

Psychology of Misusing the Religious Premises by Politicians in Africa.

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090297S>

Received: 11 September 2024; Accepted: 26 September 2024; Published: 25 October 2024

ABSTRACT

This article is divided into seven major topics and each topic is divided into subtopics. In the Introduction the author has presented the problem to the study. In methodology the author has discussed the methodology used to collect data. In this section the author used two data collection instruments for this study, and these were an observation guide instrument and interview guide instrument. The study was carried out in Nairobi County Starehe constituency. Nairobi county has 17 constituencies with 2,415,304 registered voters and Starehe constituency has 123,163 registered voters with 6 wards. In the 6 wards that is where the author conducted the study. Out of 380 respondents 200 were male and 180 were female. The author opted to use random sampling method because all members of the population has an exactly equal chance of being selected to give information based on this study.

In review of related literature, the author has reviewed the related articles, journals, and books from other studies done based on suggested subtopics. These subtopics are: The definition of religion, the highlight of using Psychology to misuse religion and religious premises for self-gain, the author has asked some key questions like: Is religion motivated with political arguments? Is religion and state the same thing? The author has also reviewed the history and the growth of religion in African states, the author has highlighted on religion and political temperature during the electioneering period, How Politicians are using social media as an Influencer in religion and society in Kenya, the author has also asked other key questions: what impact does social media have on religious identity? Can politicians be stopped from using religious premises in Kenya? The author has reviewed on what others think the way forward and the Wakeup call to religious leaders. The author has given the results and discussion from the study and finally the conclusion and the way forward. The study conducted answered the following research questions. What is the impact of politicians on religious premises? How do politicians play around with the psychology of people on religious premises? Who is responsible for religious premises? Where do we place the politicians in religious Premises?

Results were discussed and coded in tables as will be seen in the study. The duration for this study took 6 weeks to collect data. 349 out of 380 observation guides were returned within the timeline which translate to 91.8% and 31 observation guides were not returned nor filled that means which also translate to 9.2%. Based on the study the author concluded that religious leaders need to be wise when it comes to matters of politicians misusing church premises to sell themselves. Finally, the author gave the conclusion, and the way forward based on the study carried.

Keywords: Religious Premises, Politicians.

INTRODUCTION

The preservation of religious premises from misuse is becoming a challenge in modern days whereby freedom of worship is embraced by all people In Africa especially Kenya. Politicians flock to places of worship, especially churches, every Sunday and Mosque every Friday to join other members in worship. This mostly happen during the campaigns they politicians flock to places of worship for blessings and endorsements. On

the process they seek opportunities to greet the gathering and then they start politicking from the pulpit forgetting that they are standing on Holy ground.

It is very difficult to separate religion and politics in Africa mostly Kenya, because the politicians and the religious leaders' compliment to one another. Politicians are fond of giving large sums of money and gifts to religious premises like Churches and Mosque terming it as an offerings and tithes and others pledges for development purposes. It is not in their minds that they want to be blessed, but they want to be seen giving to places of worship, they manipulate people's psychology that they are giving for God, but it is indirect bribing. This makes the religious organization lose its prophetic mandate instead it sanitizes politicians. This recurring development prompted the author to do a study on the psychology of misusing religious premises by politicians for their self-interests.

Some leaders of the established Christian Churches have had enough. They have banned politicians from the pulpit, accusing them of making divisive and unedifying remarks that desecrate the church and its mandate. The Catholic Church indicated that Partly priests are to blame for the capture of the church by politicians. There is a need to return the practice to its purity. In the same spirit the Anglican Church in Kenya, concurred that it is a mistake to give leeway to politicians in churches in the first place. As part of membership of the church or religion organization they need to be recognized as state leaders but not to be given a chance to do politics from the pulpit. Because the pulpit is a sacred place dedicated for the sacred things of God. In this study the author did a study and discovered why politicians uses peoples' psychology in religious premises for their self-gains and recommended a way to seal that loophole without harming or spiritually injuring any person or politician.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology presents the details of research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, description of data collection instruments, description of data collection procedures, and description of data analysis procedures. Two data collection instruments were considered for this study. These are an observation guide and interview guide. The author opted to use random sampling method because all members of the population has an exactly equal chance of being selected to give information based on this study. This is a straightforward method used for this study, it does not need any educational qualifications, it minimizes bias and allows researchers to draw accurate conclusions about the entire population based on the data collected from the sample group. The targeted group was selected randomly because the researcher wanted to avoid biasness[1].

Observation Guide instrument

The study used an observation guide instrument as a way of getting the needed information. According with Bhandari, this method is used because it is more of non-experimental studies in which behavior is systematically observed and recorded. The goal is to obtain a snapshot of specific characteristics of an individual, group, or setting. In this case the target groups were politicians and religious leaders who brainwash believers of a religion for their self-gain. Naturalistic observation is also used where the author observed the behaviors of the politician and religious leaders in the environment in which they operate from[2]. The author agrees with Bhandari by stating that: ethically speaking, this method is acceptable if the participants remain anonymous and the behavior occurs in a public setting where people would not normally have an expectation of privacy like Churches, Mosques, Temples and other religious settings. The study was conducted in Nairobi County in Starehe constituency. Nairobi county has 17 constituencies with 2,415,304 registered voters and Starehe constituency has 123,163 registered voters with 6 wards. [3] In these 6 wards that is where the author conducted the study. The author designed 190 observation guides and gave it out to 32 research assistants 10 women and 23 men in every ward, each ward roughly has 20,000 voters. The reason why the author chose Starehe Constituency as a sample for this study is because Starehe constituency is based within Nairobi CBD and Nairobi is the Capital City of Kenya and it is considered that everything serious starts from Nairobi. That is where all politicians in Kenya get a bearing of political activities before going out to other constituencies.

Interview Guide

McMillan and Schumacher describe interviews as vocal instruments which involve the gathering of data through direct verbal interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee(s) [4]. Interviews were conducted by the author and the research assistants. The interviews were used to corroborate the information acquired through observation guide for in-depth understanding from congregants, and church leaders. The interview guides were developed for pastors, church lay leaders and church attendants such that their responses provided in-depth information about the psychology of political leaders misusing religious premises. The study made use of unstructured interviews which according to McMillan and Schumacher comprise open-ended questions which allow for greater flexibility and freedom for the respondent. The interview guide was divided into five sections according to research questions to corroborate the findings of the observation guide. The author designed 190 interview guides and gave it out to 32 research assistants 10 women and 23 men in every ward, each ward roughly has 20,000 voters. The study was conducted in Nairobi County in Starehe constituency. Nairobi county has 17 constituencies with 2,415,304 registered voters and Starehe constituency has 123,163 registered voters with 6 wards. In these 6 wards that is where the author conducted the study. The interview session lasted in between 20 to 30 minutes, the author and the researcher assistants wrote down the responses.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of literature was designed in thematic way for easy review and the identification of academic gap. Bearing in mind themes were structured in research questions mode. What is religion? How do politicians use the Psychology of members in the misuse of religious premises for self-interest, where is religion used for political arguments, is religion and state the same thing? Is religion growing in Africa? How is Religion catalyzing Political temperature during the electioneering period? How Politicians and religious leaders using of social media as an Influencer in Religion and Society in Kenya? What impact does social media have on religious identity? Can politicians Stopped from Using Religious Premises in Kenya? Wake up call to religious leaders by young people.

What is Religion?

Wikipedia defines Religion as: a collection of cultural systems, belief systems, and worldviews that relate humanity to spirituality and, sometimes, to moral values. Many religions have narratives, symbols, traditions and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life or to explain the origin of life or the universe [5]. Thinking from this definition we see religion being a cultural system and belief system which manipulates the psychology of believers to be emotionally drawn. When it comes to spirituality the mover of religion tends to brainwash the receiver to belief in everything that the mover says to be true and inspired from God. Doing against is being against God. The study revealed that the congregants go to the extent to get instructions on who to elect from priests and pastors terming them that they are God chosen. This brings us to the next step whereby leaders/ politicians manipulate Religion and religious premises for their self-interest.

Psychology of Misusing Religion and Religious Premises for self-gain.

It is a custom for many politicians to flock to places of worship for thanksgiving because of their successful election after long campaigns. Kenya being among the many countries which their leaders flock for the same. For example, William Ruto was a presidential candidate he thanked many religious gatherings for their prayers and endorsement after winning Kenya's 2022 presidential election were religious leaders, of a significant number of whom had enthusiastically campaigned for the career politician. [6] From the study the author discovered that Politicians make very religious and spiritual remark drawing the congregation closer to God as if the competitor was God's reject. It is assessed by Raymond in his handbook that: religion is a Social Participation which indicates that one of the benefits of religion and perhaps of spirituality is that it often provides a basis for social support and social participation have typically utilized single items centering around church attendance or, less frequently, financial contributions. [7] In the name of religion politician brainwash

the entire gathering by donating large sums of money as an offering as a way of diverting the attention of many as generous people.

Is Religion Motivated with Political Arguments?

The International Journal of Constitutional Law indicate that: It would be strange if diversity in a religiously pluralistic society would not show itself in the process of political opinion formation. It goes on to suggest that: Believers are religiously motivated, which does not always change when they enter the political arena. Moreover, religious communities may have special interests that they want to have represented in political debate. They saw an avenue in political party manifesto that would t air their grievances. In a democracy, political rights like freedom of speech and association guarantee that everybody is entitled to participate in political discussions. In view of these fundamental rights, religiously inspired contributions have the same status as other contributions[8]. Through this argument the study revealed that there is a loophole for Politicians to use church premises for their gains. They might argue that they are members of a particular religion and barring them from speaking is equally infringing their religious right and freedom of worship.

On the other hand, its religion is seen as a voice of the voiceless. The international journal of the constitutional law argues that: Religious points of view may enrich discussions with arguments that otherwise would be without a voice[9]. Are politicians voice of voiceless? Who will defend the less fortunate in society if the Church is aligning itself to the rich alone?

As the author stated earlier politicians speak merciful and emotional by targeting something that will benefit them, and the priests and pastors are blindly supporting them. They seem to look empathetic with a target once it is met the rest is history. Speaking of them as the voice of the voiceless is a lie. The Standard paper highlighted the political scenario in Kenya and stated that: who will speak for and with the people who cannot represent themselves are becoming fewer and rare. As it happened to some prophets in the Old Testament, the prophetic voices of our time are dimming their spirits to dream of a better, just and moral country because injustices are safeguarded by the mighty, the deep state and a populace that feels helpless[10]. Biblically speaking Prophet Jeremiah died in anguish; frustrated and even wishing he was not born in the first place. "Cursed be the day I was born! May the day my mother bore me not be blessed! Cursed be the man who brought my father the news, who made him very glad.... Why did I ever come out of the womb, to see trouble and sorrow and to end my days in shame?" (Jer 20:14 -18).

The political class has joined hand with the religious leaders prompting many Kenyans to be angry and upset that the cost of living has shot up and the prophetic voice of the church is diminishing slowly and drying on the same time Parents are struggling to get children to school, medical care for the poor is a nightmare, food insecurity is on the rise, and so on. A prophet stands up to condemn wastage and feeding citizens with empty hope.

Is Religion and State the same thing?

Historically speaking, the relationship between state and religion, more particularly between state and church, has been studied by many people of different backgrounds. At times, thoughts about this relationship have changed. During the Middle Ages, in Europe, the Christian religion determined the position of the state as well as the position of the Church this means that the Church was elevated high than the State. Religion gave state authorities and state power its legitimacy, and the government was the protector of the Christian faith. Nowadays, religion is no longer that fundamental; the starting points are democracy and the rule of law[11]. From the study the author discovered that Religion has lost the flavor this was attributed in many cases of the Mushrooming of personal churches. These churches are started with different intentions, most probably economic factors. From the study it is revealed that the proprietor is conditioned to start a church to collect the offerings and tithes as a means of survival.

In many countries, state and religion are separate from one another but they serve the same people in a state. Therefore, Raymond indicates that freedom of religion and the principle of equality play important roles, when

answering questions about the meaning of religion in a state. This development according to Raymond shows the secularization of the state and constitutional theory[12]. This freedom is what politicians are misusing by jumping from one Religion to another for thanksgiving services as it was revealed in the study.

Turning round to the states where there is separation of power between the state and religion, every citizen should be able to accept government authority, and every citizen should be able to agree with the general aims of the state. In a pluralistic society, where a lot of people do not believe in a supreme being and all sorts of religions coexist[13]. This is aimed for coexistence and equality plus harmony. That means there is something binding them together regardless of one's religious status.

The growth of Religion in African States.

While there is a decrease in the number of members of religious communities in the west, especially in Europe and America, and a similar decrease in the number of believers in churches. In Africa, religion remains an important factor in the social, cultural, and political domains[14]. It turns out that in Africa religion can be reduced to a personal conviction, which has a meaning outside the private sphere. That is why Mbiti John in his book states that: Africans are notoriously religious, and each people has its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it.[15] When they have are frustrated and lost hope politicians outside seek religious consolation because they are emotionally and religiously down, they need reenergization and hope for the next day. The author discovered that as much as we blame them also, they need God. As the Bible say in Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (NKJV). Nobody is excluded from worship if he/she is genuine in heart and action.

Religion and Political temperature during the electioneering period.

It is common in most countries even those with advanced democracies for political temperature to raise especially during the electioneering period. All these brought about political hatred among political parties' manifestos. In recent days, the attempted assassination of former president Donald Trump on July 13, 2024, brought back to Americans the gut-wrenching political violence that marred the country in the turbulent and polarizing 1960s[16]. Electoral violence is also common in other parts of the world, it seems that there will be no immediate peace soon. The author revealed that Self-interest is driving politician and nations crazy to wedge wars and conflict to one another. It is common with developed countries to impose puppet leaders on thirty world countries for their own interests and religion is playing a critical role in promoting it.

It is true as Morgan expresses in his article that: "Today, as we confront another harshly divisive era, the prospect of overcoming such violence and forging for our future "a more perfect union" seems ever more remote. Even our most basic civic institutions like churches and schools, which could play an important bridge-building role, are divided or under assault"[17]. They dance the tune of the warlords who frontiers to help the church and other institutions with hidden agendas. This means when there is conflict there is one who is enjoying somewhere.

Politicians using of social media as an Influencer in Religion and Society in Kenya

The author discovered that social media platforms have been seen both as a blessing and a curse for Kenya, a country that has a promising potential as one of the pillars of democracy in Africa but has often been haunted by electoral violence due to the influence of ethnic politics that has been spiral and propagated by politicians and their agents using social media. In Kenya election is based on tribal groupings that mean merging of big tribes on the expenses of smaller tribes. This grouping begets hate, defamatory utterances that which fuels chores on the process it destabilizes all the peace and infrastructures that have been built. Fredrick Ogenga in his article indicate that: It has watered down all the gains that have been made over the years[18].

Influencers are social media users that have a following on a social media platform precisely because of their topical expertise and the authentic relationships that they nurture with audience members. They enjoy and carefully maintain often, though not always, in a professional capacity credibility and authenticity through how and which content they choose to present [19]. It was discovered that these influencers use sweet language to move people to get interested in their contents. They leverage their social clout to promote causes that can include product advertisements for brands and enterprises, but they may also decide to support social and political tenets. The author agrees with Wikipedia that social media is a communication platform used to persuade and often works to change or influence opinions regarding political views because of the abundance of ideas, thoughts, and opinions circulating through the social media platform. Therefore, the more that people use social media platforms for news sources, the more their political opinions will be affected [20]. Social media includes Radio, Televisions, Twitter Facebook Instagram, Emails, Magazines and News Papers. The study revealed that, these media target people of different categories; for example, those who do not know how to read and write are influenced with the listening of radios and television mostly the elderly this method of communication can be done in local languages as well as national language for easy understanding. Those who read and write are mostly influenced by twitter, Instagram, emails and Facebook. These are mostly youths aged between 18 to 25 and young adults aged between 26 to 30 they read and respond immediately in another way they chat with one another. Magazines and Newspapers are commonly used by all categories of people. These methods can be used while people are at religious gatherings. Politicians use them in religious meetings, they chat while attending the sacred meetings. On the process when they are given chances to greet the congregation, they speak with emotions and reactive because of the firsthand information they have, they speak without regards. They start politics in religious factions, and they are smart on that.

What impact does social media have on religious identity?

Since Covid 19 most religious organizations opted to social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube for communication and spreading their religious teachings like preaching, Bible studies, Madrassa for Muslims and special meetings. It provides a platform for religious leaders to reach a global audience, transcending geographical boundaries. This global reach is what the Tutor Chase article indicates that: “It has led to the proliferation of religious teachings, allowing individuals to explore and understand different faiths, thereby influencing their religious identity. For instance, a person may come across a religious post that resonates with them, leading them to identify with that faith” [21]. On the contrary the person may decide to go by the teachings of that religion or misuse it or take advantage over it.

The author agrees with Tutorchase that: “social media fosters the creation of online religious communities. These communities provide a space for individuals to discuss religious matters, share experiences, and seek spiritual guidance. They can be particularly appealing to individuals who feel isolated or marginalized in their offline religious communities” [22]. By participating in these online communities, individuals can reaffirm or reshape their religious identity. For example, a person who feels disconnected from their local church may find a sense of belonging in an online Christian community, strengthening their Christian identity and participating without fear of intimidation and prejudice. The benefit of social media is coexistence it can also facilitates interfaith dialogue, which can influence religious identity. Through social media, individuals can engage in conversations with people of different faiths, broadening their understanding of other religions instead of tensions and hates which are brought about by politicians and other religious leaders who stands there to gain. This exposure is what Tutor chase call: “Diverse religious perspectives which can challenge individuals to reflect on their own beliefs, potentially leading to a shift in their religious identity. For instance, a Muslim who engages in dialogue with Buddhists on social media may begin to incorporate Buddhist teachings into their own religious practice, altering their religious identity” [23].

However, the author gives his views that social media on religious identity can be both positive and negative. While it can promote understanding and tolerance, it can also lead to the spread of misinformation and religious intolerance. As Tutor chase indicates that: “social media can be used to propagate extremist views, which can lead to the radicalization of individuals and a distortion of their religious identity. Therefore, while social media has the potential to shape religious identity in significant ways, it is crucial to approach online

religious content with a critical eye.”[24] In the contrary politicians and church leaders uses this social media platform to sell themselves to the use.

Can politicians Stopped from Using Religious Premises in Kenya?

This is a debate that has been going on for sometimes in Kenya and other parts of the world. Some countries have tried to draw a separation of Church and politics. These politicians have come up with a strategy of using freedom of worship as enshrined in the Kenyan Constitution. In his article Emmanuel Onyango observed that: “They tend to arrive flush with cash donations carried by their handlers in shoulder bags which can be used for the construction of mega churches and the purchase of loud music systems.”[25] In exchange for this large sum of money in the name of offering and thanksgivings the author states that, the Religious leaders are swayed with the appetite of this money in midway through the service they invite the politician to takes to the pulpit as a way of greetings, where the congregation becomes a captive audience for their message, which often has little to do with the bible.

In contrary views from that of the upcoming churches, leaders of the established churches have had enough. The author discovered from the study that they have banned politicians from the pulpit, accusing them of making divisive and unedifying remarks that desecrate the church and its mandate. In his article Onyango Emmanuel quotes the Catholic church stating that: "Partly priests are to blame for the capture of the church by politicians. There was need to return the practice into its purity." [26] In the same spirit the Anglican Church in Kenya, concurred that it is a mistake to give leeway to politicians in churches in the first place. This decision is welcomed by many church members citing that politicians are selfish people. [27] Based on these findings the author discovered that they are not there to inspire people or to call for unity and they do not value people at al. for this reason instead need to be recognized as state leaders for their presence in church and nothing else. If they are given a chance they will start campaigning and abusing each other in church. That will translate into a way that the church premises are a den of abusers. This mostly happens to churches that are opportunistic, which are looking for politicians to give them money, sometimes they even invite them to come aiming for cash.

The author agrees with Emmanuel Onyango that: "Politicians are still welcome to pray but without any preferential treatment to address congregants,". [28] If the church continue treating them special, they will see themselves as semi gods. Forgetting that all are equal before God and the mercy of God is upon all of us.

Wake up call to religious leaders by young people.

The recent episode in Kenya that made young Kenyans pouring into the streets under the banner of “Gen Z,” forcing changes in the government, also called Christian churches to account for how denominations relate with politicians.

Fredrick Nzwili Observed in his Article that: “young people go out to protest because of the difficult life they go through, they are unable to cope economically due to some government policies and the many burdening taxes.”[29] The question we need to ask ourselves: where is the voice of the church to defend the voiceless majority? The author observed that on a positive note some of the clergies especially the young one raised their voices and protested alongside the young people demanding for better life. These young people the GZ poured their anger toward faith leaders, the clerics and denominations who were/ said to be too close to the state for self-protection. Is the church independent from politicians? Is the church trying to fulfill its mandate that is called for? Fredrick states that: “The youth are trying to cleanse the churches, already caught up in an unhealthy relationship with the political class.” [30]

Social media hashtags that have cropped up during the protests, such as #OccupyParliament and #OccupyEverywhere, is #OccupyChurches, brought awareness of the political situation in Kenya. This made young people The GZ to feel like the church is silent and it as it was in bed’ with the government.”[31] This means that the church is proactive not reactive. But more often, the church is seen as an ally of those official

this undermines the church’s moral authority and its ability to speak truth to power. Fredrick Continue to observe that: “The church’s frequent visits to the State House (the Kenyan president’s official residence) and perceived exclusive consultations with the president, while neglecting direct engagement with the broader populace, particularly the youth, has amplified doubts about the church’s impartiality and independence.”^[32]

To some extent not all religion that have gone to bed with the government Individual churches and mosques have supported the youth movement, calling for justice for those killed by law enforcement in the protests, while urging the youth leaders to accept offers to negotiate. As it is the tradition in Kenya nothing good comes without casualties. Fredrick observed that: “The killing of dozens of peacefully picketing Kenyans by the police is totally unacceptable.”^[33] The Kenyan constitution Article 37 give people of Kenya the right to demonstrate picketing and petition.^[34] The killing by the police is an infringement of those rights. The same constitution gives people religious freedom. But warn people not to use it for hate incitements and radicalization against one another, but the politicians are using it in a bad way.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The duration for this study took 6 weeks to collect data. 349 out of 380 observation guides were returned within the timeline which translate to 91.8% and 31 observation guides were not returned nor filled that means which also translate to 9.2%

Demographic Presentation of Respondents

Data was collected from members of Starehe constituency. All these members were registered voters there. The demographic information of these respondents is presented in the subsequent section in the form of tables using frequencies and percentages. Only completed observation guide and interview guide were analyst; therefore, all incomplete 31 observation guide and interview guides were excluded prior to this analysis^[35]. In this study the author used random sampling technique because it was suitable for heterogeneous population and ensured that all the “unknown” influences are equally distributed within the sample^[36].

Table 1 Demographic Presentation of the respondents.

Target Group	Target Population	Sample Size	Percentage %	Sampling Technique
Politicians	20	10	2.87%	Stratified random sampling
Church Members	210	197	56.45%	Stratified random sampling
Lay Leaders	100	97	27.79%	Stratified random sampling
Pastor	50	45	12.89%	Stratified random sampling
Total	380	349	100%	

Out of 20 politicians, 10 representing 2.87% of all the politicians were selected using stratified random sampling technique. The researcher acquired a complete list of the target population and assigned a consecutive number to each group listed in the target population then selected randomly. Further, this sampling technique was preferred for politicians because they are of different in marital status, gender, age, social standings and levels of education. They participated in the study because they are the key supporters and promoters of politics in religious premises.

210 church members were targeted but only 197 who represents 56.45% responded, they were selected through stratified random sampling to negate the charge of researcher bias on the choice of informants^[37]. The author segmented (stratified) members according to the level of education. The stratified random technique also allowed for generalization of the findings to a wider population.^[38] They participated because they are members of the church, and they regularly attend the mass every Sundays and they listen to politicians.

100 lay leaders were targeted from the target group but only 97 who represented 27.79 % responded they were selected using stratified random sampling technique. This is a sampling technique where church lay leaders were divided into different homogeneous subgroups, or strata (classes) and then random samples selected proportionally from the different strata (classes). They were included in the study because they are elected to church leadership roles, these includes Ushers, Choir leaders, Sunday school teachers, Women fellowship leaders Youth fellowship leaders, Men fellowship leaders and Bible study leaders. Further, they are expected to follow strictly the teaching and doctrines of the church.

Finally, 50 pastors were targeted but only 45 who represented 12.89 %, responded to this study. Pastors were selected through stratified sampling technique whereby the target population was first stratified into male and female pastors then random samples taken from each stratum. This technique allowed the findings of the study to be generalized to a wider population. The total population of church pastors was also stratified into regions and a random sample drawn from each stratum but in proportion to the target population. These religious group of respondents were selected for the study because they are the shepherds of the church of God in that region, and people trust them for what they do, and they are given authority to invite whoever they wish to the pulpit. All the participants in this study were “key informants” and therefore, their informed consents were indispensable. As such, the researcher obtained their consent by issuing out Informed Consent Forms (ICF) to the sample population[39].

Results

The results from the study was analyzed based on the research questions as presented in the table below. These research questions were: What is the impact of politicians on religious premises? How do politicians play around with the psychology of people in religious premises? Who is responsible for religious premises? Where do we place the politicians in religious Premises?

All 349 returned observation guides and interview guides were collaborated and analyzed together.

Table 2. what is the impact of politicians on religious premises

Impact of Politicians	Frequencies	Percentage (%)
Spreading hatred	85	24.36%
Dividing people	77	22.13%
Promises to build	67	19.20%
For social status	65	18.62%
Make friends	55	15.69%
Total Respondents	349	100%

The results in Table 2 show that 24.36 % (n = 85) of the respondents agreed that the impact of politicians on religious premises is to spread hatred and propaganda which cannot be substantiated. But they do it for their self-interest. Further 22.13 % (n= 77) respondents were very categorical by indicating that they impact the religious premises by dividing members in church and on tribal lines, because not all people support their ideas.

The analysis in Table 2 revealed that 19.20 % (n =67) of the respondents indicated that these politicians have the impact in religious premises, because they promise to build the worship houses for God’s people. The indication is they want to construct better building than they are. From this analysis the author revealed that politician claim that they are more blessed, and they want to use part of their blessings for Gods’ work. This finding indicated that despite their presence in worship services they have an intention to do something good to the community of worshipers.

Table 2 indicate that 18.62 % (n = 65) of the respondents said that this politician go to religious premises to look for social status. Again, the same respondents 15.69 (n=55) revealed that these people go to religious premises to make friends, who will assist them on their campaigns. From this study the author discovered that where there are people politicians are happy.

Table 3. How do politician play with the psychology of people in religious premises

Playing with psychology	Frequencies	Percentage %
By donating a lot of money	98	28.08 %
To look for fame	70	20.06 %
Pretending to worship	81	23.21 %
Need an audience	100	28.65 %
Total Respondents	349	100 %

The results in Table 3 indicates that 28.08 % (n= 98) of respondents agreed that politicians make a lot of donations in religious premises. The result further revealed that this kind of giving is intentional, it is made to buy sympathy from the congregants. They are like goats in sheep's' den. Their real identity is hidden in money. This is interpreted that if they are unmasked from money and leadership, they will not give any help to religious premises they will disappear. 20.06 % (n=70) respondents, also indicated that the politicians go to places of worship to look for fame and furthermore the same study revealed that 23.21 % (n=81) said that politician go to houses of worship for pretense that they are worshiping in reality they are strategizing on how to capture the audience, that is why 28.65 % (n=100) respondents, said this politicians are in need of an audience.

Table 4 who is responsible for religious premises

Responsibilities	Frequencies	Percentage %
Clergies	120	34.38 %
Lay leaders	94	26.9341 %
Members	90	25.79 %
Politicians	45	12.89 %
Total Respondents	349	100%

According to the information revealed in table 4. 34.38% n=120 of the respondents said that it is the responsibility of clergies to take care of religious premises. From this study it is revealed that the clergies are respected and valued by the society due to the work they carry on behalf of people. They are the medium to God and people, their job is to guide, give counsel and install and uphold good morals in the society. Due to the regard given to them, society believes that care must give to those sacred places of worship by the clergies, and nobody is allowed to misuse it any way. 26.9341% (n=94) indicated that lay leaders have an obligation too to take care of religious premises. From the study it is indicated that lay leaders are the principal assistants to the clergies. They are delegated duties by the clergies and those duties are among them taking care of worship places. By cleaning them, repairing them, arranging pews, arranging hymnals, ushering, and greeting members at the door when they come in and go out. 25.75% (n=90) of the respondents had a feeling that it is a collective responsibility of all members of a religious organization to guard the religious premises from political capture. From the study it is revealed that taking care of religious premises is a way of owning it. If they mise and abandon doing it the politicians will have a platform to do, and they can do using money. 12.89% n=45 had a view that politicians have the responsibility to take care of religious premises. This was revealed that they need to do because they donate its construction, so it is their duty to take care of them.

Table 5. Where do we place politicians on religious premises.

Placing politicians in religious premises	Frequencies	Percentage %
Front sits	109	31.23 %
Back sits	90	26.64 %
Near the pulpit	89	25.5 %
Outside	61	17.48 %
Total Respondents	349	100 %

From table 5 saw that 31.23% (n=109) participants indicated that politicians need to sit in front of religious premises due to respect they are accorded in the society. 26.64%(n=90) agreed that politicians are just members like any other they need to sit at the back and listen the sermons from the pulpit like any other person. 25.5% (n=89) of respondents responded by saying that politician need to seat near the pulpit because they are friends of the clergies. 17.48% (n=61) of informants suggested that politicians need to sit outside the church and wait for people there to address after church. The author suggested from this study that placing politician sit near the pulpit is elevating them to be equal with the clergies. Clergies are ordained and set a part for the work of the universal church. The author further suggested that politicians sit a bit far from the pulpit because the pulpit is consecrated for ministry of the word and sacraments. The study indicated that putting politicians outside the church wouldn't help. That means the church is not practicing what Jesus said in Mathew: 11-28 "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (KJV) Sitting back and listen from clergies as it was revealed in this study is the best because it brings equality in the house of worship, all worshippers are equal and humbled before God.

CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD

Religious leaders need to be wise when it comes to matters of politicians misusing church premises to sell themselves. It is the responsibility of the clergy person to give guidance in love on how politicians behave in religious organization not to cause chores and incitements. Religion is for all people. Kenyan constitution chapter four (2010) guarantees every person freedom of worship in any religious premise but not to use it as platform for self-interest. As was revealed from the study religious premises are sacred things and places made for religious purposes. Respect and humbleness is needed when people are there as Onyango Emmanuel (2021) state in his article the Church need to return to her purity. People go for a purpose and the purpose is to worship God. These places need to be respected and honored as well as their religious leaders because they are set aside for that religious work. Religion and the state need to complement one another for the wellbeing of society. Religion should stand for the truth and correct the state where necessary. If religion bends and give politicians leeway to the pulpit soon or later religious leaders will be irrelevant in the society. All people are protected by the constitution, especially in Kenya. They need also to defend it in the right way with respect.

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FOOTNOTES

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