is needed to regulate the public dissemination of prophecies to prevent misinformation	192 (64%)	98 (32.67%)	7 (2.33%)	3 (1%)

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025.

Table 10 presents results and findings on the socio-religious and economic consequences of the proliferation of prophecies in South-Western Nigeria. Most respondents (40.33% Strongly Agreed and 32% Agreed) assert that the proliferation of prophecies has considerably influenced socio-religious practices in South-Western Nigeria. On the other hand, 12.67% Disagreed and 11.67% strongly disagreed. The vast agreement indicates that recurrent prophetic pronouncements, statements, and speeches shape religious norms, doctrines, and practices. This finding highlights concerns that religious institutions are increasingly driven by prophetic pronouncements, which may alter traditional worship practices and create new social dynamics within the religious populace. Many respondents (39.67% Strongly Agreed and 36% Agreed) believe that increased religious prophecies have contributed to heightened religious tensions and divisions in South-Western Nigeria. However, 13% Disagreed and 11.33% Strongly Disagreed. The high level of agreement suggests frequent and conflicting prophetic pronouncements and statements contribute to doctrinal disagreements, inter-religious rivalries, and factionalism within faith-based communities. This division may undermine religious unity and foster an environment of distrust and hostility among religious leaders and groups.

A remarkable 52% Strongly Agreed, and 36% Agreed that the increase in false prophecies has contributed to the financial exploitation of individuals and communities. Only 7% Disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed, indicating a broad consensus on this issue. The data suggest that many religious leaders capitalize on prophetic pronouncements to solicit financial contributions from followers, often under the pretext of divine intervention or spiritual breakthroughs. This finding aligns with existing concerns about the commercialization of religion, where financial extortion is disguised as faith-based religious communities. A majority (59.33% Strongly Agreed and 25.67% Agreed) affirm that the abuse of prophecies for economic and political gain has hindered socio-economic progress in South-Western Nigeria. However, 11.33% Disagreed and 2.33% Strongly Disagreed. This response highlights the detrimental effects of misleading religious forecasts on economic growth, as resources that could be directed into creative ventures are often diverted into religious institutions. In addition, politically motivated prophecies may foster instability, discouraging investments and development programs.

Many respondents (64% Strongly Agreed and 27.67% Agreed) aver that fear-based prophecies forecasts of doom or economic crumple have negatively affected businesses and financial activities. On the other hand, 5.67% Disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed. The domination of agreement suggests prophetic declarations forecasting economic downturns or disasters may lead to panic, daunting entrepreneurship, and investment. Individuals and businesses might abstain from making financial commitments due to the fear of looming calamity, thereby stalling economic development. A substantial 44.67% Strongly Agreed, and 33% Agreed that the proliferation of prophecies has contributed to the rise of religious fanaticism in South-Western Nigeria. Meanwhile, 21% Disagreed and 1% Strongly Disagreed. This finding suggests that unchecked prophetic activities may fuel radical religious beliefs and extremism. Some individuals, driven by prophetic proclamations, may engage in extreme behaviors, including intolerance, aggression, or even social isolation, believing they are acting in alignment with divine revelations.

Most respondents (33% Strongly Agreed and 19% Agreed) suggest government intervention in regulating public broadcasting prophecies to prevent propaganda and false prophecy. However, 19% Disagreed, and only 1% Strongly Disagreed. Whereas there is significant support for regulation, the notable percentage of disagreement suggests that some individuals recognize government involvement in religious matters as a contravention or infringement on religious freedom. The data point to a critical discussion regarding the balance between religious liberty and the need to control manipulative and potentially harmful prophetic statements. The findings in Table 10 highlight the insightful consequences of prophetic proliferation in South-Western Nigeria's socio-religious and economic setting. The results reveal that unchecked prophetic declarations contribute to religious tensions, financial exploitation, economic instability, and the rise of fanaticism. Fear-based prophecies, in particular, impact business and investment decisions, substantially hindering economic growth. The study suggests that many respondents support government intervention in regulating prophecy-related propaganda. Nevertheless, the divergent views on regulatory measures point out a multifaceted discussion on the role of state authorities in religious affairs. Addressing these concerns needs a multi-dimensional approach, including religious accountability, public sensitization, and ethical frameworks to prevent the abuse of prophetic statements for financial and political manipulation.

CONCLUSION

This research has analyzed the proliferation of prophecy in southwest Nigeria, which has impacted the socio-religious, political, and economic landscape of the people and the region. At the same time, prophecy is one of the strongholds of Christianity and can provide a sense of hope and meaning for individuals and nations if well harnessed. Unfortunately, it has led to manipulation, exploitation, and social unrest in southwest Nigeria. The results of this study show the link between Nigerian politics and prophecies, especially during the general elections. Thus, fake prophecies were associated with political manipulation, and some prophets do this for electoral gains, resulting in rifts among political supporters and religious adherents. Also, it is discovered that people have lost confidence in prophetic utterances and some revered men of God due to the disparity between election results, economic development, and prophetic declarations made by them. This shows how religious beliefs are hampered as a result of politicized and fabricated prophecies, particularly the involvement of some Christian leaders in escalating political tensions during elections through prophecies. Thus, political and religious leaders must understand the harm fake prophecies have caused in the religious and political landscape and the significance of preserving Nigeria's democratic ideals and religious organizations' credibility. There is a direct relationship between the spread of false predictions in South-Western Nigeria and the politicization and bastardization of prophecies and Christianity as a religion. Most respondents agree that political players, especially during election seasons, use religious leaders to influence voters through fake prophecies to control public opinion and gain political and financial advantages. This study shows that false and politicized prophecies have contributed to political and religious unrest because religious leaders use their influences to control their members to support political causes for the leader's political benefit.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. In collaboration with Christian leaders, the government should create public awareness campaigns to educate Nigerian prophets and prophetesses on the ethical use of prophecies. Equally, citizens must be sensitized to distinguish between true prophecy, one of the strongholds of Christianity, and politically motivated prophecies, especially during the election and New Year prophecies periods, to prevent manipulation.
2. Government-led initiatives in collaboration with Christian leaders should regulate the spread of fabricated prophecies in the country. Equally, Christian organizations such as CAN and PFN should establish ethical frameworks to regulate prophecy relating to social, economic, and political situations in Southwest Nigeria.
3. Christian leaders should avoid partisan politics and focus on unity, peace, and societal well-being. Training and workshops on ethics and the consequences of politicizing religion could help mitigate the harmful effects of false prophecies.
4. Christians should engage in open conversations to combat religious and political tensions fueled by fake prophecies fuelled by fake prophets in Southwest Nigeria.
5. Poverty and economic instability are some of the reasons that have led to the proliferation of prophecy. Therefore, the government should implement policies to address poverty and economic instability in southwest Nigeria. Furthermore, in the biblical epoch, prophecy and prophetic utterances were regulated. Therefore, the government should have clear guidelines and regulations for Christian activities in collaboration with Christian leaders. These guidelines should include registration and monitoring the sequence of events of religious organizations because a lawless society is sinful. It has been established that financial gain is one reason for fake prophecy. Thus, vulnerable groups such as women, older people, children, and the youth should be protected from exploitation and manipulation by the prophetic groups. Public education and awareness campaigns should be launched urgently to sensitize people about the risks and consequences of following fake prophets and believing in their counterfeit prophecies.

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