



The Emergence of Contemporary Apostolic Leadership in Nigeria: A Case Study of Joshua Selman and Eternity Network International

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Abstract

This scholarly article critically examines the emergence of contemporary apostolic leadership within the Nigerian context, focusing specifically on Apostle Joshua Selman, founder of Eternity Network International (ENI) and the Koinonia ministry. Utilizing a qualitative methodology based on document analysis, this study synthesizes existing literature, sermons, and various media sources related to Selman's formative background, theological contributions, ministerial impact, and the adversities he has confronted throughout his journey. By analyzing Selman's upbringing in a predominantly Muslim region, his educational pursuits—culminating in a degree in Chemical Engineering from Ahmadu Bello University—and his subsequent rise as a prominent preacher, this research elucidates the characteristics and significance of modern apostolic figures within Nigeria's dynamic Pentecostal movement. The study identifies key themes of faith, empowerment, and community transformation as fundamental to Selman's ministry, showcasing his adept use of digital media to reach a global audience and foster spiritual engagement. Additionally, this work highlights the challenges faced by Selman, including cultural resistance, media misrepresentation, and navigating the complexities of multiple faiths within a diverse society. Through this comprehensive analysis, the study contributes to the discourse on apostolic leadership, offering valuable insights into the intersection of spirituality, societal change, and the evolving role of church leaders in contemporary Nigeria.

Keywords: Apostle Joshua Selman, Contemporary Apostolic Leadership, Eternity Network International, Koinonia Ministry, Pentecostal Movement, Community Transformation.

Review Article

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INTRODUCTION

Apostolic leadership has emerged as a distinguished paradigm within the contemporary Nigerian religious landscape, characterized by an intricate synthesis of traditional ecclesiastical doctrines and modern pedagogical approaches. This form of leadership responds to the dynamic challenges posed by a rapidly changing society, showcasing a unique blend of spirituality, community engagement, and theological reflection. Joshua Selman Nimmak serves as a preeminent exemplar of this trend, embodying the characteristics of modern apostolic figures who significantly influence their communities through innovative ministry strategies and profound spiritual insights.

Born on June 25, 1980, in Zaria, Nigeria, Selman grew within

a devout Christian family amidst a predominantly Muslim milieu (The New Man Movement, 2025; Wikipedia, 2024). This religious setting provided a fertile ground for his spiritual development, as he navigated the complexities of faith in a diverse cultural environment. Selman's formative years were marked by a keen interest in spiritual matters, which was coupled with an engagement in church activities that laid the foundation for his future ministry. His background reflects a broader trend in Nigeria, where young individuals are increasingly drawn to charismatic movements that promise empowerment and transformation in their lives (Akindele, 2020).

Selman's educational journey culminated in a degree in Chemical Engineering from Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, where he concurrently began his ministerial journey

(DNB Stories Africa, 2024). Within the university community, Selman distinguished himself not only as a student but also as a preacher who sought to share the gospel with his peers. His experiences during this time highlight how academic institutions can serve as platforms for spiritual growth and evangelism. The interplay between education and spirituality represents a critical aspect of apostolic leadership in Nigeria, as many leaders emerge from academic settings where they have cultivated both intellectual and spiritual capital.

Central to understanding Selman's ministry is his establishment of Eternity Network International (ENI) in 2011, which is further showcased through the Koinonia ministry—an initiative aimed at fostering Christian fellowship and spiritual growth (Spirit Revealing, 2025). The term "Koinonia," derived from the Greek word for fellowship, encapsulates the ministry's mission to create a communal environment where believers can experience God through worship, teaching, and miracles (Naijasermons, 2024). This focus on community-oriented ministry reflects a significant trend in contemporary apostolic leadership, emphasizing the importance of relational engagement in the life of the church.

Apostolic leadership also entails a commitment to addressing societal issues, which Selman has demonstrated through various outreach initiatives that aim to empower individuals and transform communities (Vincent, 2024). His teachings frequently emphasize themes of personal empowerment, financial breakthrough, and divine healing—elements that resonate strongly with his audience. Scholars have noted that contemporary apostolic leaders often occupy a unique space where spiritual and socio-economic concerns intersect, creating a ministry that is relevant to the needs of the populace (MacKenzie, 2020). Selman's approach underscores the transformative power of faith as a catalyst for societal change, deftly merging spiritual aspirations with tangible support for community development.

Moreover, Selman's mastery of digital media has propelled him into the global spotlight, allowing him to reach millions through virtual platforms and online content (Sg-host.com, 2024). In a world where technology increasingly influences communication and community engagement, his ability to harness these tools exemplifies a strategic adaptation to contemporary challenges. This digital engagement not only enhances his ministry's visibility but also fosters a sense of belonging among believers across geographical boundaries. As noted by researchers, the integration of digital media in ministry is a defining feature of contemporary apostolic leaders who strive to maintain relevance in an ever-evolving cultural landscape (Adewale, 2022).

However, the journey of apostolic leadership is not devoid of challenges. Selman has confronted issues such as cultural resistance, media misrepresentation, and the complexities of navigating faith within a diverse nation (Kogi Reports, 2025). These adversities mirror broader challenges faced by many religious leaders in Nigeria, where the interplay of tradition, modernity, and spirituality creates a complex religious tapestry. Selman's resilience in the face of these challenges is emblematic of the determination exhibited by many

contemporary apostolic figures who are committed to their divine calling, even amidst opposition.

Early Life and Education

Joshua Selman's spiritual genesis is distinctly marked by his zealous participation in church activities from a young age. Growing up in Zaria, Nigeria, within a devout Christian family, he was immersed in an environment that profoundly influenced his faith development (The New Man Movement, 2025). This religious upbringing instilled in him foundational teachings that emphasized the importance of spirituality, community service, and moral integrity, reflecting the ideas espoused by other prominent Nigerian pastors who prioritize strong familial and ecclesiastical bonds (Omenugha & Alabi, 2020).

Selman's academic pursuits brought him to Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, where he enrolled in the Chemical Engineering program. His choice of technical studies underscores a broader trend observed in the Nigerian Pentecostal movement, where many leaders emerge from diverse educational backgrounds, allowing them to integrate both intellectual and spiritual perspectives (Iredia, 2021). During his time at ABU, Selman began to articulate his pastoral identity, actively engaging in preaching and ministering to his peers—a practice indicative of the vibrant religious culture within Nigerian universities (Spirit Revealing, 2025).

While at ABU, Selman became well-known not only for his academic performance but also for his passionate sermons that resonated with fellow students seeking meaning and purpose in their lives. His ability to deliver compelling messages during campus fellowship meetings illustrates his formative development as a communicator and leader. Scholars have noted that the academic setting can serve as a significant platform for cultivating spiritual leadership among youths, enabling them to bridge the gap between education and pastoral ministry (MacKenzie, 2022).

Throughout his academic career, Selman was mentored by seasoned pastors and spiritual leaders who provided him with doctrinal guidance and practical wisdom. This mentorship was essential, as it reinforced his understanding of critical Christian values, such as faith, hope, and service (Emmanuel, 2024). The role of mentoring in shaping future leaders is widely documented, indicating that young Christians often thrive when guided by mature spiritual figures (Amadi & Ifediora, 2020).

Moreover, the socio-religious context of Nigeria, characterized by its rich tapestry of cultures and faiths, played a crucial role in shaping Selman's worldview. Growing up in a nation marked by both Christianity and Islam, Selman's experiences navigating this diverse landscape have significantly informed his pastoral responsibilities. A study conducted by Iredia (2021) emphasizes that many contemporary Nigerian religious leaders face the challenge of fostering interfaith dialogue while promoting unity and understanding within their communities. Selman's ability to articulate messages of hope and reconciliation is vital in a society where religious tensions can often arise.

In addition to his studies, Selman was actively involved in

various campus religious organizations, where he organized prayer meetings, fellowship events, and outreach programs aimed at impacting the wider student body. These initiatives exemplified his commitment to serving others and providing spiritual sustenance to his peers. Research indicates that involvement in campus ministries can create a sense of belonging and community among students, often leading to lasting spiritual growth (Okoroafor & Maduka, 2022). The combination of formal education and spirit-led experiences ultimately shaped Selman into a multifaceted leader equipped to address the challenges of ministry. His academic background provided him with critical thinking skills and an analytical approach to scripture interpretation, enabling him to engage with intellectual discourse while maintaining a deep commitment to his faith (Omenugha & Alabi, 2020). This duality represents a growing trend among apostolic leaders in Nigeria, who emphasize the integration of academic pursuits with spiritual development (MacKenzie, 2022). Throughout his formative years, Selman demonstrated a remarkable ability to balance academic responsibilities, spiritual commitments, and community engagement. This multifaceted approach reflects a broader movement within the Nigerian church, where emerging leaders are increasingly seen as catalysts for societal change, bridging the gap between faith and practical action (Adebola & Oyinloye, 2021). The skills and values instilled in him during this period have proven instrumental in shaping his future contributions to the Nigerian Pentecostal movement.

Koinonia: A Ministry of Transformation

The establishment of Koinonia is integral to Joshua Selman's apostolic mission, symbolizing a profound commitment to creating uplifting and transformative experiences for believers. The Greek term "Koinonia," meaning "fellowship," captures the essence of community that is foundational to the Christian faith. This focus on fellowship is not merely a philosophical concept; it is a practice that facilitates deep connections, spiritual growth, and mutual encouragement among congregants (Akinyemi, 2023). Koinonia's gatherings serve as a microcosm of the church, emphasizing the relational aspect of Christianity in an environment of love and acceptance. Koinonia operates through regular weekly meetings that are characterized by engaging worship, in-depth teaching, miraculous occurrences, and acts of love that resonate deeply with participants. These transformative meetings attract a diverse congregation from various walks of life, emphasizing the ministry's inclusive nature and appeal across different socio-economic strata (Oyediji, 2023). Research suggests that ministries that prioritize inclusivity and community engagement can significantly enhance the spiritual satisfaction of believers, as they feel valued and connected (Daramola, 2021). Central to Koinonia's mission are several cardinal objectives that underpin its operations and outreach strategies. The first objective is Evangelism, which is vital for engaging the wider community. Koinonia aims to seek and save the lost through impactful sermons and messages that resonate with both

believers and non-believers (Uduak, 2022). This emphasis on evangelism aligns with the Great Commission, as outlined in Matthew 28:19, which urges Christians to spread the gospel to all nations. Contemporary research highlights the effectiveness of evangelistic efforts that are culturally relevant and emotionally resonant, particularly among younger demographics (Aremu & Adebayo, 2022). The second goal is Equipping Saints. Koinonia endeavors to transform believers by providing profound revelations of God's word and empowering them through the workings of the Holy Spirit (Chukwuyem, 2023). This commitment to equipping congregants is reflected in the ministry's series of teachings that address various life issues while providing biblical insights. Studies indicate that effective teaching and pastoral care contribute significantly to the spiritual maturity and active involvement of believers within their communities (Adelakun, 2021). By addressing practical challenges through the lens of faith, Koinonia fosters a culture of growth and learning. Another vital aspect of Koinonia's mission is its focus on Demonstrating Power. The ministry actively seeks to manifest the Holy Spirit's presence through signs, wonders, and miracles, thus affirming the core tenets of the Christian faith, including the resurrection of Jesus (Olaniyan, 2023). The emphasis on miraculous occurrences serves to validate the teachings of the ministry and reinforce the faith of believers. Research in the field of Pentecostal studies has shown that communities engaging in practices of divine healing and miracles often thrill attendees and deepen their commitment to the faith (Eze, 2022). The testimonials of transformed lives and extraordinary experiences within Koinonia serve as powerful tools for evangelism and outreach. A fourth key objective is Financial Empowerment, which addresses economic challenges faced by many congregants. This initiative involves discerning and revealing the wealth of God's kingdom to empower believers to fulfill their roles in God's end-time agenda (Oyediji, 2023). The teachings surrounding financial stewardship and prosperity are particularly resonant in the Nigerian context, where economic hardship can often pose obstacles to church participation and community development (Okwu, 2021). By offering principles for financial literacy and empowerment, Koinonia seeks to enable congregants to leverage their resources for both personal advancement and community enrichment. These objectives underpinning Koinonia's mission align closely with established principles of apostolic leadership, emphasizing the importance of community empowerment, transformation, and dynamic spiritual engagement. Apostolic leaders are charged with fostering environments that encourage spiritual growth and equip individuals to serve effectively (Adefeso, 2022). By focusing on fellowship, empowerment, and transformation, Koinonia reflects the essence of effective apostolic ministry in the contemporary world. Furthermore, Koinonia exemplifies a model for collaborative ministry where inclusivity is prioritized, inviting individuals from all walks of life to engage in fellowship, worship, and service. Any ministry that is committed to engaging its members holistically provides an essential framework for building and sustaining authentic relationships among its

participants (Uduak, 2022). As a church model, Koinonia illustrates how a mix of spiritual teaching, community outreach, and practical life applications can lead to not just individual transformation but also communal growth.

Key Teachings and Theological Foundations

Joshua Selman's prolific teachings encapsulate several core theological principles that reflect his unwavering commitment to the spiritual edification and empowerment of believers. Central to his ministry is a focus on understanding the workings of the Holy Spirit, which he regards as foundational to a transformative Christian experience. Selman emphasizes the pivotal role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers, advocating for a personal relationship with the divine that goes beyond mere doctrinal knowledge (Eichmann, 2025). He posits that engaging with the Holy Spirit allows Christians to unlock the full potential of their faith, drawing insights from Scriptures like John 16:13, which highlights the role of the Holy Spirit as a guide in the pursuit of truth.

Additionally, Selman's teachings frequently underscore the integral relationship between faith and the reception of God's promises. This perspective posits that faith acts as a conduit through which believers can access divine blessings, often resulting in miraculous occurrences. He frequently references Hebrews 11:1, affirming that faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen (Idowu, 2024). Miracles, for Selman, are not merely extraordinary events; they are manifestations of God's faithfulness in response to genuine belief and expectation. By fostering an environment where faith is actively encouraged, Selman empowers his congregants to anticipate and experience the miraculous in their daily lives.

A significant aspect of Selman's theological framework is his teaching on Spiritual Warfare. He provides profound insights into engaging in spiritual battles, emphasizing the necessity of fervent prayer and fasting as critical strategies in navigating the complexities of faith (LFS - Light Feathers Stories, 2025). This teaching is rooted in Ephesians 6:12, which reminds believers that their struggle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of evil. Selman's pragmatic approach equips believers with the spiritual tools needed to confront various forms of opposition, whether they be personal, communal, or spiritual. His emphasis on the importance of cultivating a robust prayer life highlights the need for believers to engage actively with the spiritual realities that affect their lives.

Selman's pedagogical method synthesizes scriptural authority with pragmatic applications, thereby empowering believers to effectively confront contemporary challenges. This method echoes the teachings found in James 1:22, which exhorts believers to be doers of the Word and not merely hearers (DNB Stories Africa, 2024). By integrating practical life lessons with theological teachings, Selman addresses real-world issues such as financial instability, relationship conflicts, and mental health struggles, providing a holistic framework for living a victorious Christian life. His teaching style, marked by clarity and relatability, resonates deeply with a diverse audience, making complex theological concepts accessible to the average believer.

In addition to these core teachings, Selman often emphasizes

the importance of Community and Fellowship as essential components of spiritual growth. He advocates for the establishment of supportive church communities where believers can share their burdens, celebrate victories, and grow together in faith. This emphasis aligns with the biblical model of the early church as described in Acts 2:42-47, where believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, and prayer. Research has shown that community engagement is critical for fostering spiritual resilience and accountability among believers (Ford & Smith, 2021). Selman's commitment to building relational bonds within the church is crucial for nurturing an environment where faith can flourish.

Moreover, Selman's teachings on Vision and Purpose resonate strongly with his congregants. He emphasizes the necessity for believers to identify and pursue their God-given purpose, which is often revealed through prayer, study of the Scriptures, and community engagement. This teaching is supported by Jeremiah 29:11, which affirms that God has plans for His people—plans to prosper them and give them hope and a future. By encouraging believers to pursue their destiny with diligence and faith, Selman fosters a mindset of expectation and fulfillment, motivating them to take active steps toward realizing their divine calling.

Challenges and Triumphs

The journey of apostolic leadership is inherently fraught with challenges, and Joshua Selman has faced several as he navigates his ministry. One prominent challenge is Cultural Resistance. Nigeria's religious landscape is diverse, with many individuals adhering to traditional beliefs that sometimes conflict with evangelical messages. This necessitates a faith that is adaptable and culturally sensitive; however, it can lead to tensions when evangelical teachings confront established cultural norms (Omenugha & Ifediora, 2021). Selman's ministry emphasizes the importance of contextualizing the Gospel, presenting it in a way that resonates with the cultural identities of his audience while remaining faithful to biblical truths. This approach aligns with the findings of sociological studies that highlight the necessity of cultural awareness in effective ministry (Akinyemi, 2023).

Another significant challenge faced by Selman is Media Misrepresentation. As a respected public figure, he is commonly subjected to scrutiny and misinterpretation, which can lead to reputational risks. In today's digital age, where information spreads rapidly, Selman must employ effective communication strategies to counter misinformation and clarify misunderstandings about his teachings (Kogi Reports, 2025). The necessity of addressing public perception through proactive engagement with both mainstream media and social platforms underscores the intricate dynamics of contemporary ministry leadership.

Despite these challenges, Selman has experienced noteworthy Triumphs that reflect his resilience and innovative approaches to ministry. One critical success is his Technological Engagement. Selman's adept utilization of digital platforms, such as YouTube and social media, has significantly expanded his reach, enabling him to connect with millions worldwide. His digital presence revitalizes the sense of community by allowing

believers from various geographical backgrounds to engage with his sermons and teachings online (Sg-host.com, 2024). Studies indicate that ministries leveraging technology effectively can enhance community engagement and facilitate spiritual growth among congregants (Daramola, 2021). By harnessing the power of technology, Selman fosters a relevant and accessible ministry for younger generations seeking spiritual guidance.

Another triumph of Selman's ministry is his Community Impact through the transformative power of his teachings. Apostolic preaching often emphasizes personal and communal transformation, inspiring attendees to pursue a deeper relationship with God and facilitating changes in their lives. Selman's sermons encourage individuals to elevate their spiritual journey, reflecting a ministry approach that profoundly impacts lives and fosters a sense of purpose (Adeyemo, 2022). By promoting principles of faith, hope, and love, Selman's ministry nurtures a strong sense of community among congregants, emphasizing the importance of fellowship, prayer, and mutual support.

Furthermore, Selman's emphasis on Life Transformation through sermons fosters an atmosphere of hope and inspiration, encouraging believers to actively engage with their faith and embody its principles in their daily lives. His teachings address contemporary challenges and concerns, empowering congregants to confront adversities with resilience and faith (Idowu, 2024). By encouraging believers to seek divine encounters and personal revelations, Selman emphasizes that transformation is not only possible but essential for fulfilling one's purpose.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The role of contemporary apostolic leaders like Joshua Selman prompts critical discourse within both academic and religious studies. Selman's ministry exemplifies the transformative potential of apostolic leadership in the contemporary Nigerian context, where he merges traditional elements of the faith with innovative outreach strategies. Notably, his effectiveness in utilizing digital media has revived discussions surrounding the paradigm shift in the dissemination of spiritual authority and influence, particularly in an increasingly interconnected world (Eichmann, 2025; Emmanuel, 2024).

The strategic use of digital platforms by Selman offers significant insights into the evolving landscape of 21st-century ministry. Research reveals that his teachings delivered through social media and streaming services have reached millions globally, reshaping how congregants engage with their faith and with one another (Wright & Narayanan, 2022). This shift suggests that digital media serves not just as a tool for dissemination but also as a mechanism for community-building, facilitating active involvement among congregants who might otherwise feel disconnected due to geographical or socio-economic barriers (Reyes, 2021). The concept of the "digital congregation" allows for greater participation and makes spiritual resources accessible to a broader audience, highlighting the potential of technology to enhance spiritual engagement (Tarimo, 2023).

Selman's approach signifies a broader trend within the Nigerian church, where traditional modes of engagement are being re-evaluated in light of modern technological advancements. This integration of technology into ministry aligns with the findings of sociologists and theologians who advocate for adaptive theology that embraces contemporary cultural and technological contexts (Akinyemi, 2023). The implications for future leadership models suggest that today's apostolic leaders must be versatile and technologically savvy, capable of navigating the complexities of both face-to-face and virtual ministry environments.

Moreover, the success of Selman's ministry may serve as a case study for assessing the effectiveness of apostolic succession and leadership development in contemporary Christian settings. The ability of leaders to influence large audiences and foster community interaction raises questions concerning the dynamics of spiritual authority. Traditional hierarchies may shift, allowing for more collaborative and decentralized forms of leadership that prioritize engagement over mere institutional oversight (Iredia, 2021). As leaders like Selman emerge, the nature of mentorship and spiritual formation is also under review, especially regarding how emerging leaders can cultivate similar abilities to connect with diverse audiences (Adeyemo, 2022).

Furthermore, Selman's ministry underscores the necessity for spiritual leaders to remain responsive to societal needs while maintaining a strong theological foundation. His consistent emphasis on the life-transforming power of faith reflects the demands of contemporary believers for authentic spiritual experiences that resonate with their personal realities (Idowu, 2024). Scholars argue that for ministry to remain relevant, it must continually adapt to address the pressing concerns of everyday life, affirming the connection between theology and lived experience (Eze, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Joshua Selman's rise as a contemporary apostolic leader exemplifies the dynamic and evolving nature of spiritual leadership in Nigeria, embodying the intersection of tradition and innovation in the church. His transformative journey from a university student to a globally recognized minister highlights the profound impact that faith, community engagement, and divine encounters can have on individual lives and communities alike. As contemporary churches confront the multifaceted challenges of modern society, leaders like Selman provide not only essential insights but also practical strategies for effectively fulfilling the apostolic mandate.

The enduring influence of Selman's teachings resonates deeply among his congregants, as they find relevance and inspiration in his messages, which are often rooted in scriptural truths and contextualized for today's realities. His innovative use of digital platforms has allowed him to reach vast audiences, facilitating a global community that transcends geographical boundaries and enabling countless individuals to engage with his ministry. This approach demonstrates that effective communication and outreach strategies are paramount for contemporary ministry, especially in an increasingly digital world.

Moreover, Selman's palpable community impact underscores

the significance of apostolic leadership within the Nigerian church context. By fostering spiritual growth, promoting communal fellowship, and advocating for ethical living, he reinforces the church's critical role in shaping society's moral and ethical frameworks. His ministry not only impacts individuals but also contributes to a collective consciousness that aspires towards higher ideal.

Selman's leadership model serves as a blueprint for aspiring leaders who wish to harmonize spiritual authority with contemporary relevance. This integration is essential for ensuring that the church maintains its vital role in addressing societal needs and shaping the moral landscape of the 21st century.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the observations and findings of this study, the author recommends the following:

1. Enhancing Apostolic Training Programs: Higher education institutions and seminaries should develop comprehensive curricula that emphasize apostolic leadership. These programs should integrate both spiritual formation and practical ministry skills to prepare future leaders effectively. By adopting a holistic approach to training, institutions can cultivate leaders who are not only theologically sound but also adept in practical ministry contexts (Morris & McGuire, 2024).
2. Promoting Digital Literacy in Ministries: As technology increasingly shapes outreach strategies, church leaders should benefit from digital engagement workshops aimed at improving their technological proficiency. This initiative can help them effectively reach and connect with younger congregants, thereby enhancing their influence and fostering a sense of community. Emphasizing digital literacy can empower leaders to employ modern communication tools skillfully (Habib & Aliyu, 2023).
3. Encouraging Inter-Generational Mentorship: Establishing structured mentorship programs can facilitate valuable knowledge transfer from experienced ministers, such as Joshua Selman, to emerging leaders. This initiative would not only nurture the church's leadership pipeline but also reinforce the theological and practical foundations for the next generation of apostolic leaders. Research indicates that mentorship plays a crucial role in spiritual development and leadership effectiveness (Owens et al., 2022).
4. Expanding Academic Discourse on Apostolic Leadership: There is a pressing need to encourage academic research and publication focused on contemporary apostolic figures like Joshua Selman. Such efforts can contribute to a deeper understanding of their influence on the religious landscape, especially within Africa. Documenting their methodologies and theological perspectives will provide essential insights for both scholars and practitioners (Okoroafor, 2023).

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