

## Analysis of Narratives in Online Comments on Daddy Freeze Anti-Tithe Postulations

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines narratives in online comments on Daddy Freeze's Anti-tithe arguments. It adopts the qualitative content analysis method to look at 22 comments by pastors and other personality to ascertain the content of their arguments and postulations for or against the position of Daddy Freeze on Tithing. The objectives of study are, to find out the direction of comments on Daddy Freeze's anti-tithe position, to ascertain the sources of those comments, and to establish the dominant frame of those comments. The findings revealed that while Daddy Freeze premised his position on scriptural backings from both old and new testament of the Bible, most of the pastors and others who spoke against his position based their stand primarily on the Old Testament scripture of Malachi 3:10. It was also found that most of the pastors and others that were against Daddy Freeze's position resorted to name-calling and insult on his personality instead of addressing his position on tithing. It was recommended among others that the clergy should not get angry when people raise controversial issues on tithing but should address the issue where necessary based on vast biblical backings.*

### INTRODUCTION

Advancement in the communication technology has no doubt revolutionized the communication sphere so much that it tends to redefine communication. Hence Olise (2014) avers that digitalization of images, multimedia, interactivity and increased storage of information, are all possible today as a result of this technology advancement like the emergency of social media through web. 2.0. Phenomenon. This tends to provide validity to Marshal McLuhams (1960) argument that media technologies would transform the world into a global village (Baran, 2002). This technological advancement has really expanded the frontiers of communication and information dissemination (Nwabueze, 2009).

This truism has led to the emergence and increased relevance of online media also known as digital media. In his words, Hasan (2013, p. 678) refers to digital media as "electronic media that work on digital codes, that is any media that are encoded in machine readable formats". According to him, digital media can be created, viewed, distributed, modified and preserved on

digital electronics device. Examples of digital media therefore include; software, digital images, digital video, video game, web pages and websites, including social media, data and databases.

In view of this therefore, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, 2go, Instagram among others have provided platform for communication with internet users all over the world instantly. Interestingly, the online comments are characterized by user generated contents. User generated contents make for horizontal communication format since internet users can upload information on the net to which other users will comment on. Suffice it therefore to state that online communication make for social presence, where users get to know each other hence interact meaningfully. Confirming this, Olise, (2014) sees social media as online communication media that use web 2.0 technologies which enable users to download, upload interact and collaborate with one another regardless of distance and time.

It therefore stirs no surprise that the online comments made by Ifedayo Olarinde popularly

known as "Daddy freeze" on tithing have continued to generate opinionated conjectures.

Mr Ifedayo Olarinde popularly known as Daddy Freeze is a Radio presenter. He is a native of Osun state Nigeria though he has a Romanian mother. He seems to show more interest and passion for religion and like Karl Max sees religion in Nigeria as the opium of the oppressed.

This underscores his "Free the Sheeple Movement" which primarily focused on advocacy against seeming religious exploitations of Nigerians and his 'Tithe Against Poverty Challenge, (TAP Challenge)' created to end poverty in Nigeria. To participate in TAP Challenge, you must remove someone from poverty with a tithe of your income and challenge someone to do the same. It therefore stirs no surprise that he granted an interview in October 2017 on Linda Ikeji Television where he voiced his stance on tithing.

The basic issues Daddy Freeze raised in his interview which generated heated arguments are as follows (www.pulse.ng.; 2017) :

- Religion is the easiest way to play politics.
- Boko Haram is as a result of religion.
- The religious man is a tool being used by the man selling him that religious brand. He is simply a puppet.
- The guy that is telling you to bring your tithe so that God will bless you is telling you lies.
- If you pay tithe to any Nigerian pastor you are a goat.
- If you want to give your money to Jesus, give it to the homeless, people in the hospital, hungry and naked people.
- Private jet-flying Daddy G.Os should be paying tithe to their church members.
- Many people are under the bondage of Malachi 3:8-10 which is actually about the priest robbing God, not the congregation robbing God.
- Mega churches are sitting on countries.
- What are the churches doing with the 10% of 80 million people's income?

Expectedly, these ten raised issues have generated heated debate online. While some lend support to Daddy Freeze's stance, others are against him and even go to the extent of calling him names. This has made the issue more interesting and popular as the said Daddy Freeze has perhaps become celebrity of some sort.

This study therefore set out to examine the narratives in the comments made by social media users on Daddy Freeze's anti-tithe postulations. This is to establish whether the reactions, especially from those against his position, provided stronger arguments for tithing or went around the issue to throw jabs at Daddy Freeze. This became pertinent because religion is a sensitive issue in Nigeria, and the social media seem to have created arena for raising tension within the Christian fold through the issue of tithing. The narratives in the online comments could reveal whether those commenting on the anti-tithe argument are getting people more confused or giving a clearer picture of the relevance of tithing in Christianity with a superior argument to that provided by Daddy Freeze.

### Statement of the Problem

Churches have been divided on whether tithing is scriptural or not. This underscores why some churches emphasize it while others do not. Those who emphasize tithing based their actions on Malachi 3:10. On the other hand, those who are opposed to tithing argue that such scriptural references are in the Old Testament, hence have no validity since the New Testament qualifies as a replacement of the Old Testament.

In the face of these controversies, Daddy Freeze online anti tithe comment which argues among others, that many people are under the bondage of Malachi 3:8-10 which is actually about priests robbing God and not the congregation has continued to raise dust and gain opinionated conjecture across the globe.

The social media created a platform for what could be described as the "Tithe war of Words" sparked off by Daddy Freeze to thrive. Since the social media was a major platform for reactions to Daddy Freeze comments, there is need to examine the content of these comments to establish whether the reactions created more confusion on the issue of tithing, provided meaningful explanation on it, or simply exhibited hate speech features with name calling and insults on Daddy Freeze. It is against this

backdrop that this study examined the narratives in the reactions of people on the anti-tithe position of Daddy Freeze.

The gap in knowledge here is that a critical analysis of the narratives in the comments on Daddy Freeze issue has not been done to know whether social media created a platform to inflame the tithing issue or served as a channel to educate people more on tithing.

So ascertaining the type of agenda the social media set through the narratives on the anti-tithe controversy is the gap this work intends to fill,

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are

- To ascertain the direction of comments on Daddy Freeze anti-tithe postulations
- To identify the sources of comments of Daddy Freeze tithe controversy
- To ascertain the choice of words used in comments on Daddy Freeze position on tithe.
- To find out the dominant frame in the comments on Daddy Freeze position on tithe.

### Scope of Study

This study is delimited to Daddy Freeze anti-tithe online comments from October, 2017 to January 2018 and the comments it generated online within the period of study. However the study shall focus on comments made in popular blogs and websites such as [www.pulse.ng](http://www.pulse.ng), [www.ripple.nigeria.com](http://www.ripple.nigeria.com), [www.ripples.nigeria.com](http://www.ripples.nigeria.com), [www.consise.news.global](http://www.consise.news.global), [www.nigeria.churchnews.com](http://www.nigeria.churchnews.com), [www.sahara.reporters.com](http://www.sahara.reporters.com), [lindaikejiblog](http://lindaikejiblog)

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

### Online Comments

Different online Posts and comments either in support or against Daddy Freeze anti tithing controversy

### Postulations

Daddy Freeze's view points, opinions and submissions on the issue of tithing.

### Tithe

This is the practice of payment of one tenth of once monthly income to the church as referred to by Daddy Freeze in his comments.

### Daddy Freeze

Mr. Ifedaya Olarinde popularly called Daddy Freeze is a Nigerian Radio host and presenter born in Osun State to a Nigerian father and a Romanian mother Smaranda Olarinde.

### Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on the Agenda Setting Theory of mass communication in view of its relevance to the subject matter. The agenda setting theory was postulated by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972 and it argues that the mass media sets agenda for public debate. It therefore implies that the degree of attention, interest and focus we give to an issue depends and derives from the degree of attention and focus the media gives to such issues. This the mass media do by the number of times they repeat a particular issue in the broadcast media and the space such story occupies in the newspaper and magazines, (Akakwanda, 2014). Therefore McCombs and Shaw (1972, p.176) emphasized that:

- In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue but how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position.

In its most simplistic form; the theory says that "The media sets agenda for the public and in fact, determine what the public discuss and think about" (Nwabueze, 2014, p.44). Earlier, Lipman (as cited in Mc Quail, 2005) avers that the kernel of the agenda setting theory is that the media do not tell us what to think but what to think about. In line with this, Ngoa (2012, p.3) deals with "The media's capability of raising the importance of an issue in the public's mind" thus is "closely related to public opinion formation since it is the mass media that usually bring up issues upon which public opinion is expressed, (Ogayi, 2016, p.49).

The agenda setting theory arguably qualifies as one of the theories that popularize and eulogize the effect of the mass media contents as very powerful so much so that they dictate what the public see as important hence discussions and debates which translate to opinion formation and behavioural change.

As captured by Asemah (2011, p.176), in agenda setting, "The media play drums and when they play their drums, we begin to dance to the tune

of their music”. Simply put, the agenda setting theory states that the media set the ball rolling by determining for the public that which they (the public should see as important and therefore should not only focus attention on, but also think and discuss about.

It therefore suffices that the social media qualifies as a powerful instrument at agenda setting since it allows for user generated contents where internet users can upload information hence set agenda for public debate.

In view of this therefore, the online anti tithe comments of Daddy Freeze generated heated arguments and debates and set agenda for the public on the tithing principle in Christianity.

### TITHING: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

The debate on tithing has continued to elicit divergent views and opinions from individuals. Why some scholars have argued that tithing is scriptural and should be paid to attract God’s blessings, others see it as an Old Testament injunction not meant for church members but specific people in the scriptures. Yet some others see it as means of enriching the bank account of the clergy. The argument continues and the public are left with several opinions on the subject matter.

In the views of Feeney (2015), tithing was a practice among believers before the Law of Moses, as well as during the time of the law. Jesus reaffirmed the validity of paying tithes in the New Testament, and God’s Word says that “The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives” as seen in Deuteronomy 14:23. Feeney summarized why he believes in New Testament tithing as follows.

- That tithe is not mine to withhold but belongs to the Lord (Leviticus 27:30)
- Tithing is an indicator of faithfulness to God (2 Chronicles 31:12)
- I don’t want God to consider me a robber for failing to give tithe and offerings (Malachi 3:8).
- Our tithes allow God – called ministers to devote themselves fully to the Lord’s work (Numbers 18:21).

In line with this, other schools of thought supported the view of tithe payment as a sacred privilege noting that when we pay tithe, we show a gratitude for all that God has given us and return to him a portion of what we have received. Tithing is used to build temple and

meeting houses, translate and publish the scriptures... and in other ways, build God’s kingdom on earth, (Holland, 2001, Bednar 2013, Eyring, 2011).

Enumerating his own view on tithing in the Bible, Corey (2009) X-rays what God’s Word says about tithing in comparison with what is being taught in the churches today. He found that men have twisted the Bible’s teaching on tithing and giving out of ignorance or ulterior motives. He further said, “They have added to Bible definition and explanation of tithing to make it fit their own ideas” (p.12).

In his argument against tithing using some examples, Corey summarized as follows:

### Abraham’s Example as Written In Gen. 14:18-20

Abram gave 10% to Melchizedek only from the spoils of war not his own money and gave the remaining 90% to the king of Sodom. Abram examples was never used in the New Testament to teach Christian how much to give and he was not commanded by God to give. This implies that Abraham’s, example of tithing to Melchizedek does not set a precedent for Christians to follow.

### Jacob’s Example – Geneses 28:20-22.

Jacob’s promise to tithe was completely conditional. He told God that he will tithe if God would bless him, but God did not ask Jacob to give a tithe. This implies that Jacob’s example of tithing is not taught by tithing advocates, because it was completely freewill, conditional and would not support the idea of giving your tithe to your local church. It does not also set a tithing requirement for Christians to follow since it was Jacob’s choice and not God’s commandment.

### The Statute of Tithing - Numbers 18:20-32.

The tithe was instituted among Israel to provide specifically for priests and the Levites. In exchange for the right to receive offerings and tithes, the priests and the Levites have to give up all rights to inheritance or land ownership. The Levites and not the priests received the tithe from Israel and the Levites then gave the priests a tithe of the tithes or 10% of all Israel agricultural increase. The tithe was still only food items and never included money. This implies that tithe does not apply to Christians because it was specific for the Israelites to support the Levitical priesthood. Christ’s death abolished that priesthood and replaced it with a

priesthood of believers with Christ as the high priest. Tithing advocates do not teach that those who receive the tithe should give up inheritance and land ownership rights. Also the tithe only contained food items and not money.

With numerous other examples on tithing, Corey summarized that modern tithe teachers have grossly misrepresented what the Bible say about tithing, adding that tithe is not a requirement for Christians as God has a better plan for Christian giving than tithing.

Lending his voice against tithe payment, Eri (2017) says that the issue of tithe as a major doctrinal teaching of every modern church and something of a compulsion is a wrong application of the scriptures. He stated that tithe payment is not applicable to the church with so many instances from the scriptures. He called on church members to go back to the scriptures for correct practice and to stop enriching the bank account of clergy who uses the church members to satisfy their selfish end.

The debate is still on with diverse online posts and comments on the anti tithe stance as postulated by Daddy Freeze.

### SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERACTIVITY IN MODERN SOCIETY

An Overview In an astonishing short period of time, technological advancement have profoundly shaped the way that the people live their lives. One example of these technological revolutions is the emergency of social media through web 2.0. This web 2.0 marks a shift from a “One-way conversation” to a “Multi-way conversation” in which users participate as both creators and consumers of web content (Hudson, 2010). In the 1.0 web era, downloading was the in thing but in the 2.0 era both downloading, uploading etc has become the order of the day as evident in social media, (Oliseh, 2004).

Social media means “Internet based tools and services that allow users to engage with each other, generate content, distribute and search for information online”, Institute for security Studies (2012). According to Doyle (2018), it includes “The various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the internet to share information and resources. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications”. “More elaborately, Bryer and Zacattaro (2011, p.43) comment as follows:

Social media includes web-based and mobile

technologies used to turn communication into interactive dialogue. Social media takes on many different forms including magazine, internet, forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. By applying a set of theories in the field of media research (social presence, media richness) and social processes (self-presentation, self-disclosure).

According to Pavilik and McIntosh (2011), social media are described as the use of technology combined with social interaction to create or co-create value. It involves a fusion of sociology and technology transforming monologue (one to many) into dialogue (many to many). They allow users to post and share content. Some examples of common social media applications are face book, you tube, tweeter, flicker and blogs. In line with this, Nwabueze (2014, p.70) explains that social media are interactive, web based media which engages key players in a communication channel in defining and determining the message content. In the same vein, Kaplan and Hacnlin (2010) sees social media as media that use web-based technologies to transform and broadcast media monologues into social media dialogues. The key word is interactivity as internet users meaningfully interact via social media platforms. No communication technology mode has made the citizens active participants in the business of encoding and decoding of news and information more than the social media, Udeze, Nwodu and Nwodu (2015). The social media have so much permeated today’s world that its penetration has risen monumentally in the developed world with developing countries like Nigeria fast becoming integrated in the new trend.

With the social media which use web based technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue, one can post news or comments online and the information will fast spread across the globe. In Nigeria today, most media organization have online presence through various social media applications.

Interestingly, the social media are not left out in the persuasive communication as many topical issues, debates, controversies and issues of the moments affecting people and awareness relating to them are brought to the door steps of the public through the numerous online posts and subsequences responses or comments dawn from such posts over a period of time, (Hassan,

2013). It is therefore based on this technological advancement as seen on the ongoing tithe controversy on the social media as postulated by Daddy Freeze which has gone whirlwind since October 2017 has continued to elicit divergent comments from other internet users.

### A Review of Reactions to Daddy Freeze Comments

Daddy Freeze had earlier argued in his interview with Linda Ikeji Television that it is scripturally wrong to pay tithe to Pastors in churches. According to him “If you want to give your money to Jesus, give it to the homeless, people in the hospital, hungry and naked people” [www.pulse.ng](http://www.pulse.ng) ... 04/10/2017. The controversy rages on as Pastors and Nigerians continued to comment online on Daddy Freeze anti tithe comments. On his part, Pastor Paul Adefarasin – the House on the Rock Church leader in his Wednesday services of November 1, 2007 titled “Abrahams Blessings are already upon my life” emphasized that “tithe is a way to show that God is the supplier of your resources”. God blesses and I respond with my 10%. It is an honour system; it means the money is not your God...”.

Also commenting, Apostle Suleman the General Overseer of the Omega Fire Ministries (OFM) posted on his twitter that he would no longer be paying the usual 10% as tithe but will be paying 30%. He emphasized “I just increased my tithe to 30% ... Satan go and die” [www.naija.com](http://www.naija.com) ... 6/12/2017.

In his reaction, Daddy Freeze shared on Instagram the video of Prophet TB Joshua of the Synagogue Church of All Nations during a sermon where Pastor TB Joshua stated that “Giving tithe to the poor is better than bringing it to the church”.

Seemingly lending credence to Daddy Freeze anti tithe stance is the comment of a popular German Pentecostal man of God, Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke [www.naiga.com](http://www.naiga.com) ... 8/12/2007 which state that “We are here to bless you, we have brought you gifts of salvation and deliverance, and we are here to give and not to take anything from you. Anyone who asks you to give offering for this crusade is a thief and should be reported immediately”.

Perhaps acting based on the influence of Daddy Freeze online anti tithe campaign Pastor Ufuma Bernard posted online, [www.pulse.ng](http://www.pulse.ng) ... 17/13/2017 that he has stopped collecting the usual ten percent. According to him, his

decision was because of his knowledge of Bible and Daddy Freeze. In his words, “After one month of poring through the Bible and critically examining both side of arguments for and against tithing, I publicly repent from receiving tithes. I am convinced Daddy Freeze is right. No more tithing in my ministry”. He further added “I am a Pastor but I don’t know everything. I am a work in progress, I learn everyday and from everyone”.

In his response, Anita Joseph a popular Nollywood actress in his post blasted Daddy Freeze for his anti tithe stance and ended up telling him to come and beat her because she tithes. [www.nigachurchnews.com](http://www.nigachurchnews.com) ...26/10/2017.

For Zack Orji, a veteran Nollywood actor, he commented that “I am a Pastor, ordained for five years now. The issue of tithing is a personal thing”.

Tithe is one tenth part of something paid as a contribution to a religious organization or compulsory tax to government (Wiki 2018).

According to Wiki (2017), in Christianity, some interpretation of Biblical teachings concludes that although tithing was practiced extensively in the Old Testament, it was never practiced or taught within the first century church. Instead the New Testament scriptures are seen as teaching the concept of “Freewill offering” as a means of supporting the church: (1st Corinthians 16:2, 2nd Corinthians 9:7).

### METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the qualitative content analysis research method. Content analysis simply mean “an objective and systematic analysis or study of the contents of any document or record that are manifest” Nwodu, (2017, p.84) as well as “a systematic and often quantitative assessment of media content” (Agbanu, 2014, p.132). Content analysis is the same with media content (Ofor, 2005, Owuamalam, 2012). As Nwodu (2017) observes, communication scholars often use this research method to investigate the level of presence of a given content in mass communication primarily to establish the impact of such comment on the audience”.

This research method was used to content analyze the online comments of some popular Pastors and celebrities on Daddy Freeze anti tithe campaign from October 2017 to January, 2018 as studied in this work.

The unit of analysis used in this study is the

comments made by pastors and other personalities on Daddy Freeze anti-tithe position. The content categories are the direction of the comments, sources of the comments, and frames used in the comments.

### Population of Study

The study examines all the online comments on Daddy Freeze anti tithe controversy from October 2017 to January 2018 especially from popular pastors and celebrities. A total of 22 comments were found. Thus, census method is used.

### TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

As the debate on the issue of tithing in churches continues to generate interest and divergent comments, Daddy Freeze the initiator of Tithe Against Poverty (TAP) initiative is still reacting to comments from Pastors and others who hold otherwise.

This part of the study tries to analyze online comments and reactions of some popular Pastors and celebrities either for or against the tithe stance and Daddy Freeze response and reactions to such comments.

In a post titled “Abraham’s Blessings are already upon my life”, Pastor Paul Adefarasin of House on the Rock in his sermon on a midweek Wednesday service emphasized that tithe is a way to show that God is the supplier of your resources, God blesses and I respond with my 10%, it is an honour system and it means the money is not your God. You won’t be cursed if you don’t tithe but when you tithe you are saying you recognize Him and it keeps the cycle moving. [www.pulse.ng...](http://www.pulse.ng...) 29/11/2017.

Pastor Paul Adefarasin who based his statement on Hebrews 7:5-8, and in line with Daddy Freeze stance noted that this payment is not compulsory as it will not stop anyone from enjoying God’s blessings. In what seems like name calling Pastor Paul further in the sermon spoke about people attacking the church. In his words “A guy cannot just show up and say he is an overseer, who is your father and who ordained you ... anyone that attacks the body of Christ is not a man of God. You can’t attack the church and call yourself a man of God. We have to have decency and order in the Body of Christ. Paul said in 1st Corinthians 14:40, let everything be done decently and in order”.

However, Pastor Adefarasin did not emphasise if the “everything” refers to in the passage is about tithing in the church as he arguably failed

to provide Biblical evidences to support his claims.

In response to Pastor Adefarasin comments, Daddy Freeze said this to him, “... You might disagree with me in public but I am positive that in your quiet moments, when you dialogue with your soul, you as well as most of the other shepherds, knows that my message is the truth and that the revolution has become inevitable; I’m not here by my doing but by the instance of God Almighty, ... However, if you choose to disagree with the truth that I preach, do so wisely, so as not to make yourself a hurdle in the path of God’s word”. Summarizing his response from the book of 1st Corinthians 3: 5-9, Daddy Freeze stated that they are simply ‘planters’ and ‘waterers’, messengers and bearers of the word, that it is only God that makes the seed to grow. He added “I am here to depopulate the temple of events and populate the body of Christ because what you call the church is more of an events/business centre to me as the Bible is clear in Acts 7:48 and 17:24 that the Lord does not dwell in buildings made by human hands”.

Apostle Johnson Suleman, the General Overseer of the Omega Fire Ministries (OFM) was so riled up over Daddy Freeze’s preaching’s against tithing that he announced on his Twitter the decision to raise his tithe from 10% to 30%. He emphasized “I just increased my tithe to 30% ... Satan go and die! [www.naija.com...](http://www.naija.com...) 6 /12/2017.

In response, another popular Nigerian Columnist, Femi Aribisala reacted by stating that the ‘apostle’ exposed himself by foolishly prophesying that Nasir EL- Rufai, the Governor of Kaduna State will die within two weeks, unfortunately for him, the Governor refused to die. This time, the ‘apostle’ publicly boasts of fictitious increases in his tithes. He said that the 30% tithe increase clearly shows that the ‘apostle’ need to go back to bible school and learn that a tithe is 10% and can never be 30%. He emphasized further that Apostle Suleman should endeavor to listen to Jesus Words of Mathew 6:1, and 3-4 which calls for carefulness not to do your acts of righteousness before men to be seen by them because you will loose your reward. Also when you give to the needy, it must be in secret and never by public announcement, [www.tori.ng...](http://www.tori.ng...) 16/12/2017.

In his reactions, Freeze took to his Instagram to share a video of Prophet T.B Joshua of the Synagogue Church of All Nations where T.B

Joshua in a sermon said that “giving tithe to the poor is better than bringing it to the church”. He stated further that bringing tithe to church is a burden and temptations for pastors who may not be able to remit all”. Freeze posted the video with the caption. “On this tithe issue, Pastor TB Joshua has spoken the Biblical truth and I respect him for standing firmly behind the truth, despite what his counterparts are saying”,www.naija.com. ... 6/12/2017.

Perhaps acting based on the influence of Daddy Freeze anti tithe campaign is the online post of Warri-based Pastor, Ufuoma Bernard who has stopped collecting the usual 10% tithe. According to him, his decision was because of his knowledge of Bible and Daddy Freeze. In his words. “After one month of poring through the arguments for and against tithing, I publicly repent from receiving tithes; I am convinced Daddy Freeze is right. No more tithe in my ministry”. He further added; “I am a pastor but I don’t know everything. I am a work in progress. I learn every day and from everyone, I am open to new things. I am not stuck in dogma and tradition. I am a liberal person”. He continued, “I hate fanaticism. I am not interested in making money through church business or attracting a large crowd or having branches of my church in every street and road. I am only interested in sharing the truth as I know it. The truth I am sure will set the people free from dogma; superstition, manipulation, ignorance and poverty”. www.pulse.ng. ... 17/12/2017.

On his part, popular Nigerian Pastor and founder of Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel) Bishop Oyedepo disclosed that those who pay their tithe are qualified for God’s blessings adding that there are conditions to receiving God’s blessings as long as one takes to prophetic instructions. According to him, “Everybody believes that God has an open heaven full of blessings for his people but it takes your tithe to open the file for you. So if you only know the promise and you don’t know the conditions, you will die frustrated....” www.naija.com ... 2/12/2017.

For Zack Orji, a Veteran Nollywood actor, the issue of tithing is a personal thing, having been a pastor, ordained for five years now. In his words,“... I have watched some people condemn tithing, saying a lot of things about men of God and I pity some of those people because they are speaking out of ignorance. It is a terrible thing to go on the social media and be condemning men of God and be condemning

something that is in the Bible” www.pulse.ng. ... 20/12/2017.

In response to Zack Orji’s comment, Daddy Freeze posted on his Instagram page on December 21, 2017. “Pity will not solve this dilemma, Sir, all we need is scriptural evidence of where Jesus our High Priest under the order of Melchizedek collected tithe, or where our first pastors, the disciples and apostles collected tithe or where believers who weren’t Jewish paid tithe, simple!”.

Supporting Freeze anti tithe stance is another popular Pastor Adelaja who condemns Pastor Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) on his teaching on the subject “Sacrifice Overtures Wrath” saying he is twisting the Bible just for people to give to him.www.pulse.ng ... 26/12/2017

Responding to this comment, Daddy Freeze wrote “Sunday Adeleja punches a hole in Pastor Adeboye’s doctrine. Let’s examine what the Bible truly says”. Drawing reference from the book of Psalms 41:1-3, he quotes “Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble ...” Freeze emphasized that the givers the Bible is talking about are those that give to the poor not to Pastors adding that it is a sin to give money meant for you parents to God. Jesus Himself said so”. www.pulse.ng. ... 26/12/2017.

Daddy Freeze took to his Twitter to call out Pastor Adeboye over alleged possession of private jet and stated that until the RCCG leader, uses the jet to convey sick people in remote places to good health centers, he (freeze) does not believe he needs a jet”. He said this in reaction to a face book post of a pastor who left his job as a pilot in an Oil and Gas company and began using his private jet to help the sick in remote places in Gabon. www. consicenews.global ...6/11/2017.

In response to Daddy Freeze, Free the Sheeple Movement, Leke Adeboye, the youngest son of Pastor Enoch Adeboye thanked Freeze for his stance against tithe which has ironically resulted in an increase in their church (RCCG) tithe. According to him it was Freeze constant attack on tithe that was responsible for the increase. Leke Adeboye who doubles as a Pastor in the RCCG and Personal Assistant to his father said that the whole church is grateful to Freeze since the more he criticizes the church, the more people will flock there and bring out their money in defiance. In his words “there has been



33% increase in the number of people viewing RCCG events, increase in the number of people paying their correct tithes, increase in the number of persons visiting the personal website of E.A. Adeboye. Com and sending him emails and the number of persons watching all messages from start to finish on any Pentecostal live events has increased". [www.pulse. ...](http://www.pulse.ng) 12/12.2017.

In his response to Leke Adeboye, Freeze via a video and his Twitter account congratulated Leke on the "expansion of his family business, believing he will inherit a blue chip company in the futures". He further said "... I am a man of figures, instead of saying that the tithe debate has caused 33% increase in your church tithe payment; please just show us a copy of bank details from the last three months to prove the tithe increase."

In another post titled "Daddy Freeze attacks Pastor Mathew Ashimolowo over message on tithing", Freeze asked; "Are we Melchizedekians or Christians". This is Freeze response to Ashimolowo's tweet that "Jesus is our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek the High Priest, we the seed of Abraham must bring our tithes to Jesus our High Priest. In his further response, Freeze questioned "So how come Jesus never collected tithe and how come no one brought tithe to him or his disciples. Are we Melchizedekians or Christians, I ask again".

Pastor Ashimolowo of Kingsway International Church Centre (KICC) had earlier on his televised sermon said "Once and for all let's settle this matter on the power of the tithe. Some bunch of Yoyo somewhere should not determine what you pay. Some guy who beats his wife, throws her out, throws his children out of the house, broke his son's knees should not determine what we believe. He drinks alcohol, sleeps with women and he's trying to preach".

Reacting to Pastor Ashimolowo's comments, Daddy Freeze wrote a reply saying; "Haaaaaa! Has it come to this? See the way he is defending tithing with so much passion, I hope this same passion is extended to bringing home our brothers who are currently enslaved in Libya". Still replying, "I didn't hear one single Bible verse, just sentiments and emotions in this defense ... who is this 'Yoyo' now ... I hope there is proof to back these allegations up and they are not just 'hear say' from an false interview conducted on an embattled pot of stale bitter leaf soup". Daddy Freeze added further. "Whoever the 'Yoyo' is, one thing is

certain, he cannot determine what the body of Christ believes, only the BIBLE can do that, so until you can come out with a superior argument to explain where Jesus our High Priest or the disciple our first Pastors collected tithes, it looks like the 'Yoyo' is the one speaking the biblical truth and no amount of subbing or name calling can override the scriptures". Daddy Freeze concluded his response with these sayings "If the 'Yoyo' drinks alcohol, let's remember Jesus drank alcohol too ... he was called a drunkard by the Pharisees ... the teachers of religious law who burdened the people with unbearable religious yokes and put up similar fights when Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple,! A man can't be seen drinking Pap, Fanta or Lucozade and be called a drunkard, can he?" [www.naija.com ...](http://www.naija.com) 2/12/2017.

It is however interesting to note that Daddy Freeze provides valued Biblical instances to back his stance against tithing. He had earlier argued that many people are under the bondage of Malachi 3: 8 – 10 which is actually about the Priests robbing God, not the congregation robbing God. And he questioned "What are the churches doing with the 10% of 80 million people's income. [www.pulse.ng ...](http://www.pulse.ng) 04/10/2017.

On his part, an Abuja based cleric, Pastor Humble Okoro offered to exorcise Daddy Freeze of 52 destiny destroying demons over his stance on tithing. According to him, he needs to engage Daddy Freeze to a spiritual contest at National Stadium Abuja just to prove to Nigerians that the On Air Personality (OAP), Freeze is demonized. One wonders if the argument today is whether Freeze is a demon or God sent or whether the issue of tithe payment has scriptural backings or not, [www.ripplesnigeria.com ...](http://www.ripplesnigeria.com) 01/01/2018.

For the popular Nollywood actress Anita Joseph, she fully supports tithe payment though without any Biblical reference, she simply said "I tithe, Daddy Freeze come and beat me".

Another popular Gospel singer and the initiator of the 'Hallelujah challenge, a midnight praise and worship session', Nathaniel Bassey believes in tithing regardless of the session of the bible that supports the doctrine. He said "Tithing whether old or new testament or whether under the law or under grace, count me in". He went further to quote Malachi 3:10, a portion of the Old Testament that supports tithing and said "Tithing, a key to an open Heaven ... "It is offered to God through our Local Assembly ... and I unapologetically believe in tithing".

www.saharareporter.com ... 7/11/2017.

In his own reaction, popular Nigerian Musician, Obiora Nwokolobia Agu, who left secular music for gospel has concerned himself with the ongoing issue on tithing. The artist advised Daddy Freeze to let the issue of tithe to rest and allow God handle it. He wrote about how God is watching all that is being said concerning tithe issue and the disrespect going on in order to prove a point. In his words "... We can quote scriptures back on forth on this tithe matter and I have quoted many myself but such strivings would be fruitless and we will be sinning in the light of 2nd Timothy 2: 23 no matter which side you are on ... none of us can fight for him, He is big enough and powerful enough to fight for Himself". He advised further that Freeze will share this with his followers so they also will take head and not err constantly with insults, dishonouring words and actions against individuals and against the body of Christ, which do not please God. He concluded his comments with this "For me I consciously chose to leave everything and follow Christ ..."  
www.naija.com ... 11/12/2017.

Providing illumination to this controversy, Reno Omokori in his comments noted that the tithe controversy is a sad reflection of the state of Christianity in Nigeria specifically and the black world in general. He said that the campaign has confirmed the saying that if you want to hide anything from a Blackman, you put it in a book. He emphasized further that if all those talking about tithe had cared to read the Bible stand on it, it would not have led to a big controversy as it is today. To him most people's positions and comments on tithe are based on references to their Pastors, and sermons they have heard. To him there is only one reference point and that is the Bible (2nd Timothy 3:16) and any controversy about tithing must be settled by the Bible.

In his further comments about tithing, Omokori emphasized that "tithing as presently practiced by many churches, especially the so called Pentecostal or Evangelical Churches is unscriptural". According to him, "take away tithing and the attraction and motivation to be founder and president of 'International Ministry' will disappear".

He argued that tithing is an age long agricultural practice that predates even Abraham and Moses and those ancient communities set aside a portion of their harvest (usually a tenth) and sacrificed it to their gods through his priests. He

explained further that the tithe that Moses taught about was instituted by God because the Levitical Priests were not given a portion of the land of Cannan as an inheritance and as such should be supported by their fellow brethren. With reference from Numbers 18:20-21, he noted that God specifically told Arron "You will have no inheritance in their land, nor will you have any share among them; I am your share and your inheritance among the Israelites. I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the tent of meeting". From the above, it is clear that the tithes were specifically gifted by God to the Levites.

He emphasized further that you will never find anywhere in the Scripture where God, His son Jesus or the early Apostles and Disciples asked the New Testament Church to pay tithes to Pastors who do not replace Levites, rather in the new Testament, Pastors worked and earned a living. They were never dependent on the church. He therefore backed himself up with this Biblical verse in Acts 20:33-35 which stated that "it is more blessed to give than to receive being Paul's farewell message to the Ephesians while exhorting them on the need for Pastors to embrace hard work and not depend on members. In his words, neither Jesus nor Paul or any of the fathers of the early church collected any tithes from their congregation because they were not Levites who were prevented from doing any type of work other than temple service". For him rather than this, the book of Acts teaches us in Acts 2:44-45 that the early Christian lived a communal life and shared everything they had. He therefore sees tithing as an Old Testament injunction and considered Pastors who insist that Malachi verses on tithing must apply to them do not insist that other Old Testament provision should also apply to them. He therefore revealed that Deuteronomy 21: 18-22 commanded the ancient Israelites to stone their own stubborn children to death. He then queried if the tithe receiving Pastors are prepared to stone their stubborn children to death because of that Biblical verse. He also argued that though Abraham tithed from his military victory but he did not tithe to be blessed but simply tithed from the goods he reclaimed from the kings he fought against.

Illuminating further on this, he noted that though Abraham tithed from his victory, it does not mean you must also tithe, after all Abraham had concubines. By the same logic, you should also have concubines.

Contrary to the positions of so many Pastors that God would bless us if we tithe, he argued that “we do not need Abraham blessings since God has blessed us with every spiritual blessings in Christ and we are complete in him as referenced from Ephesians 1:2 and Colossians 2:10... vangudngr.com ... 4/11/2017. See the attached appendix for more insight.

“Tithe Against Poverty Challenge (TAP Challenge), I accept the challenge. 300k for three people. Happy Christmas for the hood. Much love for the people. I stand with Daddy Freeze. This is a good call to all able individuals around the world, lets come together and help the less privileged. So much attention on tithes and offerings, it’s time to do it for the culture, let’s do this for the world. Please do not criticize the month piece Daddy Freeze, he is a good man, doing what most people cannot do or say in order to avoid criticism [www.internation.ng.com](http://www.internation.ng.com). 17/12/2017.

The above comment is the response of popular Nigerian Musician Davido to Daddy Freeze ‘TAP Challenge’ aimed at encouraging people to channel their tithes into more ‘fruitful’ ventures like helping to lift someone out of poverty. This has attracted supporters including this Davido who revealed his interest in the challenge via his Twitter account.

In his response to this Award winning Nigerian singer, Davido, Freeze took to his Twitter and wrote “Davido officially accepts to take the TAP challenge! He is so cool, I challenged him and he responded within 30m minutes! May the good Lord bless his wonderful soul for accepting a challenge that aims at removing at least one person from poverty”.

In his own comment, Pastor Nicolas Uagbor of Miracle Centre International took to death threats to respond to Freeze anti tithe controversy. His exact words are “The way this guy is going, he may not see next year”. Pastor Uagbor’s comment was made in reply to Daddy Freeze comment to Pastor Adeboye’s son on an Instagram Blog post.

Daddy Freeze saw the above comment, took a screenshot and posted it on his own Instagram account calling on law enforcement agencies to look upon the issue. He wrote “This alleged men of God, Pastor Nicolas Uagbor made this comment clearly for all to see ... from his account, I hereby reject his curse and want to use this medium to appeal to all relevant

authorities that if anything should happen to me, or any member of my family, this man could be the likely source”. [www.naija.com](http://www.naija.com)... 12/12/2017.

To Oladapo Daniel Oyebanjo, a Nigerian singer known by his stage name D’banji, he went on social media to make his stand known on tithing. He shared a cute photo of himself with the caption “It pays, to pay your tithe”. This is a clear response to Daddy Freeze who is yet to respond to D’banji on this [www.naija.com](http://www.naija.com) 6/12/2017.

A Nigerian man identified as Sirkey Johnson, a singer has emphasized that paying tithe was a thing of the Old Testament. He claimed that tithe was broken when Jesus Christ washed away all sins. [www.naija.com](http://www.naija.com) ... 15/12/2017.

On his part, Pastor Ejowo Moses Oseremor of the Living Faith Church stated that “This Daddy Freeze of a man is a deceiver and accuser of the brethren”. He continued by saying “Freeze, it is my prayer that you repent before destruction catches up with you”. According to him, Mathew 23:23 specified that Jesus said we can pay tithe just as he emphasized that in Hebrew 7:7. Jesus Christ is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek who collected tithe from Abraham.

In his own reaction, Sunday Igiri a CEO at Wuse II Abuja and an actor has this to say “Pastors are now businessmen and worship money more than God. They are getting richer and richer on daily bases. Let stop it now ...” Commenting also, Erimana Daniel Abon of the University of Benin stated “As I read online comment here, I weep for ignorance of many Nigerians; in their desperate poverty they still enrich the already rich. Thank you Daddy Freeze”.

The argument on tithe controversy continues with more comments for and against tithing, some with scriptural backings while others are with mere sentiments, emotions and personal feelings.

### FINDINGS

This study found that the issue of anti-tithe controversy as postulated by Daddy Freeze is a serious matter as seen by the number of online comments from internet users. These comments come in their numbers on daily and weekly bases. General Overseers and Pastors from different churches as well as other celebrities who are directly or indirectly affected by the subject matter reacted on the issue. It is comments and counter comments, at times with

little or no biblical justification.

Based on the objective of study which sought to ascertain the direction of comments on Daddy Freeze's position on tithing, it was found that the online comments on Freeze, tithe stance is both negative and positive, some supporting what Freeze is saying while others oppose it insisting they will keep paying tithe for God's blessings.

On the objective that sought to ascertain the sources of comments on Daddy Freeze's anti-tithe position, the study revealed that the personalities involved in the comments are highly influential and respectful people, mainly General Overseers of Ministries, Senior Pastors, Actors and celebrities who the public sees as role models.

On the narratives found in the comments on Daddy Freeze's anti tithe position, findings from the work showed that most comments lacked biblical facts and justifications while some resort to name calling and abusive language to buttress their position on tithe stance, yet Daddy Freeze kept matching his arguments with biblical evidences.

On the frames of the comments, the work discovered that most of the comments were so framed to draw sympathy to their personal positions or create awareness on the biblical truth about tithe. Such frames as fear frames, Ignorance frame, and insanity frame were used by Pastors to create perception of meaning.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study show that on line comments persuade people to react on topical issues as seen by the volume of comments on this Daddy Freeze tithe stance during the study period. The frequency of this comment is that no day passes without a comment on the tithe stance through various social media platforms. This is in tandem with the literature review which established that the social media are not left out in the persuasive function of communication as many topical issues, debates, controversies and issues of the moments affecting people are brought to the door steps of the public through the numerous online posts and responses or comments drawn from such posts over a period of time (Hasan, 2013).

Part of the finding of this study equally showed that some people are still ignorant of biblical position on tithe as they based their argument on Pastors sermons or personal feelings without

enough biblical backing. Out of 22 comments analyzed, 12 supports tithe payment though not with valued biblical references but mainly as a way of attracting God's blessings and as a church dogma. Other 10 comments biblically emphasized that it is not meant for church congregation but for the Levites and equally an Old Testament command not practiced in the New Testament by Jesus or early disciples.

Further findings from the study reveals, that the credibility of the source and the credence of the message forms part of essential factors that facilitates efficacy of persuasive communication. This confirms behavioral changes of some Pastors who have stopped tithe collection in their church because of Daddy Freeze personality and exposition on it. Pastor Ufuoma Bernard is an example here and equally some congregation who has stopped payment of tithe in their church based on the Pastors message with Biblical reference.

The findings of the research especially from the choice of narrative shows that majority of the comments in favour of tithing lack biblical justifications, but mainly centered on Malachi 3:10 which is actually about the priests robbing God not the congregation. Equally most Nigerian tithe collecting Pastors resort to name calling, abusive language throwing every possible missile at Daddy Freeze including death threats instead of counter biblical quotations to match Freeze argument. Meanwhile Daddy Freeze has continued to give reasons why Christians are not obligated to pay tithes and his reasons were all based on the scriptures from the comments studied.

It is possible that the adoption of name calling by the pastors that reacted to Daddy Freeze's comments on tithing may have set agenda on the issue from a wrong perspective, as if Christians were at war with Daddy Freeze. That is the strength of the media in setting agenda, where by frequent coverage of an issue tells people what to think about and discuss (McQuail, 2005, Nwodu, 2007; Owuamalam, 2012; Nwabueze, 2014) Interesting findings were also made on the issue of framing. The study showed that behavioural or attitudinal outcomes are possible due to how a given piece of information is being framed in public discourse. This is evident in different frames used in the comments analyzed. The pastors and other celebrities used various choices of words to create frames through which the public perceived Daddy Freeze and his position on tithing. This is in line with the

observation of Entman (2004, p. 141) who sees framing as “the selection of some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communication text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”. The following frames were observed in the comments studied; Insanity frame abounds in the comments as most Pastors create an impression that Freeze is insane and demonized and as such his message will not be taken serious.

Ignorance frame is also used to show that Daddy Freeze does not know what he is saying, yet he kept backing his arguments with facts from the Bible.

Deception frames are also seen as some Pastors called him a deceiver, out to deceive people and as such people should not listen to him.

Fear frames are equally used in most comments where most Pastors result to name calling to win peoples sympathy and possibly afraid that if Freeze will be allowed to continue the way he is going, there might be serious crash in the church. The fear frame was also reflected in the comments where pastors said those who do not pay tithe will not receive God’s blessing.

Awareness frames are also seen in some comments as some Pastors testified that Freeze message has opened their eyes to the truth of the Gospel as they are now aware of Bible stand on the issue of tithe not just basing their believe on church Dogma and doctrine.

### CONCLUSION

The anti-tithe debate continues as people keep posting their comments online. Interestingly while some of the posts have biblical justification for the payment of tithe or otherwise, some resort to foul language and name calling. Despite this, Daddy Freeze sticks to his stance and has continued to provide scriptural backings for his anti-tithe campaign. The response has been both positive and negative, in support and against Freeze anti-tithe stance.

In the same vein the quantity of internet post on the issue has been on the increase making the tithe issue more controversial and topical especially in view of the flamboyant life styles of the Pastors who collect the tithe from church members.

The study concludes that while Daddy Freeze

has continued to provide scriptural evidence for his anti-tithe stance, while most Pastors and members of the public appear to base more on sentiments and total reliance on the provisions of the Old Testament Malachi 3:10, which according to Freeze was interpreted out of context. He questioned, did Jesus Christ or the apostles who are our Pastors collect tithes, and also called for any new testament proof from the Bible. There has been no answer to the affirmative on the above question and this seems to provide validity for Daddy Freeze anti-tithe stance.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

This research work in view of its findings on the persuability of online comments on Daddy Freeze anti- tithe postulations, recommends as follows:

That foul language and abusive words should not be used by clergy as this is not fitting for them, besides, such sentiments will not solve the tithe controversy.

Since Bible is the one and only reference materials for the Christians, Pastors should go back to it, study it with understanding, find out the Biblical stand on tithe and match Daddy Freeze arguments quotation to quotation.

Since social media possesses potentials for bringing about radical change in society, for good or for bad, one need to be careful of the comments, possibly talk less in the social media and talk with facts.

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## Analysis of Narratives in Online Comments on Daddy Freeze Anti-Tithe Postulations

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