

ICT USAGE AMONG PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN BENIN CITY METROPOLIS

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**A RESERCH PROJECT SUBMITTED, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELORS OF ART B.A. (HONS)
DEGREE IN MASS COMMUNICATION, TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS
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NIGERIA.**

_____, 2024

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project is based on a study conducted by me, **NASAMU CHRISTIANA EMOSHIORAMHE**, with Matriculation Number, **ART2000699** in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under the supervision of Dr. D.O. Ekhareafu. All findings and analyses presented in this project are the result of my personal research, and where the views of others have been used and expressed, they were duly acknowledged.

NASAMU CHRISTIANA EMOSHIORAMHE

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this work was carried out by **NASAMU CHRISTIANA EMOSHIORAMHE** with Matriculation Number **ART2000699**, and it is adequate in scope for the degree of B.A. (Hons) in Mass Communication under my supervision in the Department of Mass Communication, University of Benin, Benin City.

Dr. D.O. Ekhareafo

Project Supervisor

Date

Dr. D.O. Ekhareafo

Head of Department

Date

External Examiner

Date

DEDICATION

The project is dedicated to GOD Almighty for His faithfulness, benevolence, wisdom and supremacy and to my parents and siblings for their love and support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere gratitude to God Almighty for the successful completion of my project. To an awesomely amazing God who has kept me in His Love and clothed me with his mercy throughout my journey at the University of Benin, I say the biggest thank you.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent to which Pentecostal Churches use ICT for church activities in Benin City. The study was designed to ascertain the rapid rise in the application of information communication technologies (ICTs) across nearly all aspects of human activity, including religion, in the 21st century. This study aims to determine the extent of ICT usage in the act of worship, to determine the challenges faced in the usage of ICT, to assess how ICT affects method of worship and gospel sharing, to ascertain the importance of ICT usage in growth and development of selected Pentecostal churches in Benin City and to ascertain the purpose for which ICT is being utilized. The technological determinism theory formed the theoretical foundation of the study. A survey research design was used and a questionnaire consisting of 17 items was distributed to 89 respondents who were specifically chosen based on their prior knowledge of this study. The data collected from the study were analysed and displayed using the frequency and simple percentages based on the 5-point Likert scale. The research showed that Pentecostal churches utilize ICT to a significant degree, leading to an increase in membership growth and aiding in evangelism even with the challenges faced. Thus, the study concludes that ICT has not only facilitated the spread of gospel but also enriched worship experience. As a result, the study suggests that the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), and other governmental organizations should support Pentecostal churches in acquiring ICT devices and ensure that messages are broadcasted online without any internet subscription fees. Also, due to technical challenges in using ICT, members of Pentecostal Churches should be trained on how to operate these devices.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background Of The Study

Communication is essential to all human activities, existence and social interactions. Human existence would not be possible without communication; according to Orewere (2006), human beings do not like to live alone, they like love and desire to live in a place where there are other human beings; they interact with one another to satisfy their wants, needs and goals. This interaction is initiated, promoted and achieved through communication.

As the oldest type of interaction, communication has become better with time, resulting in more effective and refined ways for people to connect with one another. It has witnessed several ages, including the Stone Age, the computer age, and the jet age in which people can instantly communicate with one another anywhere in the world.

In this 21st Century, modern technology has made communication easier and faster. This has allowed globalization to occur on a world wide scale and brought about change in all aspects of life. The ability to communicate has been further improved by the organized method of storing, computing, and retrieving data quickly and accurately made possible by the development of the electrical device known as the computer. The internet is essential for this computerized form of communication to function, as it is a vast network that links millions of computers globally and facilitates the free exchange of information. For this reason, information communication technology (ICT) was created.

Furthermore, the development of information communication technology (ICT) has significantly transformed our attitude towards communication, largely eradicating the need for outdated and antiquated methods of information dissemination. In the same vein, John Pavlik in Cutlip, Center and Broom (2006) stressed how ICTs have become the live wire of modern communication. Journalist, PR practitioner and advertisers all use ICTs to do their work more effectively and fast to reduce cost. Adaja (2007) also notes that ICT "is basically the application of modern technologies to information generation, processing, storage, retrieval and dissemination to meet the needs and requirements of individuals, groups, organizations, governments and societies". It

ensures that information is communicated accurately, quickly, and efficiently by using digital communication to transfer events from a remote area to the organization using automated equipment to distribute the news at the same time. A vast array of new activities and concepts have allowed journalist to widen and brighten their perspectives as a result of the entrenchments of ICT media practice.

However, the ease with which information can now be obtained and shared has also transcended traditional face-to-face communication to an electronic medium that allows one to access information from anywhere in the world, even from a local perspective. It is therefore not surprising that Canadian scholar Marshall McLuhan introduced the concept of the “Global Village” in 1964, foreseeing decades earlier that the world would eventually unite into a single global village. The advancement of information and communication technology (ICT) has made education more accessible since it has promoted e-learning, which has led to a rise in students who appear to know more than their teachers. Nowadays, learning resources and libraries are easily available, unlike in the past when they were restricted to a specific area and could not be found everywhere. Nwajinka (2004) noted that and at a relatively low cost, thereby vastly accelerating research and progress in various aspect of human knowledge which could propel growth and development.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) or Information Technology (IT) as it is sometimes called has not only greatly advanced the field of education but also made room for advancements in religious institutions that go beyond simple computers. Information and communication technology, to put it simply, refers to the tools and channels used in the creation and dissemination of information. These technologies includes, Computer ROMS, mobile phones, projectors, Audiovisual, Video Tapes, Video Machines, Recorder (Tape & Video), Filmstrip, Cameras, etc. these technology allows us to work, interconnect and socialize online. The gospel has undoubtedly been spread in a new way as a result of the intervention of these technological devices. Gospel messages are now easily accessible and free to all. Nowadays, most churches and religious institutions, if not all of them, have satellite stations where members can stream live and get message snippets. Church leaders and workers can access each other both inside and outside the state because of this interconnectivity.

1.2. Statement Of The Problem

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have had a profound impact on many facets of society since the beginning of the 21st century. ICTs have evolved into instruments for social transformation, upending the traditional status quo and substituting new, contemporary methods of doing things. ICTs are used in almost every industry; their utility in politics, education, communication, advertising, banking, governance and a host of other fields has been demonstrated to a great extent. ICTs have established a hierarchy that specifies the proper way and means of doing things. Marshall McLuhan's 1948 prediction that the world will become a global village can be linked to the impact and influence of ICTs today. With the advent of ICTs, this prediction has come true in this century as ICTs have reduced the size of the world from a global village to a smaller, more compressed one. ICTs have been used to improve and ease human lives.

ICTs are being used in churches and mosques for religious purposes these days. Due to the reduction of time and geographic barriers brought about by ICT usage, religious worship has changed in form of structure. Using downlink satellite technology, for example, churches that have their headquarters located far from their sub-branches can now communicate religious teachings to their members. Satellite decodes are used by members wherever they may be, to access these communications. As churches increasingly post religious content online using platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media platforms, ICTs have aided and improved the spread of the gospel. With the use of ICTs in churches, religious worship has expanded due to their instrumentality. It is on this note that this study aims to determine the extent and impact of ICT usage among specific Pentecostal churches in the Benin Metropolis.

1.3. Objective Of Study

This study accomplished the following objectives which were to;

1. Determine the extent of ICTs usage by selected Pentecostal Churches in their act of worship.
2. Assess how ICT has affected several Benin City Pentecostal churches' methods of worship and gospel sharing.

3. Ascertain the importance of ICTs usage on selected Pentecostal Churches growth and development.
4. Determine the challenges faced by selected Pentecostal Churches in the usage of ICTs.
5. Ascertain the purposes for which ICT is being utilized.

1.4. Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions;

1. What is the level of ICT usage by selected Pentecostal Churches in their act of worship?
2. What is the impact of ICT on the mode of worship and propaganda of gospel by selected Pentecostal Churches in Benin City?
3. What is the significance of ICTs on selected Pentecostal churches growth and development?
4. What are the challenges faced by selected Pentecostal Churches in the usage of ICTs?
5. What factors influence ICT usage among these churches?

1.5. Significance Of Study

This study would give mass communication students a firsthand understanding of how these particular churches have used ICT to spread the gospel. It would also give religious stakeholders in these particular churches a wealth of information on how to devise strategies for increasing membership and growth through improvements in ICT. Furthermore, this study would assist members of those chosen churches in determining the degree to which their chosen place of worship has included ICT and how it has also been utilized to spread the good news of God. It would also function as a valuable resource for the general public to evaluate the effect of ICT on the membership of these Pentecostal churches and the degree to which this medium has been utilized to reach out to those locations where in-person connection is not possible. Additionally, this research would advance knowledge by offering a resource for future studies to academics and researchers working in related fields.

1.6. Scope of Study

The scope of this research work is to determine the extent to which ICT has been utilized to facilitate profitable service and how it has been utilized to harness church growth. In order to properly investigate the degree to which ICTs aided in spreading the gospel in these churches, Benin City was selected.

However, this study is restricted to Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel), Deeper Life Bible Church, and Believers Love World.

1.7. Limitations Of Study

In the course of this research work several constraints posed as serious challenges to the furthering of this study which are:

1. Gathering accurate data on ICT usage in churches was challenging due to varying levels of technological integration and record-keeping practices.
2. Some churches were hesitant to participate in the project due to concerns about the intrusion of technology into traditional worship practices.
3. Conducting thorough research and analysis within the project time frame was difficult especially when coordinating different churches at various locations.
4. Inadequate ICT infrastructure in some churches impeded the project's data collection effort and the implementation of technology-based solutions.
5. Resistance from the church's leaders and members to adopt new technological practices slowed down the project's progress and limited the effectiveness of proposed ICT solutions.
6. Limited resources for the project such as funding, manpower, and technical expertise hindered the comprehensive study of ICT usage in Pentecostal churches.

1.8. Definition Of Terms

It is essential to explain some often used terminology to prevent misunderstandings and promote better comprehension of this research endeavor.

Communication: According to Ella and Onwochei (2005) it is the act or process of exchanging or sharing information, ideas or feelings between persons, using appropriate means.

Development: This refers to the enhancement, evolution, and progress in the way information is shared, exchanged, and understood among individuals or groups.

Dissemination: This is the act of spreading or sharing information, knowledge or ideas to a wider audience or the general public.

Globalization: This refers to the interconnectedness of people, cultures, and ideas on a global scale through various communication channels.

ICTs: This is an abbreviation for Information Communication Technologies. These are technological devices or new media or computer enable communication technologies used for the acquisition, processing and dissemination of information to a large audience.

Information: This is the giving or receiving of knowledge or intelligence and has the capacity to produce feedback.

Technology: This can be defined as the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes or applications to achieve practical goals, especially in a reproducible way.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. INTRODUCTION

This chapter delves into studies, articles and publications that examine how Pentecostal churches in Benin City are adopting and utilizing ICT tools for various purposes such as communication, worship, outreach, and administration. By synthesizing this information, we aim to gain insights into the current trends, challenges, and opportunities related to ICT implementation in Pentecostal churches in this specific geographic area.

Furthermore, the literature review highlights notable trends or patterns in the use of ICT among Pentecostal churches in Benin City, shedding light on best practices or innovative approaches that have been successful in enhancing the church goers' experiences and engagement.

Overall, this chapter review on ICT usage among Pentecostal churches in Benin City metropolis providing valuable insights into the intersection of technology and religious practices within the specific context, offering a subtle understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with incorporating ICT in a religious setting.

2.1. HISTORICAL REVIEW

2.1.1. HISTORY OF ICT

The term "Information Technology" evolved in the 1970s. Its basic concept, however, can be traced to the World War II alliance of the military and industry in the development of electronics, computers and information theory. After the 1940s, the military remained the major source of research and development funding for the expansion of automation to replace manpower with machine power.

Since the 1950s, four generations of computers have evolved. Each generation reflected a change to hardware of decreased size but increased capabilities to control computer operations. The first generation used vacuum tubes, the second used transistors, the third used integrated circuits and the fourth used integrated circuits on a single computer chip. Advances in artificial intelligence that will minimize the need for complex programming characterize the fifth generation of

computers, still in the experimental stage. The pre-mechanical age is the earliest age of information technology. It can be defined as the time between 3000B.C. and 1450A.D. We are talking about a long time ago. When humans first started communicating, they would try to use language or simple picture drawings known as petroglyphs which were usually carved in rock. Early alphabets were developed such as the Phoenician alphabet.

As alphabets became more popular and more people were writing information down, pens and paper began to be developed. It started off as just marks in wet clay, but later paper was created out of papyrus plant. The most popular kind of paper made was probably by the Chinese who made paper from rags.

Now that people were writing a lot of information down they needed ways to keep it all in permanent storage. This is where the first books and libraries are developed. You've probably heard of Egyptian scrolls which were popular ways of writing down information to save. Some groups of people were actually binding paper together into a book-like form.

Also, during this period were the first numbering systems. Around 100A.D. was when the first 1-9 system was created by people from India. However, it wasn't until 875A.D. (775 years later) that the number 0 was invented. And yes now that numbers were created, people wanted stuff to do with them so they created calculators. A calculator was the very first sign of an information processor. The popular model of that time was the abacus.

The first commercial computer was the UNIVAC I, developed by John Eckert and John W. Mauchly in 1951. It was used by the Census Bureau to predict the outcome of the 1952 presidential election. For the next twenty-five years, mainframe computers were used in large corporations to do calculations and manipulate large amounts of information stored in databases. Supercomputers were used in science and engineering, for designing aircraft and nuclear reactors, and for predicting worldwide weather patterns. Minicomputers came on to the scene in the early 1980s in small businesses, manufacturing plants and factories.

In 1975, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology developed microcomputers. In 1976, Tandy Corporation's first Radio Shack microcomputer followed; the Apple microcomputer was introduced in 1977. The market for microcomputers increased dramatically when IBM introduced the first personal computer in the fall of 1981. Because of dramatic improvements in

computer components and manufacturing, personal computers today do more than the largest computers of the mid-1960s at about a thousandth of the cost.

The mechanical age is when we first start to see connections between our current technology and its ancestors. The mechanical age can be defined as the time between 1450 and 1840. A lot of new technologies are developed in this era as there is a large explosion in interest with this area. Technologies like the slide rule (an analog computer used for multiplying and dividing) were invented. Blaise Pascal invented the Pascaline which was a very popular mechanical computer. Charles Babbage developed the difference engine which tabulated polynomial equations using the method of finite differences.

There were lots of different machines created during this era and while we have not yet gotten to a machine that can do more than one type of calculation in one, like our modern-day calculators, we are still learning about how all of our all-in-one machines started. Also, if you look at the size of the machines invented in this time compared to the power behind them it seems (to us) absolutely ridiculous to understand why anybody would want to use them, but to the people living in that time all of these inventions were huge.

Now we are finally getting close to some technologies that resemble our modern-day technology. The electromechanical age can be defined as the time between 1840 and 1940. These are the beginnings of telecommunication. The telegraph was created in the early 1800s. Morse code was created by Samuel Morse in 1835. The telephone (one of the most popular forms of communication ever) was created by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876. The first radio developed by Guglielmo Marconi in 1894. All of these were extremely crucial emerging technologies that led to big advances in the information technology field.

The first large-scale automatic digital computer in the United States was the Mark 1 created by Harvard University around 1940. This computer was 8ft high, 50ft long, 2ft wide and weighed 5 tons – HUGE. It was programmed using punch cards. How does your PC match up to this hunk of metal? It was from huge machines like this that people began to look at downsizing all the parts to first make them usable by businesses and eventually in your own home.

The electronic age is what we currently live in. It can be defined as the time between 1940 and right now. The ENIAC was the first high-speed, digital computer capable of being

reprogrammed to solve a full range of computing problems. This computer was designed to be used by the U.S. Army for artillery firing tables. This machine was even bigger than the Mark I taking up 680 square feet and weighing 30 tons – HUGE. It mainly used vacuum tubes to do its calculations.

There are 4 main sections of digital computing. The first was the era of vacuum tubes and punch cards like the ENIAC and Mark I. Rotating magnetic drums were used for internal storage. The second generation replaced vacuum tubes with transistors, punch cards were replaced with magnetic tape, and rotating magnetic drums were replaced by magnetic cores for internal storage. Also during this time high-level programming languages were created such as FORTRAN and COBOL. The third generation replaced transistors with integrated circuits, magnetic tape was used throughout all computers, and magnetic core turned into metal oxide semiconductors. An actual operating system showed up around this time along with the advanced programming language BASIC. The fourth and latest generation brought in CPUs (Central Processing Units) which contained memory, logic and control circuits all on a single chip. The personal computer was developed (Apple II). The graphical user interface (GUI) was developed.

2.2 Conceptual Review

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is a digital method of communication that allows individuals to transmit, receive, and exchange information electronically. ICT which is an extended version of Information Technology (IT) focuses on combining telecommunications to bring about swift transformations to human existence and endeavors.

Information Technology (IT) according to Fawett (1999) is a term that encompasses all forms of technology used to create, exchange and use information in its various forms (business data, voice conversation, still image, motion pictures, multimedia presentation, etc.). To fully grasp the idea behind this research, it is crucial to delve into the historical background of Information and Communication Technology.

Information Communication Technology and its forms is a general phrase used to describe a variety of gadgets and devices, both mobile and connected ones that are enabled by wireless technology. According to Olise (2007), ICTs brought hope to many Nigerians in almost every aspect of life. Today, people can now communicate ideas, messages, and information with each

other without constraints of time or distance, due to modern ICTs tools such as Personal Computers (PC), Digital Television, CDs ROMs, Microphones, DVD Players, Digital Cameras, Mobile Phones, Video Conferencing, Satellites, Flash Drives, Projectors, MP3 amongst others.

2.3 Opinion Review

2.3.1 Overview of Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism or classical Pentecostalism is a Protestant Charismatic Christian movement that emphasizes direct personal experience of God through baptism with the Holy Spirit. However the term Pentecostalism is derived from the word Pentecostal gotten from Pentecost which is a Jewish festival known as “feast of weeks”. It is an event that commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the feast of the week. It was a festival in the Old Testament that celebrates the fiftieth day after the Passover observance, while in the New Testament it was seen as the day the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples of Jesus Christ.

Pentecostalism also known as the Holiness movement emerged in the early 20th century among radical adherents of the Wesleyan Holiness movement, who were energized by Christian revivalism and expectation of the imminent second coming of Christ. In 1900, Charles Parham, an American evangelist and faith healer, began teaching that speaking in tongue was the biblical evidence of Spirit baptism. However, a number of historians, like Yan Susarsana and Allan Anderson, have documented the holiness movement’s (or Pentecostalism’s) historical roots. This movement which started in the early 20th century with the Los Angeles Azusa Street revival was spearheaded in 1906 by Williams Joseph Seymour (1870 – 1922), a former student of Charles F. Parham (1883 – 1929), one of the founding fathers of Bethel Gospel School in Topeka Kansas. The three-year-long Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles resulted in the growth of Pentecostalism throughout the United States and the rest of the world. Visitors carried the Pentecostal experience back to their home churches or felt called to the mission field. While virtually all Pentecostal denominations trace their origins to Azusa Street, the movement has had several divisions and controversies.

According to Anderson (2014), the revival in Azusa Street revival stood out as the primary hub of Pentecostalism. Today a number of people across the globe have experienced the baptism of

the Holy Spirit, which has led to the spread of Pentecostalism from Azusa Street to become a powerful force in Christendom.

2.3.2 Role of ICTs in Modern Society

Information Communication Technology (ICT) plays a pivotal role in modern society by fundamentally changing how we communicate and access information. The evolution of information and communication technology, from the telegraph to the internet, has had a profound impact on various aspects of our lives. Communication has been revolutionized by ICTs, allowing people to connect instantly across the globe. The development of telecommunication technologies has made it possible to communicate in real-time, breaking down barriers of distance and time. This has transformed how individuals, businesses, and governments interact, collaborate, and share information.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) has also revolutionized various industries, such as education, healthcare, business, and entertainment. E-learning platforms, telemedicine service, e-commerce websites, and digital streaming services are just a few examples of how ICTs have transformed these sectors, making services more accessible, efficient, and convenient. Connecting with friends, families, colleagues and business associates have been aided by ICTs and become easier with the use of technological inventions such as Yahoo Messenger, Skype, Call Conference, WhatsApp, Facebook etc. Lloyd et al cited in Omenugha (2010) asserts that since the introduction of Facebook in 2004 technology has moved it to everyday use.

Networking is another crucial role of ICTs in modern society. It involves the interconnection of devices and systems to enable communication and the sharing of resources. Through networking, ICTs facilitate the seamless exchange of information between individuals to communicate globally, and for the internet to function as a vast network of interconnected systems. Networking, enabled by ICTs, forms the backbone of our digital world, allowing for collaboration, data sharing, and the efficient transfer of information across various platforms and devices. They have reshaped how we communicate, work, learn, and entertain ourselves, playing a vital role in shaping the way we live in today's interconnected world.

2.3.3 Roles of ICTs in Corporate Organization

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) play a vital role in the daily operations of corporate organizations, particularly impacting communication. These technologies have transformed how businesses interact and share information both internally and externally, leading to increased efficiency and productivity throughout the organization. By leveraging ICT tools, companies can streamline their communication processes, foster collaboration among employees, clients, and stakeholders, and ensure seamless information sharing across various departments and teams. The integration of ICTs in corporate organizations enables swift decision-making, effective problem solving, and enhanced connectivity, ultimately contributing to the overall success and operational effectiveness of the organization on a day-to-day basis.

2.3.4 Usefulness of ICTs in Pentecostal Churches

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) which is one of the major modernizing factors has had a profound impact on how individuals live their lives, how organizations operate, and even how churches operate. Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the function of ICT in religion and how it has been integrated into religious settings.

Furthermore, it is no secret that Pentecostal churches in the 21st Century are embracing ICT and utilizing it to raise the bar for worship and spur church expansion. Christian worship services undergo a U-turn as ICT stops at nothing to provide believers with profitable services.

However, a few ways that ICTs can benefit Pentecostal churches are as follows:

1. **Enhance Communication:** The use of various ICT devices such as projector display helps to facilitate communication in Pentecostal churches to provide a platform for deaf worshippers both within and outside the physical church buildings to participate in worship and other activities thereby strengthening and expanding their mode of worship outside Sunday services.
2. **Live Streaming Services:** The use of ICT enables churches to broadcast services online, reaching a broader audience and allowing members to participate remotely.
3. **Facilities online donations:** The use of ICTs allows members to give offerings and tithes electronically, making the donation process convenient and transparent.

4. Utilizing Social Media for Outreach: using social media platforms for outreach is a powerful tool for Pentecostal churches through ICTs. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter provide churches with the ability to reach a wider audience beyond their physical congregation. By sharing sermons, inspirational messages, church events, and testimonies online, Pentecostal churches can engage with individuals who may not have otherwise been exposed to their ministry.
5. Connecting with Members Virtually: Through the use of technology like social media, live streaming of services, and online platforms, Pentecostal churches can reach their members even when they are not physically present in the church building. This virtual connection allows for continued spiritual growth, community engagement, and the sharing of important church information and events with members who may not be able to attend in person.
6. Church Management Software: ICT is a very useful tool in the management of the Church. It helps in organizing church activities, managing members' databases, tracking donations, and scheduling events efficiently.

2.3.5 Ways in Which Pentecostal Churches Deploy ICTs to Use

Information Communication Technology (ICTs) has become a significant concern in today's society that every Pentecostal assembly and leaders strive to keep up with the latest developments in this area. Thus, Pentecostal churches have begun utilizing ICTs.

Reyes-chow (2009_ <http://www.patheos.com/>) noted that, technology provides the church with the ability to conduct its ministry in a more adaptable and efficient manner. OssaiUgbah (2011) suggests it is imperative to examine the use of information communication technologies in churches as they are an integral part of the information community. However ICT has been deployed in the following ways;

1. Organizing and scheduling discussions that need to take Place in the Church Life: This means that Pastors and gospel Ministers can use ICT to assist the current generation see the face of Christ and introduce individuals to church life.
2. ICTs tools like tablets and projectors can be utilized during sermons to preach and display images or bible verses on the screens.

3. Computers can also be utilized as ICT devices to compute programming schedules, financial records and membership records. ICTs can also be deployed to invite people to church services and stream live worship sessions from a distance via social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instant Messaging apps like WhatsApp.
4. Pentecostal churches utilization of ICTs goes beyond online platforms. They also employ tools like mobile phones for outreach purposes, CD and DVD ROMs for programs recording, microphones (to improve sermons), and more.

2.4 Review of Empirical Studies

Numerous researchers have conducted comparable studies on the use of ICT and its effects on various societal sectors, such as education and religion, etc. O.E Fagunwa conducted a research on Church Growth and ICT in Nigeria and United Kingdom (UK) in 2015. The primary goal of the research was to determine which ICT applications have been effective in fostering church growth. The work states that the church is a covenant community where members are accountable for building each other up and utilizing technology for sharing information in order to spread the gospel and carry out God's divine plan. The work also mentions that for the church to expand in this new era of globalization, it is vital to embrace ICT for information sharing. Also he added that churches in this information age will not dress in the same manner as those in the industrial age because advertisements must be repeated multiple times before it sinks.

Furthermore, the work emphasizes how ICT has improved and advanced church outreach by enabling it to fulfill its holy mission without bounds and without compromising the content of the message through the inclusion of strategically chosen ICT.

The reviewed work's focus of study looks at how ICTs have impacted church growth in a few chosen churches in the United Kingdom and Nigeria.

The focus of this reviewed work is to ascertain how church leaders view the use of ICT in churches. It also seeks to compare the church communication practices and ICT usage in churches between Nigeria and the United Kingdom, based on selected studies. Ultimately, the goal is to gain fresh perspectives on the effects of increased ICT use in local rural churches.

Furthermore, the reviewed research revealed that the number of rural local churches using ICTs for communication has grown significantly more than the number of rural local churches not using ICTs. It also found that United Kingdom churches use ICTs at a higher rate than Nigerian churches. ICT use in church communication has more beneficial effects than negative ones.

The primary similarities between the examined work and the current work is that both sets of authors are interested in examining the ways in which ICTs have promoted church growth and assisted in the gospel's dissemination. It also aims to ascertain how ICTs affect local church services.

However, even with these similarities, the studies diverge in significant aspects. The reviewed work focuses on understanding church leaders views on ICT usage, whereas the current study aims to identify the obstacles encountered by specific Pentecostal churches in utilizing ICTs and assess the influence of ICTs on their worship style.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The Technological Determinism Theory

Technological determinism theory suggests that technology is the main force driving changes in society. This theory posits that technological advancement have a profound impact on shaping how societies operate and develop. It proposes that technology influences not only how we interact with each other but also how we organize ourselves socially and culturally. In essence, technological determinism asserts that changes in technology drive and shape changes in society, often leading to inevitable transformations in various aspects of life.

The theory emphasizes the importance of technology in an evolving society. Technological determinism is a reductionist theory that assumes that a society's technology progresses by following its own internal logic of efficiency, while determining the development of the social structure and cultural values. The term was coined by Thorstein Veblen (1857 – 1929), an American sociologist and economist. The theory aims to provide a point of convergence between technology and society. The technological determinism theory suggests that technology shapes and controls society and human behavior. Lievrouw and Livingstone (2006) point out that the

technological determinism theory is the belief that technologies possess a dominant influence in steering human behaviors and social change.

The theory further argues that technology is a driving force behind social structure, economic change and cultural values and that society adapts to the technology that is available to it. Dominick (2009) supports this when he states that the technological determinism theory propels historical and cultural changes, implying that advancements in technology diffusion impact all political, economic and cultural changes. Technological determinism theory asks the question; to what extent is the human life influenced by technological factors. According to Anaeto et al. (2008) posits that this theory involves using communication to transfer technological innovations from development agencies to their clients so as to create an appetite for change through raising a climate for modernization among members of the public.

Furthermore, German economist and philosopher Karl Max also believed that technological advancements are fundamental to the development of human social interactions and organizational structure, and that social, cultural, political, and economic practices in a given society are centered on technology.

For the purpose of this study, it is vital to understand the theory of technological determinism and how it pertains to Pentecostal Churches. Technology in Pentecostal assemblies affects how well messages are conveyed to the audience. Marshall McLuhan once said that “the medium is the message”. This simply illustrates that the kind of technology used to communicate would influence the mind of the receiver. The extent to which a Pentecostal church has integrated technology into its worship sessions and gospel-propagation efforts is a key determinant of its development. This is the reason why the theory is appropriate for the research.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

A research design is plan on how data will be collected analyzed and the extent to which corrections are applicable.

Survey research according to Osuala (2005:254) studies both large and small populations by selecting and studying samples chosen from the population to discover the relative incidence, distribution and interrelations among sociological and psychological variables. He further adds that surveys are used to determine what people know, what people think, what people own, what people do, what people plan to do, what people's attitudes are, people's tastes, people's beliefs and what people value.

This study aims to investigate how members view the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) for gospel message dissemination and religious activities. In addition, this research design also aims to address the where, when, how and by what means data would be created in order to deliver the solution that is being investigated. Asemah (2012:102) stated that survey design is the type that takes a sample in order to understand and make descriptive assertions about a large population. The Survey research method was chosen because it makes handling vast amounts of data from various samples possible. It is also use to gather demographic data that describes the composition of the population. It is a productive way to gather data systematically from a wide range of people. In light of this, the use of the survey method as a research design for this study will ensure that these selected Pentecostal churches will represent the entire Pentecostal churches in Benin metropolis.

3.2. Population of Study

Population is the census of all the items or subjects that possess the characteristics or that have the knowledge of the phenomenon being studied. Asemah (2012, p.138) stated that population comprises of all those objects or subjects that makes up a study. It comprises of the entire subjects that are being focused on or the age, sex, religion, ethnic group, occupation nationality, etc. that the researcher focuses on. Asika (2002, p. 39) cited in Asemah posits that population is

made up of all conceivable elements, subjects or observations, relating to a particular phenomenon of interest to a researcher. It is the group about which you want generalization to be made.

The population of this study focused on three Pentecostal churches in the Southern Region of Edo State, namely, Love World, Deeper Life Bible Church, Living Faith Church also known as Winners Chapel with a total population of 100,000 people.

3.3. Sample Size

A sample is a sub-set of the entire population, which the researcher uses to represent the entire population. Sampling is the selection of a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the large group from which they were selected. The purpose of this is to gain information about the population because owing to the largeness of the population or its geographical size, it is not economical or feasible to study the entire population.

From the total population 100,000 which is the sum of all the major churches that comprise the selected churches in Benin Metropolis, the Taro Yamane's sample size formula would be employed.

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

Given that:

$$n = \text{Sample Size}$$

$$N = \text{Total population size}$$

e = Sampling error which is the level of significant which is the accepted at .10 and 1 the standard value.

$$n = 100,000 / (1 + 100,000 (.10)^2)$$

$$n = 100,000 / (1 + 100,000 (0.01))$$

$$n = 100,000 / (1 + 1000)$$

$$n = 100,000 / 1001$$

n = 100

Therefore the sample size is 100.

3.4 Sampling Technique

This refers to the technique employed by the researcher in arriving at the sample size. Purposive Sampling was the technique used to gather data for this study. Using this technique the researcher selected respondents based on certain criteria. These criteria are level of literacy and knowledge of ICTs of the respondent.

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument utilized in this study to collect data will be questionnaires. The researcher chose questionnaire due to its ability to yield consistent answers, which is as a result of the uniformity of the questions. Because it is anonymous, it encourages respondents to answer questions freely.

The questionnaire used in this study was divided into two sections. The first section (Section A) focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as age, gender, educational qualification, occupation and so on. The second section (Section B) consists of a well-organized and close-ended questions designed to elicit specific responses that contribute to answering the research questions for the study.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Instrument

Validity is the degree to which any measurement approach or instrument succeeds in describing or quantifying what it is designed to measure. (Weiner, 2017). It is the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Validity examines the response from the same objects to ensure that the research instrument is correct and valid internally and externally. Reliability is the ability of the research instrument to consistently measure what it is intended to measure. It is the consistency of scores obtained by the same person when retest with identical test. The research instrument which was the questionnaire used in this study was properly examined with the help of the research supervisor. To assess the reliability of the research instrument of this study, the researcher conducted a pilot study, and the results of the study's reliability tests showed that the research instrument had a high level of dependability.

The reliability technique utilized in this study is the parallel forms reliability. By relating the adoption of ICT in churches to common technology practices or challenges that individuals encounter in their daily lives, it helped make the topic more accessible and relatable to a broader audience. This technique aided in bridging the gap between the technical aspects of ICT and the practical implications within the context of Pentecostal churches in Benin City.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

A descriptive analysis of the statistics which includes frequency and simple percentage were used to answer the research questions and results will be presented in tables and simple percentages.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter present the analysis of the data collected through the distribution of 100 copies of the questionnaires which were administered to worshippers in Deeper Life Bible Church, Living Faith Church and Love World. The researcher was able to retrieve 89 copies of the questionnaire. It explains the presentation of data by analyzing their responses based on specified demographic variables in terms of age, sex, level, marital status and other research questions using frequency tables and simple percentages after which general information are explained.

4.1 Data Presentation

Section A

Presentation and Analysis of Data Based on Demographics of Respondents

The data gathered from the field is presented as follows:

Table 1: Showing the age of Respondents

Age Range	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
18 – 25 years	38	42.7%
26 – 35 years	28	31.5%
36 - 45 years	13	14.6%
46 years and above	10	11.2%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 1 illustrates the age demographics of respondents. The result shows that there was much response from the age range 18-25 years with a 42.7% rate. Additionally, it appears from this table that younger respondents were more engaged in the study.

Table 2: Showing Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Male	31	34.8%
Female	58	65.2%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 2 presents the data on the gender of respondents. It shows that there are more response from the female gender with a percentage rate of 65.2%. This shows that there are more female respondent than male respondents.

Table 3: Showing the Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Single	66	74.2%
Married	19	21.3%
Widow or Widower	4	4.5%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

The data on table 3 shows the marital status of the respondents. The table reveals that there were more responses from the singles with a percentage rate of 74.2% than any other marital status.

Table 4: Showing the Qualifications of Respondents

Qualifications	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
SSCE	36	40.4%
OND/HND	17	19.1%
B.Sc/B.A	26	29.2%
M.A	7	7.9%
PGD/Ph.D	3	3.4%

Total	89	100%
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Source: Field Survey: 2024

The data on table 4 represents the qualifications of respondents. This shows that there are more response from those with SSCE qualification with a percentage rate of 40.4% than any other qualification.

Table 5: Showing the Denomination of Respondents

Denomination	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Deeper Life	21	23.6%
Living Faith	40	44.9%
Love World	28	31.5%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 5 reveals the denomination of respondents. It shows that the frequency of respondents from Living Faith church is more than other denominations with the percentage of response at 44.9%. This also implies that the Living Faith showed more interest in the demographics.

Table 6: Showing the Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency of Respondent	Percentages of Respondent
Students	43	48.3%
Traders	9	10.1%
Civil Servants	13	14.6%
Others	24	27%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 6 presents the data on the occupation of respondents. This shows that students have more frequency of response than any other occupation with a percentage rate of 48.3%. This reveals that students showed more interest in the demographics.

Section B

Presentation and Analysis of Data Based on other Items in the Questionnaire

Table 7: Respondents View on the Employment of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the Denomination

Employment of ICT	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Yes	86	96.6%
No	3	3.4%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 7 shows the total respondents of the population size with 86 (96.6%) stated that ICT is employed in their denomination while only 3 (3.4%) stated that ICT is not employed in their denomination. This implies that there are more denominations that agree to ICT.

Table 8: Respondents View on how Frequent ICT is employed in the Denomination

Frequency of ICT Usage	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Often	31	34.8%
Very Often	45	50.6%
Occasionally	11	12.4%
Never	2	2.2%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 8 shows respondents' view on how frequently ICT is used in the various denominations. This data shows that most denomination employ ICT very often in their system with a percentage rate of 50.6% compared to the frequency of others.

Table 9: Respondents View on the Apparatus of ICT Frequently used in the Denominations

Apparatus	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
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Camera/Television Network	9	10.1%
Satellite Decoder	7	7.9%
Projectors	7	7.9%
Internet-Social Media	3	3.3%
All of the Above	63	70.8%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 9 shows the data of respondents view on how frequently ICT apparatus are being used in their various denominations. This data shows that every denomination make use of all the above apparatus with a percentage rate of 70.8%.

Table 10: Respondents View on the extent to which ICT is used in the Denominations

Extent of ICT Usage	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
To a very high extent	58	65.2%
To a high extent	29	32.6%
To a very low extent	2	2.2%
To a low extent	0	0
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

According to the above data, the respondents view on the extent to which ICT is used in the denominations is majorly to a very high extent with a frequency response of 58 and a 65.2% percentage of response.

Table 11: Respondents Degree of Agreement on whether ICT has contributed in Achieving a Wonderful and Glorious Service

Degree of Agreement	Frequency of Respondent	Percentages of Respondent
Strongly agree	74	83.1%
Agree	10	11.2%

Neutral	3	3.4%
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	2	2.2%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 11 shows that more respondents strongly agree that ICT has contributed in achieving a glorious and wonderful service with frequency of respondent of 74 and percentage rate of 83.1%. This implies that ICT has a high positive impact to achieving a great service.

Table 12: Respondents Degree of Agreement on whether ICT has helped to Facilitate Evangelism and Propagate the Gospel

Degree of Agreement	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Strongly Agree	66	74.2%
Agree	17	19.1%
Neutral	4	4.5%
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	2	2.2%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 12 above implies that ICT has helped to facilitate evangelism and propagate the gospel with respondents strongly agreeing to it with a 66 frequency of response and a 74.2% response rate which is greater than the other degrees of agreement with great margin.

Table 13: Respondents Degree of Agreement on whether the Absence of ICTs has affected Mode of Worship

Degree of Agreement	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Strongly Agree	47	52.8%
Agree	22	24.7%
Neutral	9	10.1%

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	11	12.4%
Total	89	100%

Source Field Survey: 2024

Table 13 displays the data of the total respondents on how the absence of ICT has affected mode of worship. The data show that respondents strongly agree to it with a 52.8% and 47 frequency of response.

Table 14: Respondents Degree of Agreement on how ICT has improved Membership Growth

Degree of Agreement	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Strongly Agree	25	28.1%
Agree	44	49.4%
Neutral	15	16.9%
Disagree	3	3.4%
Strongly Disagree	2	2.2%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 14 represents the data of respondents' degree of agreement on how ICT has improved membership growth. The above data shows that the respondents agree with a 44 frequency of response and 49.4% of response. This implies that ICT has its impact on membership growth.

Table 15: Respondents Degree of Agreement on Whether there is Membership Increase as a Result of the Maximum Use of ICT

Degree of Agreement	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Strongly Agree	35	39.3%
Agree	32	36%
Neutral	13	14.6%

Strongly Disagree	5	5.6%
Disagree	4	4.5%
Total	89	100

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 15 shows the data of the total respondents that strongly agree to the degree of agreement on whether there is membership increase as a result of maximum use of ICT is more compared to other degree of agreement listed with a 35 frequency of response and 39.3% of response.

Table 16: Respondents Degree of Agreement on Challenges Encountered in the Use of ICT

Degree of Agreement	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Strongly Agree	11	12.4%
Agree	35	39.3%
Neutral	18	20.2%
Strongly Disagree	16	18%
Disagree	9	10.1%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 16 displays the data of respondent's degree of agreement on challenges encountered in the use of ICT. The above data shows that respondents agree to it with a 35 frequency of response and 39.3% response.

Table 17: Respondents Degree of Agreement on Whether Technical Know-How and Financial Issues are Challenges Faced in the use of ICT

Degree of Agreement	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response
Strongly Agree	29	32.6%
Agree	21	23.6%
Neutral	14	15.7%
Strongly Disagree	13	14.6%

Disagree	12	13.5%
Total	89	100%

Source: Field Survey: 2024

Table 17 shows respondents degree of agreement on whether technical know-how and financial issues are challenges faced in the use of ICT. The data above show that respondents strongly agree with a 29 frequency of response and 32.6% of response that those challenges affect the use of ICT compared to the degree of other agreements.

4.2 Discussion of Findings Based on Research Questions

This section presents the discussion of findings which is based on the answers to the research questions as generated from the questionnaires.

RQ 1: What is the Extent of ICT Usage by Selected Pentecostal Churches in their Act of Worship?

According to O.E Fagunwa, a research on church growth and ICT in Nigeria and United Kingdom(UK) in 2015 was conducted which reveals that churches in the United Kingdom are leveraging ICTs at a higher rate compared to their Nigerian counterparts. This enhanced usage of ICT facilitates richer engagement during worship services, allowing for improved dissemination of messages and greater interaction among congregants. For example, the inclusion of multimedia presentations, live streaming of services, and social media engagement can enrich the worship experience, making it more accessible and relevant to the congregation. Furthermore, technological determinism theory asks the question; to what extent is the human life influenced by technological factors? Anaeto et al (2008) posits that this theory involves using communication to transfer technological innovations from development agencies. This can be achieved in selected Pentecostal churches by the use of ICT technology which will influence their mode of worship.

Recent studies also show that Pentecostal churches have increasingly integrated various ICT tools into their worship services. For instance, multimedia projectors and sound systems are now commonplace, enhancing the overall worship experience by making sermons and songs more accessible to congregants. This contrasts with earlier research, which noted limited technological adoption, primarily due to resource constraints and a lack of awareness about the benefits of ICT in worship.

Moreover, the role of social media has expanded considerably. Churches are now leveraging platforms like Facebook and Instagram not just for announcements but also for live streaming services and interactive engagement with their congregants. This shift reflects a broader trend observed in previous studies, where the use of social media was still in its infancy. The current findings suggest that churches are now using these platforms to foster community and reach out to a wider audience, which is a significant advancement from earlier practices focused mainly on in-person interactions.

Additionally, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote worship technologies. Many churches that previously relied on traditional worship methods quickly adapted to live streaming and virtual services to maintain connections with their members. This rapid transition highlights a shift in mindset and capability that was not as pronounced in earlier research, where the emphasis was more on physical attendance rather than digital engagement.

In accordance with this research question, Tables 10 and 8 also reveals the extent to which ICT is used in the various Pentecostal Churches. Analysis based on Table 10 shows that 58 (65.2%) of worshippers in these Pentecostal Churches agreed that ICT is used to a very high extent, 29 (32.6%) believes that ICT is used to a high extent while 2 (2.2%) of the total population thinks that ICT is used to a low extent. It therefore shows that ICT usage is very high among these Pentecostal Churches.

The findings from the current study indicated that the extent of ICT usage among Pentecostal churches in Benin City has evolved significantly compared to previous research. This evolution reflects a growing recognition of the importance of technology in enhancing worship, community building, and outreach efforts. The ongoing development in ICT will likely continue to shape the future of worship practices in these churches.

RQ 2: What is the Impact of ICT on the Mode of Worship and Propagation of the Gospel by Selected Pentecostal Churches in Benin City?

With reference to chapter 2, the study reveals that the mode of worship in selected Pentecostal churches in Benin City significantly influences the propagation of the gospel. These churches have adopted dynamic and engaging worship styles that resonate with the local community, incorporating contemporary music, vibrant praise and worship sessions, and interactive preaching. This approach not only attracts a diverse congregation but also fosters a sense of belonging and participation among members. Moreover, the study indicates that the use of ICT in worship enhances the effectiveness of gospel propagation. Churches that utilize technology for live streaming services, social media outreach, and multimedia presentations are able to reach a wider audience, including those who may not physically attend services.

Furthermore, Lievrouw and Livingstone (2006) point out that the technological determinism theory is the belief that technologies possess a dominant influence in steering human behaviors. This modern approach to worship allows for a more inclusive environment, encouraging both spiritual growth and community engagement.

The integration of ICT tools such as multimedia projectors, sound systems, and digital platforms has transformed the worship experience. Many churches now utilize visual aids and music technology to enhance their services, making them more engaging and appealing to congregants. This shift marks a departure from earlier research findings, which indicated that many Pentecostal churches relied heavily on traditional worship methods, often lacking the resources or knowledge to incorporate technology effectively.

Furthermore, the use of social media and online platforms for evangelism has become increasingly common. Churches are now able to reach a broader audience beyond their physical locations by live streaming services and sharing sermons on platforms like Facebook and YouTube. This change contrasts sharply with previous studies that highlighted limited outreach efforts, primarily focused on in-person gatherings. The current research suggests that the digital presence of churches has become a vital component of their evangelistic strategies, allowing them to connect with younger generations and those who may not attend traditional services.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of ICT in worship practices. Many churches that were previously hesitant to embrace technology were forced to adapt to virtual services to maintain their congregations during lockdowns. This rapid shift has not only changed how worship is conducted but has also led to a lasting impact on church operations and community engagement. Previous research had noted a slower pace of technological adoption; however, the pandemic has acted as a catalyst for change, pushing churches to innovate and rethink their modes of worship and outreach.

In line with this research question, tables 11, 12 and 13 also provide answers to this research question. It shows that ICT has a great impact on the Mode of Worship in the selected Pentecostal Churches. It is instructive to note that 74 (83.1%) of respondent strongly agreed ICT has contributed in improving their mode of worship.

Table 12 reveals that 66 (74.2%) of the respondents spoke in an affirmative manner that ICT has helped to facilitate and propagate the gospel. The emergence of ICT has in no doubt helped to propagate the gospel. Table 13 shows 11 (12.4%) of the respondents disagreed that the absence of ICT affects their mode of worship.

The findings indicated that the impact of ICT on the mode of worship and the propagation of the gospel by Pentecostal churches in Benin City has evolved significantly. The current landscape

reflects a more dynamic and technologically integrated approach compared to previous research, highlighting the importance of digital tools in enhancing worship experiences and expanding outreach efforts. This ongoing transformation is likely to continue shaping the future of Pentecostal worship and evangelism in the region.

The findings here prove that; ICT has improved the mode of worship of believers Pentecostal Churches as well as influenced the propagation of the gospel.

RQ 3: What is the Importance of ICT Usage on Pentecostal Churches Growth and Development?

O.E Fagunwra research in previous chapter highlights the importance of ICT usage in the growth and development of Pentecostal churches, showcasing several key aspects. Firstly, the integration of technology in church activities enhances communication and outreach efforts, allowing churches to connect with a broader audience. This is particularly evident in the use of social media platforms and live streaming services, which enable churches to share their messages and engage with congregants who may not be able to attend in person. This further point out that ICT facilitates the dissemination of information and resources, making it easier for church leaders to provide spiritual guidance and support to their members. This accessibility fosters a sense of community and belonging, which is vital for church growth. The adaptation to the information age allows for repeated engagement with members, which is essential for fostering a strong church community. Furthermore, the study indicates that rural churches utilizing ICT for communication are experiencing positive outcomes, reinforcing the idea that technology plays a significant role in enhancing church outreach and mission fulfillment. This alignment with modern communication practices ultimately contributes to the overall growth and effectiveness of Pentecostal churches.

One of the primary findings is that ICT has facilitated enhanced communication within and outside the church community. Churches are now able to disseminate information quickly through social media, newsletters, and mobile applications, which has led to increased member engagement and participation. This marks a shift from earlier studies that suggested limited communication channels restricted church growth. The current research indicates that effective use of ICT tools has allowed churches to maintain a stronger connection with their congregants, fostering a sense of community even in challenging times.

Additionally, ICT has played a crucial role in financial growth for many Pentecostal churches. The introduction of online giving platforms and mobile payment options has simplified the

donation process, making it easier for members to contribute. Previous research often highlighted traditional collection methods, which could be cumbersome and deter potential contributions.

The current findings suggest that churches embracing digital finance solutions have experienced increased financial support, directly contributing to their growth and development.

Moreover, the ability to access a wealth of resources online has empowered church leaders and members alike. Many churches now utilize online training programs, webinars, and digital libraries to enhance their knowledge and skills in ministry and leadership. This contrasts with earlier research that indicated a reliance on local resources and limited access to broader educational materials. The current landscape shows that ICT has opened new avenues for personal and professional development within church communities, leading to more effective leadership and innovative ministry approaches.

According to this research, tables 14 & 15 supports this view as 25 (28.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the maximum usage of ICT in the Pentecostal Churches has brought about growth and development of the church.

The findings underscore the critical role of ICT in the growth and development of Pentecostal churches in the Benin City metropolis. The enhanced communication, improved financial systems, and access to educational resources represent a significant evolution from previous research, highlighting the transformative impact of technology on church dynamics and community engagement. This trend is likely to continue shaping the future of Pentecostal churches in the region as they adapt to an increasingly digital world.

RQ 4: What is the Challenges Faced by Selected Pentecostal Churches in the Usage of ICT?

The empirical study in previous chapter reveals several challenges faced by selected Pentecostal churches in the usage of ICT. One significant challenge is the lack of adequate infrastructure, especially in rural areas, which can hinder effective communication and technology adoption. Additionally, there may be a gap in digital literacy among church members and leaders, making it difficult to utilize ICT tools effectively. Financial constraints can also limit the ability of churches to invest in necessary technology and training. Furthermore, resistance to change within some congregations may pose a barrier to fully embracing ICT, as traditional practices remain deeply rooted. These challenges can impede the potential benefits that technology could bring to church growth and community engagement.

One major challenge is the lack of adequate infrastructure. Many Pentecostal churches struggle with inconsistent internet access and limited technological resources, which hampers their ability to fully utilize ICT tools. Previous research often acknowledged infrastructure issues but

suggested that churches were gradually overcoming these obstacles. However, the current findings indicate that while some progress has been made, many churches still face significant barriers that prevent them from leveraging technology effectively.

Another challenge is the digital divide among congregants. While younger members may be tech-savvy and eager to engage with digital platforms, older members often lack the skills or resources to participate fully in online church activities. This generational gap can create division within the church community. Earlier studies highlighted the potential for ICT to unite congregants, but the current research shows that without targeted training and support for all age groups, ICT usage can inadvertently alienate some members.

Additionally, there are concerns regarding the security and privacy of online interactions. Many churches have reported issues related to data breaches and unauthorized access to church platforms, which can undermine trust among congregants. Previous research noted similar concerns but suggested that churches were implementing security measures. The current findings, however, reveal that many churches still struggle to establish robust cybersecurity protocols, leaving them vulnerable to potential threats.

Finally, the challenge of digital content creation and management cannot be overlooked. Many churches lack the expertise to produce high-quality digital content, which can affect their online presence and engagement. Earlier studies pointed to the importance of effective content in attracting and retaining members, yet the current findings suggest that many churches are still working to develop the necessary skills and resources to create impactful digital materials.

To this question, data on table 16 & 17 shows indeed the usage of ICT is faced with various challenges. Table 16 shows that 35 (39.3%) of the total respondents accepted that technical know-how and financial issues are the major challenges faced with the usage of ICT.

While ICT presents significant opportunities for Pentecostal churches in the Benin City metropolis, the challenges they face—such as inadequate infrastructure, the digital divide, security concerns, and content management—highlight the complexities of integrating technology into church life. These challenges reflect a more nuanced understanding compared to previous research, emphasizing the need for ongoing support and resources to help churches navigate the digital landscape effectively. To this end, the usage of ICT in Pentecostal Churches though very good and necessary for growth and development is faced with various challenges.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. SUMMARY

This study looked into how Pentecostal churches in the Benin metropolis used ICTs. In order to adequately examine the influence of ICT on worship styles and how it has aided in the spread of the gospel, four research questions were developed during this process.

This was accomplished by using a 17 item questionnaire as the research instrument in a survey research methodology. The principles of the technological determination theory served as the basis for the topic.

The study uses survey research with the questionnaire as instrument of data collection.

The findings revealed the following:

1. The utilization of ICT in the act of worship is highly prevalent: In reference to Table 11 in the previous chapter, 83.1% strongly agree that the use of ICT contributes highly in the act of worship.
2. ICT plays a vital role in spreading the gospel and aiding evangelism: In Table 12 of the previous chapter, 74.2% strongly agree that ICT plays a vital role in spreading and facilitating evangelism and the gospel.
3. ICT though important is faced with challenges: Table 15 in the previous chapter, show that 39.3% of the respondents agrees that ICT is faced with challenges despite its importance.
4. The absence of ICT would in no way affect the mode of worship: According to Table 13, 52.8% of respondents strongly agree that the absence of ICT will affect the mode of worship.

5.2. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, ICT usage among Pentecostal churches in the Benin City metropolis highlights the transformative potential of technology in enhancing church activities and outreach. ICT has improved the conventional methods that we humans carry out our everyday tasks. Its speed and efficiency make it one of the most sought-after technological advancements of this generation, and it has greatly advanced other spheres of human endeavour, such as the spread of the gospel. While many churches have begun to embrace ICT tools for communication, worship, and community engagement, significant challenges remain. Issues such as inadequate infrastructure, the digital divide among congregants, security concerns, and difficulties in content creation hinder optimal usage.

Despite these obstacles, the findings indicate a growing awareness of the importance of ICT in modern church operations. With targeted support, training, and investment in technology, Pentecostal churches in the region can improve their digital presence and foster greater engagement within their communities.

This research has demonstrated how ICT has increased worship as well as the gospel's ability to be shared. It is noted, therefore, that information and communication technology; whether one agrees with this or not is what drives the modern world. It has proven to have the unmatched ability to accelerate progress in all spheres of human endeavor, including religion.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the findings of this study in the previous section, this research presents the following recommendations:

1. Small and large Pentecostal Churches should invest more in purchasing ICT gadgets to improve worship experience.
2. Due to technical challenges in using ICT, members of Pentecostal Churches should be trained on how to operate these devices.
3. Organizations like the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) and government bodies should support Pentecostal Churches in acquiring ICT devices and ensuring online message transmission at minimal or no cost.
4. Regular feedback system to gather input from the congregation on the ICT initiative should be established and improvement should be made based on their suggestions.
5. Interactive online platform for community engagement, prayer request, and sharing resources should be encouraged to enhanced connectivity.

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APPENDIX

Department of Mass Communication,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Benin,
P.M.B 1154,
Benin City,
Edo State,
Nigeria,
December 2024.

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO COMPLETE A QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a final year student of the Department of Mass Communication, University of Benin, Benin City. I am currently carrying out a research project on “**ICT Usage among Pentecostal Churches in Benin City Metropolis**”. The research is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Art Degree in Mass Communication.

This is purely an academic exercise and the answers will go a long way in contributing to the success of this study. I would most hereby appreciate your honest and unbiased response to the questions in this questionnaire. All your responses I assure would be treated in utmost confidentiality and utilized for the purpose of this work.

Thank you so much for your understanding and anticipated cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

NASAMU CHRISTIANA EMOSHIORAMHE
(Researcher)

QUESTIONNAIRE

Instruction: Please tick (any of the option that is applicable to you).

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Age: 18 – 25 () 26 – 35 () 45 and above ()
2. Gender: Male () Female ()
3. Marital Status: Single () Married () Widow or Widower ()
4. Qualification: SSCE () OND/HND () B.Sc./B.A () MA () PGD/Ph.D. ()
5. Denomination: Deeper Life Bible Church () Love World () Living Faith Church ()
6. Occupation: Student () Trader () Civil Servant () Others Specify ()

SECTION B: PSYCHOGRAPHICS DATA

1. Do you employ Information Communication Technology (ICTs) in your denomination?
 - a. Yes ()
 - b. No ()
2. How frequent are ICTs employed in your denomination?
 - a. Often ()
 - b. Very Often ()
 - c. Occasionally ()
 - d. Never ()
3. Which ICTs do you use frequently?
 - a. Camera/Television Network ()
 - b. Satellite/Decoder Technology ()
 - c. Projectors ()
 - d. Internet-Social Media ()
 - e. All of the above ()

4. What does your denomination use of ICT for?
 - a. Evangelism
 - b. Administration
 - c. Finance
 - d. Online evangelism

5. ICTs have contributed in achieving a wonderful and glorious service
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

6. The use of ICTs has helped to facilitate evangelism and propagation of the gospel
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

7. The absence of ICTs has affected your mode of worship
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

8. The usage of ICT in your denomination has improved membership growth
 - a. Strongly Agree

- b. Agree ()
 - c. Neutral ()
 - d. Disagree ()
 - e. Strongly Disagree ()
9. There is membership increase in your denomination as a result of the maximum use of ICTs for worship and evangelism
- a. Strongly Agree ()
 - b. Agree ()
 - c. Neutral ()
 - d. Disagree ()
 - e. Strongly Disagree ()
10. Your denomination encounter challenges in the use of ICTs
- a. Strongly Agree ()
 - b. Agree ()
 - c. Neutral ()
 - d. Disagree ()
 - e. Strongly Disagree ()
11. Technical know-how, financial issues are ICTs challenges peculiar to you denomination
- a. Strongly Agree ()
 - b. Agree ()
 - c. Neutral ()
 - d. Disagree ()
 - e. Strongly Disagree ()