

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTED PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES ALONG BADAGRY AXIS

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Abstract

The widespread use of social media has provided Christian churches with an opportunity to widen their reach and extend their influence to their adherents in new ways. While it is fairly established that some Pentecostal's ministries' social media presence is largely monitored by trained marketing team, not all Pentecostal ministries have chosen to pursue their social media outreach in such a polished manner. However, its proliferation has allowed the Pentecostal churches to state one truth doctrinally, but communicate another truth through its media outlets. The paper assessed the role of social media in the purposively selected indigenous Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis. Five churches were purposively selected considering the years of establishment and the founder of the churches. Phenomological and historical approaches were used for the study. While interview was carried out with the church founders, elders and workers making 25 participants for the interview, 50 self-structured survey questionnaires were administered to the members of the five (5) selected churches. The Pentecostal churches purposively selected were: The Redeemed Christian Church of God Living Waters Parish along Seme Road Badagry (Province 31), Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries Adenuga, Ibereko Badagry, Fire and Deliverance Ministries Agankameh Badagry, Foursquare Gospel Church Badagry, Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel) Torikoh Badagry. The result revealed that the role of social media cannot be over emphasized especially in the area of evangelism, easy access to both old and new members, thus communication was made much easier. The study concludes that social media has caused a shift in influence within the Pentecostal churches. It has also allowed Pentecostal churches to exert influence on their adherents with more power in their aesthetic representations than in their doctrinal constructions. The study recommends that Pentecostal church leaders should endeavour to make sure that their message in social media glorify God and not flesh. The researcher recommends that social media should continue to influence the development of communal understanding and doctrinal development instead of exalting flesh on social media.

Keywords: Indigenous, Pentecostal, Pentecostalism and Social media.

Background to the Study

The use of social media platforms for church activities has been enormously increased as the world is battling with the outbreak of the novel COVID-19 globally (Adelakun, 2020; Shereenet al.,2020). The Church is one of the largest non-governmental organization that is vastly taking advantage of the social media platforms to reach out to their audience. The use of social media is steadily changing the nature of religious communication, communities, and authority (Cheong, 2014, 2017), churches offer an interesting context in which to explore the use of social media. Unlike before, where church activities were primarily taking place in person only, now, churches most especially the Pentecostal church in Nigeria are utilizing social media platforms such Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram as a complement to the traditional way of conducting church activities. White, Tella and Ampofo (2016) aver that social media as a new phenomenon has become a tool used by many televangelists and pastors.

Meanwhile, in the context of this paper, Pentecostal churches are being referred to as the church. Pentecostalism can be said to have been born out of the holiness movement and the Welsh's Revival in the US (Gilley & Stanley, 2008). In the early 1960s the Pentecostal movement became the new evangelical awakening which reinforced the drive for personal Christianity. This personal Christianity was tagged, 'the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues' (Shelley, 2008). It is reported that from the initial spark of the movement in the 20th century, Pentecostalism swept quickly round the world through a three-year long revival meetings starting from the Azusa Street Mission in Los-Angeles. This new movement that started in 1906 have now assumed different postures and adaptations wherever it became practiced, as obvious around the world.

It has become an essential and valuable communications tool for those providing services for people in the Church." Crawford (2017) outlined the cardinal reasons why the church elects to use of social media platforms are as follows; to share the gospel of Jesus Christ on a mission through social media, to share encouragement and to share resources, insight, Scripture, to constantly engage the youth to draw them closer to God etc.

Implicitly, in the quest for the church to stay in constant communication with their members and beyond and to reach a large audience, the utilisation of social media platforms has become the order of the day (McKinney, 2014). Lewis (2016) aver that the use of social media platforms is considered an innovative way of reaching out to a majority of church members irrespective of their geographical location and the time of the day. In this regard, having church services on social media platforms has been recommended by governments, church leaders and health professionals as it is the safest and best way of reducing physical and social gathering (WHO, 2020; Shereenet *al.*,2020). Lewis (2016) added that social media platforms provide the avenue for church members to actively engage and follow church sermons, share their reactions with photos and text, asking questions, tweeting along. Similarly, social media offers much more space for congregations to actively engage with sermons by tweeting along, asking questions, sharing photos of church activities, or continuing discussions throughout the week and not just on Sundays. (Obi-Ani,Anikwenze&Isiani, 2020; Lewis, 2016).There is no doubt that there is a perceived effect of social media" on the church. Several authors have debated the pros and cons of the use of social media in the Church. Again, Obi-Ani,Anikwenze&Isiani, (2020) intimated that, the use of social media by churches has made it possible to attract the attention of the technologically savvy youths who feel reluctant to join church services. This crop of youths are usually found glued to their social media platforms and this makes it easy to redirect their attention to church services (Kaplan, 2003). While the debate continues, there is the need to examine the issue from an empirical point of view.

Social media allows churches to connect with their members, as well as people who may not attend church. Websites like Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, WhatsApp offer a free, easy way to promote church events and strengthen our community outside of Sunday services.

However, misusing social media, even if unintended, can damage Church reputation and even put the church at risk of litigation. In order to enjoy the benefits of social media while also protecting against possible misuse, the study therefore examined the impact of social media on the growth and development of the church using some selected indigenous Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis as a case study.

Statement of the Problem

Social media is one of the" most dominant forces all over the world that is sharpening the human culture as well. It is therefore not surprising that churches are using it to manage their activities. Several churches all over the world have embraced the idea of social media technology to usage in order to expand their church community and activities into the virtual world. The impact of social media on church life is generally seen as positive and cannot be over-emphasized (Butler, 2011).

However, despite its phenomenal benefits and coupled with the high acceptance of social media all over the world by people of all races, faith and religion, some church leadership still have reservation for use of social media platform due to its recurrence abuse by some church leaders and followers either for false propagation (Kgatle, 2017), false alarming (Olukoya, 2004) as well as for snatching of other denomination members through some fallacies that are not existing (Aribisala, 2012).

Social media, at first, seemed like a whole new strange world that some people decided to explore, but today, for many, it is part of everyday life to inform about places that you visit, thoughts or acts through a simple click on the computer without having any slightest idea where it originated. Porter *et al.*, 2018 acknowledges that "...these new [communication] technologies makes it extremely possible to become dependent...on them". Milani, Osualdella, and Di-Blasio, 2019 also recognize this and claim that "...it is precisely the social function of the Internet that could explain the dependence on" social media (Milani *et al.*, 2019 : 683). Users are enticed by the idea of easier and convenient ways to keep in touch with family and friends (Sponcil and Gitimu 2015), thus individuals are becoming dependent on social media to facilitate communication efforts in their relationships whether with their fellow members or with God.

As a result, social media can ultimately affect both interpersonal relationships between pastors and the church member as well as member-member relationships, when they choose to allow them to control communication in a supposedly Christian relationship. When Christian become dependent on social media to facilitate communication, there are shifts in relationship maintenance behaviours (members are no longer interested in going to church programmes, but rather through social media), misconstrued thoughts about what a true Christian membership and relationship really is , and there are emotional barriers, where there is lack of both spiritual and emotional intimacy as it was experienced by the Apostles of old. Hence, causing the quality of Christian relationship with God to deteriorate and "weak ties" in a relationship to develop.

As good as social media may seem to be, there are many unrealized disadvantages attached to it. It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate impact of social media on the growth and development of church in Nigeria with emphasis on Covid-19 pandemic period.

Brief Overview of the Origin of Indigenous Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria

The beginning and growth of the Pentecostal churches in Nigeria can be said to have occurred around the period the movement came into West African soil. According to Umuteme, 2016, he opine that the Pentecostal landscape in Nigeria can be said to be made up of: Mainstream Pentecostalism; Ethnocentric Pentecostalism; Prosperity- centred Pentecostalism; Prophetic Pentecostalism and a hybrid of two or more of the above doctrines.

However, history traces the Pentecostal movement origin in Nigeria to the 1970s as charismatic university youths began creating their own spaces for worship, modelling the Pentecostal movement in America and the indigenous African churches (Aladura Churches). As reported in Magbadelo (2004), the surge in the growth of indigenous Pentecostalism in Nigeria was occasioned by the feeling by many that the mainline churches such as Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists etc., where they had grown as children had lack the fire and ecstatic presence of the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal blend of worship and preaching emphasised the importance of local adaptation, as there are important traits in the Nigerian Pentecostal movement which shows some elements of local cultures (McLeod, 2008).

Living Faith Church Worldwide a.k.a Winner's Chapel founded by Bishop Dr. David Raman Oyedepo in the 1980s, the time when Pentecostalism had gained firm root in the history of Christianity in Nigeria particularly in South West. ((Ishola, 2008)

Furthermore, due to recurrent economic hardship that bedeviled Africa from time immemorial, study has equally shown that depressed people often seek solace in the spirit world (Koenig & Huguelet, 2009), hence, the plunge of many towards the Pentecostal experience as solutions to local

poverty and powerlessness that are common phenomena in Africa. It can be quickly said that the doctrine of Pentecostalism that a person who had been saved, baptized in the Holy Spirit and had spoken in tongues could never afterward need deliverance from a demon (Prince,1998), was attractive to Nigerians. This is because there is a strong belief in demonic attacks in Nigeria, as obvious in other African nations where there is high belief in superstition.

Attesting to the presence of the power of God was the claims of miracles, signs and wonders. However, the authenticity of such claims was questioned by many as there were evidences of many of those who claimed to have had a healing encounter often saying the illness had come back. To this, the pastors are quick to say it was their faith that failed them, as they could not remain sinless after the encounter. If the reason given is the case, then one can say it is in line with Jesus' proclamation in some of His warnings to those who He healed, as seen in John 5:14, "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."

Concept of Social Media

Social Media plays a very important role in today's life, social Media are web-based online tools that enable people discover and learn new information, share ideas, interact with new people and organizations. It has changed the way people live their life today, it has made communication much easier. It allows the exchange of user-generated content like data, pictures, and videos. Social media platforms may come in different forms such as blogs, business forums, podcasts, microblogs, photo sharing, product/service review, weblogs etc (Cheong, 2017).

Studies have shown that quite a good number of people spend 25% of their time on social networking platforms, this goes further to show how relevant and popular social media platforms have become in recent times (Duggan, 2015). The importance of social Media can be seen in several fields such as business, entertainment, food, lifestyle, welfare and a host of others. It is important to any business because as an entrepreneur you own a brand and with the help of social media networking companies keep in touch with their customers and get valuable information about them which may increase their brand value (Lewis, 2016). Most of the entrepreneur and marketers have

Importance of Social Media:

According to Adalakun, 2020, social media are very important for almost every facet of human and he states them as follow:

- Nowadays above 85% of all businesses have a dedicated social media platform as part of their marketing strategy.
- Nearly 58% of businesses that have used social media marketing for over 3 years and have reported an increase in sales during this period.
- Almost 60% of marketers are devoting the equivalent of a full work day to social media marketing for development and maintenance.

You will find over millions of users on social media sites today, sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, WeChat, and WhatsApp have made a big impact on people's life (Crawford, 2017). Not only sharing photo's and information but trades and business have also flourished. The numbers are ever rising on the social media sites, the mass number of users on each social platform clearly indicates how important is social media in today's world, it has changed the entire concept in the field of Information and Communication (Acheampong, 2014).

Significance of Social Media platform

Online Wikipedia (2019) elaborates the significance of social media platform as follow:

- **Communication:**

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Google + has made it easy to contact and message anyone just by searching for their names online. Smartphones have also played a very big

role, previously you needed to have a PC or a laptop, but now you can be in touch with all your friends and relative on the move, even managing the business on the move is very common.

- **Photo sharing:**

With the advent of Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, one can now share photos about exciting moments of our lives with friends and family members miles away from us. People were deprived of such things in the past and now they are just a click away from sharing the loving moments with their loved ones sitting miles away.

- **Awareness Campaign:**

When it comes to raising funds or helping poor, social media network is always seen as a big platform to raise millions of dollars for charity or different awareness campaign such as the Boston bombing victims, where nearly about 200,000 dollars was raised.

- **Promotion:**

Promotion on Social Media sites has gained a lot of confidence in the world of business and entertainment, people can promote their work and increase the fan base by sharing information about their events and themselves. Through this platform, they can raise funds and monetize their works.

Social media is a big platform not only for promotion or marketing but one can also reach out millions of people and share their views, through social media every person is aware of what is happening around them. But like any other theory, social media platform may also have certain disadvantages (Obi-Ani, Anikwenze & Isiani, 2020).

Objective of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of social media on the growth and development of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria using some selected indigenous Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the objective of the study, include to:

- a) identify the impact of social media on growth and development of churches among some selected Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis, Lagos State, Nigeria and
- b) investigate if proliferation of social media has any significant effects on spreading of gospel and church doctrine among the adherents.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant impact of social media on growth and development of churches among the purposively selected Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis, Lagos State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant effect of proliferation of social media on spreading of gospel and church doctrine among the adherents.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary data were utilised for the study. The literature is the secondary source, while, the primary data was collected through survey - structured questionnaires. The scope of the study was some selected indigenous Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis in Lagos state. The population of the study consists of 50 respondents comprising of the church founders, elders and workers making 25 participants for the interview and 50 self-structured survey questionnaires were administered to the members of the five (5) selected churches representing all the stakeholders for the study. The sample is quite adequate as a sample of 0.05 proportion of the population is believed to be satisfactory in making inferences (Amadi, 2005).

The five (5) selected indigenous Pentecostal churches were selected based on their level of patronage by Nigerians through the information retrieved from Corporate Affairs Commission website.

The questionnaire and the interview were specifically designed to accomplish the objectives of the study. The questionnaire is divided into 2 sections, comprising 14 questions. The first section contains information on the participants' name of the Church; sex; position held in the church and years of operating as a church. The second section comprises 10 questions which measure the impact of social media on growth and development of churches as well as the effect of proliferation of social media on spreading of gospel and church doctrine among the adherents in some selected indigenous Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis in Lagos State, Nigeria, using four points Likert scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The hypotheses were tested using Chi-square statistical method of analysis.

Below is a list of notable churches in Nigeria. It also contains the year of establishment, founder and the current general overseer of the congregation.

Church name	Founder	Current senior pastor/general overseer	Date established	Location	Population
Redeemed Christian Church of God	Rev Josiah Akindayomi	Pastor Enoch Adeboye	1952	Lagos State	2.5 million
Living Faith Church Worldwide	David Oyedepo	David Oyedepo	1981	Ota, Ogun	1.5 million
Foursquare Gospel Church District Headquarters, Badagry. Ekundayo Street opposite Mobil Fuel station.	Rev G.T. Oluyemi	William F. Kumuyi	1982	Lagos State	500,00
Revival Fire of the End Time Ministries (REFEM)	Late Pastor (Mrs) Deborah Oluwatoyin Akinkugbe, (aka Mummy Fire)	Pastor Akinola Akinkugba	2007		200,000
Mountain of Fire and Miracles	Dr. Daniel Olukoya	Dr D.K Olukoya	1989	Yaba	990,000

Source: Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) website

Table 1: List of Indigenous Pentecostal Churches Operating Along Badagry Axis, Lagos State

S/N	Name of the Indigenous Pentecostal Churches	Founder	Pastor-in-charge	Age of the Interviewee	Names of Deaconesses, Deacons and Elders interviewed	Age	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
1.	Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Living Water Parish, Badagry	Pa Josiah Akindayomi	Pst Ayo Umoh	50 years old	Deac. Titilayo Olorunniyo	57	Church premises	12 th Dec. 2021
2.	Living Faith Church Worldwide	Bishop Dr. David Raman Oyedepo	Pastor Gideon Oyedepo	61 year old	Mrs Idowu Kayode	52	Church premises	19 th Dec. 2021
3.	Foursquare Gospel Church District Headquarters, Badagry. Ekundayo Street opposite Mobil Fuel station.	Rev G.T. Oluyemi	Dr.Rev Jacob N Patinvo	57 years old	Deaconess Bosede Semande Olude,	58	Church premises	14 th Nov. 2021
4.	Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries (MFM), Adenuga Branch, Badagry, Lagos State	Dr D.K Olukoya	Pst Timothy Ola Adekeye	52 year old	Mrs Olufunke Adepoju	45	Church premises	21 st Nov. 2021
5.	Revival Fire of the End Time Ministries (REFEM)	Late Pastor (Mrs) Deborah Oluwatoyin Akinkugbe, (aka Mummy	Pastor Akinola Akinkugbe	70 years old	Pst Olanrewaju Folorunsho	50		7 th Nov. 2021

		Fire)						
	Total							

Source: - Researcher's Field Report as at 2021 and January 2022

From the above table 1, it shows that the five purposively selected Pentecostal churches along Badagry expressway were actually indigenous, because they were all founded by Nigerian Pastors and the age of the respective pastors-in-charge as well their names were indicated including where the interview took place and the dates when the interview were conducted in no particular order. Meanwhile, other participants interviewed included elders, deacons and deaconesses in the purposively selected indigenous Pentecostal churches

Table 2: Distribution Analysis of Respondents Personal Data According to Gender (n=50)

Sex	No of Respondent	Percentage
Male	32	64%
Female	18	36%
Total	50	100%

Source: - Researcher's Field Report as at November 2021\January 2022

From the above table 2 shows the percentage of the result from the respondent where 32 (64%) respondents were male while the remaining 18 (36%) respondents were female. This shows that number of male respondents is more than female respondents.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Respondent According to the Position Held in the Church (n=50)

Qualification	No of Respondent	Percentage (%)
Founder	5	10
Elders	15	30
Workers	30	60
Total	50	100%

The table above revealed the positions that the participants held in the selected churches for the study. 5 (10%) respondents of the study were founders of the indigenous Pentecostal churches, 15 (30%) respondents were elders of the selected churches, while 30 (60%) respondents were workers in the selected indigenous Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis.

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Churches According to Years of Operations (n=50)

S/N	Years of Experience	No.	Percentage
1.	0-5 years	1	20
2.	6-10 years	2	40
3.	11 years and Above	2	40
Total		5	100%

The above table shows the percentage distribution of the selected churches according to their years of operation are of the following distribution: 1 – 5 years (20%), 6 years – 10 years (40%) and 11 years and above (40%) of the selected indigenous pentecostal churches within the study area.

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Church (n=50)

S/N	Name of the Church	No of respondent	Percentage of the Respondent (%)
1.	Foursquare Gospel Church District Headquarters Badagry	10	20
2.	Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) Living Waters, Seme road Badagry.	10	20
3.	Fire and Deliverance Ministries Agankameh Badagry.	10	20
4.	Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (MFM) Adenuga Badagry	10	20
5.	Living Faith Church (Winner Chapel) Torikoh Badagry	10	20
	Total	50	100%

Table 5 revealed that the five selected indigenous Pentecostal churches with equal number of participants for each church within the study area.

Hypothesis I

There is no significant impact of social media on growth and development of churches among the purposively selected Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Table 6: Respondents' Response With Remarks for Hypothesis I

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	Calculated X ²	D.F	Critical Val.	Remark
5.	Social media is a good platform to announce church forthcoming programmes.	80	50	15	15	238.13	12	5.226	Rejected
6.	Church programmes can be viewed by all the adherents and be spiritually blessed.	60	45	30	25				
7.	Social media can be used as an image maker for intending worshippers.	70	70	10	10				
8.	Social media platforms can be harnessed to	35	40	45	40				

	employ both the adherents and online followers to contribute financially to the development of the Church								
9..	Social media gives recognition to churches with numerous followership based on their online congregation sizes.	40	20			50	50		

Decision Rule

Table above indicates that the calculated Chi-square of 238.13 is significantly greater than the table value of 5.226 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. The null hypothesis I which states that “there is no significant impact of social media on growth and development of churches among the selected Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis, Lagos State, Nigeria” was therefore rejected. The alternative hypothesis which states that “there is significant impact of social media on the growth and development of churches among some selected Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis, Lagos State, Nigeria” was accepted.

Hypothesis II

There is no significant effect of proliferation of social media on the spreading of the gospel and church doctrine among the adherents.

Table 6: Respondents’ Response With Remarks for Hypothesis II

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	Calculated X ²	D.F	Critical Val.	Remark
10	Widespread use of social media has provided Christian churches with an opportunity to widen their reach and extend their influence to their adherents in new ways	70	40	60	30				
11	Proliferation of social media has made it possible for online evangelism to online users.	80	40	50	30	165.18	12		Rejected
12	Proliferation of social media enhances increase in church population by the count of the online followers.	60	30	45	45			5.226	
13	Proliferation of social media enables adherents to interact with the ministry and its messages directly without their physical	50	60	55	30				

	presence.								
14	Proliferation of social media enables gospel to be preached through all nations.	80	40	45	35				

Decision Rule

From the table above, it is observed that the calculated Chi-square of 165.18 is significantly greater than the table value of 5.226 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. The null hypothesis which states that “there is no significant effect of proliferation of social media on spreading of the gospel and church doctrine among the adherents” was rejected while the alternate hypothesis which states that “there is significant effect of proliferation of social media on spreading of gospel and church doctrine among the adherents” was accepted.

Research Findings:

From the responses as shown in Table 5, the first null hypothesis was rejected calculated value (238.13) greater than the critical table (5.226) at significant level of 0.05 which indicates that there is significant impact of social media on growth and development of churches among some selected Pentecostal churches along Badagry axis. The findings supported the findings of a study by Burnett (2013) in which it was revealed that social media was perceived as useful to the church because it made announcements very cheap and easy. The findings also supported those of Badmos (2014), which pointed out that the use of social media had enabled churches to reach a large number of their members as well as the public as a whole.

Similarly, in the interview conducted with the founders and elders of the selected churches, It can be deduced that social media performs a key role in creating awareness about the churches as the majority agreed and strongly agreed. In response to the statement “we have been able to reach out to more church members using social media”, 20 (80%) interviewees agreed to the statement. On the flipside, only 5 (20%) interviewees were opposed to the statement during the interview conducted. This indicates that indeed, social media platforms played a prominent role in public awareness and education in the churches most especially during the peak of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

Furthermore, majority of the interviewee 23 (92%) of the participants expressed their satisfaction about social media platforms keeping the church members updated on information on the church, while only 2 (8%) of them did not believe that they were well informed through social media about church activities during the pandemic period.

Again, it is evidenced from Table 6 that a sizeable the null hypothesis was rejected due to the fact that calculated Chi-square of 165.18 is significantly greater than the table value of 5.226 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 12 which indicates that there is significant effect of proliferation of social media on spreading of gospel and church doctrine among the adherents

Similar findings were found in the works of Donath and Boyd (2004); Peter and Schouten (2006); Vosko (2011); Aduloju *et al.* (2009);Gould (2013); Lacy (2021); Akanbi and Adeyeye (2011) and Asamoah-Gyadu (2007).The findings of the study also pointed to a high level of the use of social media in the performance of church-related activities and the situation that enables every online member to voice their opinion about any issue as regards church and also use the medium to evangelize to thousands of follower of the account with one button.

There are other notable deficiencies in the ministries’ presence on social media. One example is the confusion surrounding the various accounts claiming to be Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries is something that the official organization admits and had to publicly denounce some of these accounts that claims to be for the church, while some of them were actually broadcasting the

events and activities of the church they represent, some were busy using it for profit making by selling some prayer booklets that were not originally approved by the church leadership.

This leaves some ambiguity as to whether the original MFM social media platforms or another account was a valid platform of the church or if such platforms are discouraged by General Overseer of the Church (MFM Ministries); Dr D.K. Olukoya.

Concerning The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), one of the negative effects of social media that happened on their social media pages, was the ease that critics of major churches can gain an audience. Some disgruntled members who were not satisfied with some of their doctrine on dressing were able to quickly find themselves and labeled themselves as RCCG classical where church members can dress in a worldly way without any check from the leaders of the church. This group laid more emphasis on material wealth, but for the quick intervention of the G.O of RCCG; Pastor E.A. Adeboye, this could have led to unimaginable thing.

Finally, social media ensures that church members' voices are heard and recognized "in the Aspect of evangelism to the virtual members using the church account comment page where they were able to contribute to the church positions as well as voice their own opinion and preach to non-members who just follow the Church social media accounts.

Conclusions

From the findings of the study, it can be observed that, social media platforms have become invaluable tools for churches to survive in this technological age. As the world has witnessed a great shock due to the novel COVID-19, the church was able to quickly shift to social media platforms in order to carry out its activities so as to catch up with their adherents and not be left behind. It was observed that every church member possesses some requisite skills needed to follow church activities via social media platforms. The study also arrived that while some churches were able to use the social media for the purpose of evangelism, some were using it to propagate their doctrine and promote church ideas. This move by the churches help them to keep pace with updates on social media use. The instrumental contribution of social media to the churches was evident as the study revealed positively perceived usefulness of the social media platforms and this can also be attributed to the fact that almost every member had access to android phones to follow their respective church activities.

The Pastors and most members have stop using the bible this is one of the disadvantages of the social media some people will stay on the phone 24/7 without paying attention to some spiritual matters this was the comment made by Pastor Akinola of REFEM.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is need for church leadership to be trained in effective use of social media and to harness it positively for the growth and development of the church
2. Church leadership of the respective indigenous Pentecostal churches needs to provide adequate infrastructure needed to boost their effectiveness of social media use.
3. Church workers still need adequate training to handle those ICT infrastructure to be put in place for social media platforms.
4. There is need for continuous education on policies regarding the use of social media platforms by the government to both the church leaders and the members to be abided by them and as well, emphasizing its importance to the church and not to use it as avenue to promote division or unbiblical doctrines to the adherents.
5. It is the responsibility of the relevant government agencies to properly monitor the use of these social media platforms to ensure ethical compliance.

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