

# From Pulpit to Platform: Christians' Attitudes and Perceptions on Faith-Based Social Media Use in South-East Nigeria

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**Abstract-** *The digital revolution is reshaping religious experiences in Southeast Nigeria, particularly through faith-based social media platforms. These platforms have significantly influenced how Christians interact with their faith, engage in church activities, and maintain communication within their religious communities. This study investigated the attitudes and perceptions of Christians in the South-east region regarding the use of social media platforms for religious purposes. Using the survey research design, data was collected from 375 valid respondents through a structured questionnaire. Findings revealed a high level of usage and positive perception of faith-based social media handles. Respondents strongly endorsed online church services, digital donations, and virtual prayer meetings, with mean scores exceeding 4.00 on a 5-point scale. Additionally, faith-based social media handles were credited with enhancing prayer habits, Bible reading, evangelism, and communication with pastors, while also reducing religious-based segregation. The findings also revealed that the respondents do not have a positive attitude towards traditional faith-based activities after usage of faith-based social media handles and but show favourable attitude towards the use of faith-based social media handles. Overall, the study concludes that social media platforms have become vital to modern Christian practices in Southeast Nigeria, promoting greater participation, spiritual growth, and convenience in worship.*

**Indexed Terms-** *Faith-based, Social media, Christian attitudes, digital evangelism, online church, religious communication.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, the emergence and proliferation of social media have revolutionized communication globally, affecting how individuals interact, share information, and express beliefs, including religious ones. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), WhatsApp, and YouTube have become integral to religious practice and evangelism, creating what scholars describe as the "digital religion" phenomenon (Gambo & Özad, 2020).

According to Kasule (2013), social media plays a very important role in the life of the church and the enculturation of the gospel. The natural advantage of the use of social media is that they are fast, furious, and infectious. It is an all-inclusive, non-restrictive, non-hierarchical and non-pretentious way of spreading the gospel. Within this context, faith-based social media use has become a significant domain where religious messages are disseminated, communities are built, and spiritual experiences are mediated, especially among Christian communities.

In Nigeria, Christianity remains one of the dominant religions, with a significant presence in the South-east region, comprising states such as Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. Historically, the pulpit has served as the traditional platform for Christian communication, worship, and doctrine dissemination. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital turn in religious practice globally, pushing churches to adopt live streaming and virtual worship out of necessity. In Nigeria, this shift not only transformed how religious services were conducted but also influenced

believers' attitudes toward digital faith engagement (Kayode-Adedeji et al., 2024).

However, recent digital trends indicate a migration of Christian practices from the physical pulpit to virtual platforms, where sermons, prayers, worship sessions, and doctrinal teachings are streamed or shared through social media (Ibrahim, 2022).

This digital transformation presents opportunities and challenges for both clergy and laity. On one hand, social media offers increased access to religious content, fosters connectivity across congregational and geographical boundaries, and facilitates the spread of evangelical messages. On the other hand, it raises concerns about theological authenticity, spiritual commodification, and the dilution of sacred traditions (Frahm-Arp, 2024). Moreover, the use of social media for faith-based purposes may be influenced by individual attitudes, cultural norms, and socio-religious contexts, which are particularly nuanced in the Nigerian setting (Anameje, 2023). Attitudes toward faith-based social media use can be shaped by various factors, including age, gender, denominational affiliation, digital literacy, and theological orientation (Uzuegbunam, 2019). For instance, Pentecostal churches in Nigeria are often more receptive to digital evangelism, integrating multimedia into worship and leveraging online platforms for outreach. In contrast, mainline denominations may adopt more conservative approaches due to doctrinal constraints or institutional inertia (Munshaw, 2020).

As churches continue to navigate the post-pandemic digital landscape, understanding the perceptions and motivations behind faith-based social media use becomes increasingly relevant hence the bedrock for this study.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Due to the explosion of online technologies and social media, religious institutions across the world are finding more and more creative ways to connect with their members and reach out to new audiences as there has been a tremendous shift from traditional pulpits to platforms on social media for the dissemination of faith-based Christian activities.

Several studies have examined the intersection of religion and digital media in Western contexts, focusing on how digital platforms are used for outreach, pastoral care, and religious identity formation. However, there remains a dearth of context-specific research in Africa, especially in South-east Nigeria, where Christianity intersects with indigenous beliefs, communal values, and local ecclesiastical structures. Understanding how Christians in this region perceive and engage with faith-based social media is crucial for grasping the broader implications of digital religiosity.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the specific objectives guiding the study;

- i. Determine the level to which Christians in South-east Nigeria use the faith-based social media handles for Christian activities;
- ii. Find out the perception of Christians in South-east Nigeria on the use of faith-based social media handles for Christian activities;
- iii. Examine the attitude of Christians in the South-east Nigeria towards traditional Christian activities after usage of faith-based social media handles;

## IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, concepts that featured in this study were reviewed based on their relevance to the study. The Concept of Social media

According to Ekeanyanwu and Kalyango (2013), social media as media which is used for social interaction online and uses highly accessible publishing techniques. Eventually, social media is about users communicating with other users; there is nothing inherently good or bad about it. In spite of personal feelings about social media, it is worth considering that this highly popular way of sharing information both globally and locally is of enormous value.

The Social Media is a subset of new media. It is a new way of passing developmental information to people. Social Media is the social interaction amongst people, especially the Christians in which

they create, share or exchange information, opinions and thoughts in virtual populations and networks. They rely on mobile and web-based technologies to develop hugely interactive platforms through which women communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content.

The Social Media and its platforms have had enormous impact on the scope and perspective of information dissemination across the world as people can now receive information on public issues with available new media platforms, thereby increasing the volume of data being sent out to the general public. Hudson and Oboh (2012) observe that this new media is deeply involved in shaping public opinion, perception and an awareness of events in the world as they unfold. This means that the social media has been endowed with tremendous responsibility because it has such a powerful voice within any given democratic society. By implication, the social media is also instrumental in carrying out religious activities.

- Faith-Based Communication in the Digital Age

The intersection between religion and digital technology has transformed traditional modes of religious communication. Faith-based communication now transcends the confines of the pulpit and moves into online platforms where clergy and laity engage in spiritual discourse. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube are increasingly utilized by Christian denominations to evangelize, build community, and share religious content (Lundby & Evolvi, 2021).

Social media has influenced the religious handles on faith-based activities of Christians in Nigeria and beyond, its introduction has played some significant roles on communication, administrations, teaching, listening and learning in both Nigeria and other countries. This explosion of social media use currently incorporates billions of people (Bowman 2019), providing an enormous potential for creating change within society. Consequently, many people have successfully used social media successfully as a tool to promote societal change, even within the context of religious causes (Deaton 2015; Lim 2017). Employing this means of impact, Christians have used this growing platform of social media for

sharing their faith in response to the biblical mandate to do so.

- Christianity and Faith-Based Activities

Its adherents, known as Christians, believe that Jesus is the Christ, who's coming as the messiah was prophesied in the Hebrew Bible, called the Old Testament in Christianity, and chronicled in the New Testament. There are more than 2.4 billion Christians worldwide, which makes Christianity the largest religion in the world, Pew Research Center (2018).

Christianity actually has lots of denominations but is often divided into three main branches, which are Catholicism, Orthodox, and Protestantism. Sometimes the religion is divided even further into 5 main branches which are the Church of the East, Oriental Orthodoxy, Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Protestantism. Christians believe in God the Father, Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit, the death, descent into hell, resurrection and ascension of Christ, the holiness of the Church and the communion of saints. It also accepts Christ's second coming, the Day of Judgment and salvation of the faithful.

There is no doubt that Christianity has had a huge part in shaping the world into what we know it as today. Many of the laws in Western society has origins in the Bible, and much of the moral beliefs of right or wrong also has origins from the teachings of Jesus, this also holds true for many Atheists growing up in Christian countries.

- Faith-based activities include the following

- Prayer and meditation: this serves as a practice for spiritual growth and connection with God. Both promote spiritual renewal, intimacy with God and a commitment to living according to Christian faith.
- Bible study and reflection: Group or individual study of the Bible to deepen understanding of scripture and its application to life
- Worship services and hymns: Regular gatherings for communal worship, including singing, prayer and sermons.

- Evangelism and outreach programs: Acts of programs, services and evangelism to share the Christian faith and meet community needs.
- Fellowship and community Gatherings: social gathering that promote community among church members, such as potlucks, picnics or game nights.
- Retreats and conferences: Events for spiritual rejuvenation, learning, teaching and connection with others.
- Communion and sacraments: Observance of key rituals such as baptism and communion, which hold significant spiritual meaning.
- Christian counseling and mentorship: Christian guide and support of individuals seeking spiritual growth, emotional healing or guidance through personal challenges. This mentorship often emphasizes prayers, Bible study and the application of Christian values in everyday life.
- Discipleship and accountability group: the goals here are practicing faith, getting to know Christ and encouraging others to grow in their faith. Both work hand in hand to build community within the church, promote maturity and strengthen faith.
- Service projects and mission trips: it is an organized effort by an individual or groups within the church community, aimed at helping others in need. Both reflect the Christian commitment to love, serve and spread the message of faith through action and community engagement.
- Serving others through volunteer work: is a vital aspect of living out one's faith, illustrating the values of service, love and community that are core Christianity.

These activities play an essential role in fostering community, spiritual growth and outreach within the Christian faith.

#### • Attitudes and Perceptions

Attitudes refer to individuals' predispositions to respond favorably or unfavorably to certain ideas or practices, while perceptions denote the cognitive interpretation of such ideas (Ajzen, 2020). In the context of social media use for religious purposes, Christians' attitudes and perceptions are shaped by cultural, theological, and technological factors. Some

perceive social media as a valuable tool for spreading the Gospel, while others view it as secular and potentially harmful to spiritual authenticity (Tsuria, 2021).

## V. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Empirical studies reveal that faith-based social media use is growing globally. A Pew Research Center (2018) report indicates that over 40% of Americans who use social media follow religious leaders or organizations. In Kenya and Ghana, faith influencers have a significant online presence, promoting religious content that resonates with youth (Ndereba, 2021).

In a study by Brubaker & Haigh (2017) titled *The Religious Facebook Experience: Uses and Gratifications of Faith-Based Content*, this study explores why Christians use Facebook for religious purposes and the needs engaging with religious content on Facebook gratifies. This study used survey method to answer the two proposed research questions which includes what are the primary motivations and uses for using Facebook for religious purposes and Does the frequency with which someone engages with spiritual information, the intensity of religious Facebook use, the degree to which someone is holy, or other demographic characteristics predict the use of Facebook for religious purposes? The findings revealed increased in religious activities arising from virtual interactions in the forms of responses, questions and answers relating to topical issues on religion which forms the themes of the Facebook content. Also some of the knowledge and information gathered from the Facebook contents are used outside Facebook for the furtherance of religions activities. In relation to the present study, the researcher would understand how the knowledge and experience from faith-based social media handles affected the attitude to Christian activities.

Similar studies also indicate an increasing acceptance of digital media for religious engagement. Kamau et al. (2019) found that digital evangelism, especially on Facebook and WhatsApp, enhances spiritual growth and participation among young Christians. However, some religious leaders express concern over misinformation, doctrinal compromise, and

distraction (Hasty, 2020). Kamau et al. (2019) observed that social media has redefined religious practices among urban Christians in Enugu and Anambra States. These platforms serve not only as channels for preaching but also for communal prayer, fundraising, and faith testimonies. Yet, the study found disparities in attitudes based on age, denomination, and level of digital literacy.

According to the study carried out by Pittman (2022), Communication between religious organizations and their followers has blossomed on social media. Many churches have turned to social networks to increase their outreach to spread their teachings. Just under half of those surveyed say social media is the most effective method of communication, while about 25% prefer the more traditional method knocking on doors, Pittman (2022). It recommended consistent posting which is crucial to social media success, but this task often falls to an unpaid volunteer (especially at smaller churches). It also suggested some guidance for the staff who runs the social media pages. The use Facebook has increased religious activities because some members update social media handles (Facebook) steadily. This keeps members and non – members posted with the activities of religious groups. Hence the blossoming of communication between religions organizations and their members has increased their outreach to spread their teachings.

- Gaps in Literature

Despite growing interest, few studies focus specifically on Christians' attitudes and perceptions within the socio-cultural and religious landscape of South-east Nigeria. More empirical insight is needed into how doctrinal beliefs, generational differences, and media exposure influence attitudes toward faith-based digital engagement.

## VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) served as the theoretical framework for the study.

- Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Developed by Davis, TAM posits that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use predict users'

attitudes toward technology adoption. In the context of faith-based social media use, this theory helps explain why some Christians in South-east Nigeria are more receptive to digital platforms than others. If believers perceive social media as useful for spiritual edification and easy to navigate, they are more likely to adopt it for religious purposes (Camilleri & Falzon, 2020).

- Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

UGT suggests that individuals actively seek media that satisfy specific needs—informational, social, entertainment, or spiritual. Christians may use social media to meet spiritual needs, such as virtual worship, religious learning, and prayer groups. This theory is useful in analyzing the motivations behind faith-based social media engagement in a region with strong communal religious practices (Camilleri & Falzon, 2020).

Therefore, this study seeks to explore the attitudes and perceptions of Christians in South-east Nigeria toward the use of social media for faith-based activities. By examining this phenomenon within a socio-cultural and theological framework, the research aims to contribute to the growing discourse on digital religion in Africa and offer insights for religious leaders, media scholars, and policymakers interested in the future of faith in a digital age.

## VII. METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was adopted for this study. The sample size for the survey was 400. This was calculated using the Taro Yamani formula for sample size calculation from a population of 21,955,400. The multi-stage sampling technique was used. First the researcher used Cluster sampling to group the respondents according to the five states that makes up the South-east geopolitical zone in Nigeria; Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. Next the non-proportionate sampling was used to select the state capitals and they include: Umuahia, Awka, Abakaliki, Enugu and Owerri, the reason for choosing the state capital is based on the fact that most mega churches and good number of churches are found in state capital with the possibility of seeing Christians who are literate and who are familiar with social media environment. From each

of the five state capitals, two local government areas in the urban area were purposively selected. They are Umuahia North and Umuahia South, Awka North and Awka South, Abakaliki and Izzi, Enugu East and Enugu South, Owerri Municipal and Owerri West.

Lastly, the researcher selected two communities in each of the two LGA's in the state capitals, making it 20 communities. The reason for choosing these communities is for manageability. The researcher made use of questionnaires. It was close-ended in structure with question items in 5 point Likert scale. The data gathered were presented in tables and the frequency of occurrence was calculated using simple percentage statistical method. Mean scores that are above 3.0 are considered significant by the study

while Mean scores below 3.0 are considered to be insignificant.

#### VIII. DATA PRESENTATION

Out of 400 questionnaires administered, 375 (94%) were valid for analysis. Simple percentages and Weighted Mean Scores (WMS) were used to analyze responses, with a cut-off point of 3.00 indicating significance. Research Question 1: To what extent do Christians in South-east Nigeria use Faith-based social media handles for Christian activities?

Table 1: Respondents' use of Faith-based handles for Christian activities.

Indices	Rating <i>x</i>	SA 5	A 4	FA 3	D 2	SD 1	Total	<i>xi</i>
I use Faith-based social media handles for my bible reading.	<i>f</i>	226	104	24	14	7	375	4.40
	<i>fx</i>	1130	416	72	28	7	1653	Accepted
	%	60	28	6	4	2	100	88%
I use Faith-based social media handles to keep up with prayer meetings.	<i>f</i>	231	120	7	14	3	375	4.5
	<i>fx</i>	1155	480	21	28	3	1687	Accepted
	%	61	32	2	4	1	100	90%
I use Faith-based social media handles to give my tithe and offerings.	<i>f</i>	124	186	52	9	4	375	4.11
	<i>fx</i>	620	744	156	18	4	1542	Accepted
	%	33	50	14	2	1	100	82%
I use Faith-based social media handles to source information about church activities/programmes.	<i>f</i>	303	72	0	0	0	375	4.80
	<i>fx</i>	1515	288	0	0	0	1803	Accepted
	%	81	19	0	0	0	100	96%

Result from Table 1 demonstrates strong usage of these platforms by respondents. Most notably, 96% use them for sourcing information about church activities (mean = 4.80), while 90% use them for prayer meetings and 88% for Bible reading. Additionally, 82% use them for giving offerings and

tithe (mean = 4.11), suggesting widespread functional adoption.

Research Question 2: What is the perception of Christians in South-east Nigeria on the use of faith-based social media handles for Christian activities?

Table 2: Perception on the use of faith-based social media handles for Christian activities.

Indices	Rating $x$	SA 5	A 4	FA 3	D 2	SD 1	Total	$xi$
It is easier to participate and follow up on church programmes online.	$f$	124	186	52	9	4	375	4.11 Accepted 82%
	$fx$	620	744	156	18	4	1542	
	%	33	50	14	2	1	100	
Faith-based handles have made it easier to donate to church projects and programmes anonymously.	$f$	231	120	7	14	3	375	4.40 Accepted 88%
	$fx$	1155	480	21	28	3	1687	
	%	61	32	2	4	1	100	
Faith-based handles enable easy and fast communication with pastors and ministers for religious matters.	$f$	135	172	23	31	14	375	4.02 Accepted 80%
	$fx$	675	688	69	62	14	1508	
	%	36	46	6	8	4	100	
Faith-based media handles have closed the gap of religious-based segregation.	$f$	124	186	32	25	8	375	4.04 Accepted 81%
	$fx$	620	744	96	50	8	1518	
	%	33	50	8	7	2	100	

In terms of perceptions on the use of faith-based social media platforms for Christian activities, the responses indicated strong positive acceptance. As shown in Table 2, respondents agreed that it is easier to follow and participate in church programs online (WMS = 4.11), and 82% agreed that faith-based handles facilitate anonymous donations (WMS = 4.40). Moreover, 80% believed these platforms enhance communication with pastors (WMS = 4.02),

and 81% agreed they help reduce religious segregation (WMS = 4.04).

Research Question Three: What is the attitude of Christians in South-east Nigeria towards traditional Christian

activities after usage of faith-based social media handles?

Table 3: Respondents' attitude towards traditional Christian activities

Indices	Rating $x$	SA 5	A 4	FA 3	D 2	SD 1	Total	$xi$
I prefer joining church services online to physical services.	$f$	135	172	23	31	14	375	4.02 Accepted 80%
	$fx$	675	688	69	62	14	1508	
	%	36	46	6	8	4	100	
Prayer meetings and unit meetings are more convenient online than physically.	$f$	226	104	24	14	7	375	4.40 Accepted 88%
	$fx$	1130	416	72	28	7	1653	
	%	60	28	6	4	2	100	
It is easier to address religious issues and follow-up religious discussions online than physically.	$f$	87	172	23	72	21	375	3.61 Accepted 72%
	$fx$	435	688	69	144	21	1357	
	%	23	46	6	19	6	100	

There is a higher level of attendance at church programmes online than physically.	<i>f</i>	189	131	34	14	7	375	4.3 Accepted 86%
	<i>fx</i>	945	524	102	28	7	1606	
	%	50	35	9	4	2	100	

Table 3 shows that many respondents have favorable attitudes toward engaging in traditional Christian activities via digital platforms. Notably, 80% preferred attending church services online over physical gatherings (WMS = 4.02), and 88% found online prayer and unit meetings more convenient (WMS = 4.40). Additionally, 72% stated that online platforms make it easier to address and follow up on religious issues (WMS = 3.61), and 86% observed higher attendance in online church programs compared to physical ones (WMS = 4.30).

## VII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated Christians' attitudes and perceptions toward the use of faith-based social media platforms in South-east Nigeria.

Research Question 1: To what extent do Christians in South-east Nigeria use Faith-based social media handles for Christian activities?

Analysis of data showed that the respondents had a high level of usage of faith-based social media handles for Christian activities. This is proven as, 88% of respondents are make use of faith-based social media handles for listening and reading the word of God; 90% make use of faith-based social media handles for prayers and prayer meetings; 82% of the respondents use faith-based handles for the giving of offerings and tithes; and lastly, 96% of the respondents make use of faith-based social media handles to source information about church activities and programmes. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube are increasingly utilized by Christian denominations to evangelize, build community, and share religious content (Lundby & Evolvi, 2021).

The increased use of digital means for tithing and offering suggests an evolving theology of giving and trust in virtual ecclesiastical structures. As Afolabi and Babatunde (2021) note, the digitalisation of offertory practices represents both technological

adaptation and a deeper integration of faith and finance within mobile-mediated religious life. This finding is supported by the Technological Acceptance theory which helps explain why some Christians in South-east Nigeria are more receptive to digital platforms than others. If believers perceive social media as useful for spiritual edification and easy to navigate, they are more likely to adopt it for religious purposes (Camilleri & Falzon, 2020). The findings have both practical and theological implications. They reveal a new landscape where digital faith expressions complement traditional worship. For Southeast Nigerian Christians, this digital transformation is not merely an adaptation to technological trends but a reimagination of sacred spaces and spiritual connectivity. Faith is no longer confined to physical pews but flows across pixels and data streams.

Research Question Two: What is the perception of Christians in South-east Nigeria on the use of faith-based social media handles for Christian activities?

Analysis of the data showed a strong positive perception of faith-based social media. It was revealed that Christians in South-east Nigeria had a favourable perception about the use of faith-based social media handles for Christian activities. It was revealed the perception of 82% of the respondents' that social media has made it easier for Christians to participate and follow-up on church programmes online. Further analysis of data revealed the perception of 88% of the respondents was that faith-based social media handles has made it easier to donate to church programmes and projects anonymously. Analysis of the findings also revealed that 80% of the respondents perceive faith-based social media has made it easier and faster for Christians to connect and communicate with pastors and ministers on religious matters; and lastly, findings showed that 81% of the respondents perceive faith-based social media handles have closed existing gaps on religious-based segregation.



Agreeing with this finding, Obayi (2018) in his study titled, an evaluation of the perception and use of new media in Christian pastoral communication in southern Nigeria. The study revealed that 100% of the respondents perceived the new media as a necessary avenue for Christian pastoral communication, indicating that the media have broad and effective reach for the conversion of sinners. It was also revealed that, Christians use the internet in checking pastoral messages. As the findings of the current study has shown, faith-based social media has made it easier and faster for Christians to connect and communicate with pastors and ministers on religious matters and it has made it easier to participate in church programmes and religious meetings. Also, Kamau et al. (2019) in his study found that digital evangelism, especially on Facebook and WhatsApp, enhances spiritual growth and participation among young Christians

Respondents also believed that faith-based platforms have helped reduce religious segregation (WMS = 4.04), a notion supported by Andok (2023), who emphasized that social media fosters interdenominational dialogues and breaks traditional silos. According to Pittman (2021), communication between religious organizations and their followers has blossomed on social media. Many churches have turned to social networks to increase their outreach to spread their teachings. The use Facebook has increased religious activities because some members update social media handles (Facebook) steadily. This keeps members and non –members posted with the activities of faith-based groups.

Research Question Three: What is the attitude of Christians in South-east Nigeria towards traditional Christian activities after usage of faith-based social media handles?

Analysis of the data revealed the attitude of Christians in South-east Nigeria towards traditional Christian activities after usage of faith-based social media handles. It was revealed that, 80% of the respondents prefer joining online services than physical services. The findings also revealed that 88% of the respondents have a high preference for online church meetings, prayer sessions and unit meetings than physical meetings. Further findings of

the analysis showed that 72% of the respondents believes it easier to address religious issues and follow-up religious discussions online than physically; and lastly, 86% of the respondents rated very high level of attendance to church programmes online than physically.

From the foregoing, it can be rightly deduced that Christians in South-east Nigeria do not have a favourable attitude towards traditional Christian activities after their usage of faith-based social media handles. The study shows a shift in Christian engagement patterns. A notable 80% of respondents expressed a preference for online services over physical gatherings (WMS = 4.02). Additionally, prayer and unit meetings were perceived to be more convenient online (WMS = 4.40). These results reflect post-COVID-19 transformations in worship patterns, where many believers adjusted to virtual worship and developed new digital habits (Chukwuma, 2021).

Respondents also agreed that religious issues are more easily addressed online (WMS = 3.61), and that online church programmes attract higher attendance (WMS = 4.30). This supports the findings of Afolabi and Babatunde (2021), who reported increased participation in online religious events, particularly among youth and working-class members, due to flexibility and accessibility. The findings align with the Uses and Gratification Theory (Bhatiasavi, 2024), as respondents actively used faith-based platforms for convenience, spiritual edification, communication, and social interaction, indicating goal-oriented media use. According to Afolaranm, (2020) covid-19 made the deployment of digital platforms as the media of worship. The digital technological which used social handles made it possible for religion leaders to connect with their congregations and worship God virtually. Thus as a result of the very high level of attendance of Christians in South-east Nigeria to church programmes online than physically, it becomes imperative to state that they have an unfavourable attitude towards traditional faith-based activities after usage of faith-based social media handles and a favourable attitude towards the use of faith-based social media handles.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this research confirm a significant shift in Christian practices and attitudes toward the use of faith-based social media in South-east Nigeria. There is strong evidence of widespread acceptance and appreciation of digital religious engagement, particularly among younger Christians. Faith-based social media platforms have not only augmented spiritual discipline but have also redefined communal worship, communication, and religious identity. This transformation points to a broader trend in global Christianity where the digital sphere is becoming an integral part of religious life. Therefore, churches and religious leaders must recognize and harness this potential, ensuring theological integrity while adapting to the evolving digital landscape.

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