

**CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND CHRISTIANITY IN UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF THE  
EFFECT OF WHATSAPP ON THE GROWTH OF CSUC COMMUNITY CHURCH**

**PROJECT WORK**

**(LONG ESSAY)**

**EMMANUEL KWAKU DONKOR KOOMSON**

**DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY**

**JUNE, 2019**

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND CHRISTIANITY IN UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF THE  
EFFECT OF WHATSAPP ON THE GROWTH OF CSUC COMMUNITY CHURCH**

**BY**

**EMMANUEL KWAKU DONKOR KOOMSON**

**(10002271)**

**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE  
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY WITH ADMINISTRATION.**

**DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY**

**JUNE, 2019**

## DECLARATION

I, Emmanuel K. D. Koomson, do hereby declare that this dissertation report/ long essay is the result of my own original research, except for sections for which references have been duly made, and to the best of my knowledge, no part of it has been presented to this University College or any other institution for the award of a degree.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

*Emmanuel K. D. Koomson*

*(Student)*

Signature: .....

Date: .....

*Rev. Dr. Peter White*

*(Supervisor)*

Signature: .....

Date: .....

*Dr. Samuel B. Adubofour*

*(Head of Department, Theology)*

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Koomson, and my brothers, Edwin and Ebenezer, for their support in my pursuit of this degree.

I also dedicate this work to the numerous men and women of God, who in one way or another, helped and inspired me during the academic journey (this includes my lecturers and other staff on the university campus and past and current members of the Chaplaincy, Community Church and GHAFES), and the Theology Level 400 graduating class of 2019.

Lastly, I dedicate this work to Thanks Mabel Nkunim, Emelia Gyamfua and my best friend Deborah Nueki Commey, for their immense support and care for me while pursuing this degree. God richly bless you all.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to acknowledge first of all, the Almighty God for the grace and strength He gave me to be able to endure this four-year journey and the successes that came with it. Thank you Father.

I would also like to acknowledge my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Koomson, for their patience and care for me within this period of study. I also acknowledge my supervisor, Rev. Dr. Peter White and the Head of the Department of Theology, Dr. Samuel Brefo Adubofour for their patience and tolerance during this period.

Finally, I acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of all my lecturers in the Department of Theology, especially Pastor Paul Diboro Kang-Ewala for the support, patience and tutelage which has brought me this far. Thank you all and God bless you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CONTENTS  | PAGES    |
|---|----------|
| DECLARATION ... ..                                    | i        |
| DEDICATION ... ..                                     | ii       |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ... ..                                | iii      |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS ... ..                              | iv       |
| <b>CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION</b> ... ..       | <b>1</b> |
| 1.1 <b>Background to the Study</b> ... ..             | 1        |
| 1.2 <b>Statement of the Problem</b> ... ..            | 2        |
| 1.3 <b>Research Questions</b> ... ..                  | 2        |
| 1.4 <b>Aim and Objectives of the Study</b> ... ..     | 3        |
| 1.5 <b>Scope of the Study</b> ... ..                  | 3        |
| 1.6 <b>Research Methodology</b> ... ..                | 4        |
| 1.6.1 <i>Methods of Data Collection</i> ... ..        | 4        |
| 1.6.1.1 <i>Primary Sources</i> ... ..                 | 5        |
| 1.6.1.2 <i>Secondary Sources</i> ... ..               | 5        |
| 1.6.1.3 <i>Participant Observation</i> ... ..         | 5        |
| 1.6.2 <i>Sample Size and Population</i> ... ..        | 5        |
| 1.6.3 <i>Data Analysis</i> ... ..                     | 5        |
| 1.7 <b>Literature Review</b> ... ..                   | 6        |
| 1.7.1 <i>Defining WhatsApp</i> ... ..                 | 6        |
| 1.8 <b>Significance of the Study</b> ... ..           | 7        |
| 1.9 <b>Organization/ Structure of the Work</b> ... .. | 7        |

## CHAPTER TWO: HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (CSUC) AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CSUC COMMUNITY CHURCH... 9

|       |  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
|-------|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 2.0   | Introduction   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9  |
| 2.1   | History of Christian Service University College                        | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 10 |
| 2.2   | Core Values of CSUC  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| 2.2.1 | <i>The Lordship of Jesus Christ</i>                                    | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| 2.2.2 | <i>Integrity</i>   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12 |
| 2.2.3 | <i>Hard work</i>   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12 |
| 2.2.4 | <i>Good Stewardship</i>  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12 |
| 2.2.5 | <i>Mutual Support and care</i>   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 13 |
| 2.3   | Brief History of CSUC Community Church                                 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 13 |
| 2.4   | The Integration of WhatsApp into the Activities of Community Church... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 14 |
| 2.5   | Conclusion   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 15 |

## CHAPTER THREE: THE PLACE OF WHATSAPP IN THE ACTIVITIES OF CSUC COMMUNITY CHURCH ... 16

|         |   |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |
|---------|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 3.0     | <b>Introduction</b>   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 16 |
| 3.1     | <b>Social Media and its Missional implications for the Church</b>                         | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17 |
| 3.2     | <b>Understanding the Place of WhatsApp in the Activities of CSUC<br/>Community Church</b> | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| 3.2.1   | <i>The use of WhatsApp in CSUC Community Church</i>                                       | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 20 |
| 3.2.1.1 | <i>The Promptness of Information Posted On the Church Platform</i>                        | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 21 |
| 3.2.1.2 | <i>The Relevance of Information Posted On the Platform</i>                                | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 21 |

|  |  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |           |
|--|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------|
| 3.2.1.3  | <i>Other Comments</i>  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 22        |
| 3.2.2  | <i>The Church's Platform as a source of Godly and Devotional messages</i>                        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 23        |
| 3.2.3  | <i>The Church's Platform as a source of Information and Publicity</i>                            | ... |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 28        |
| 3.3  | <b>Participant Observation</b>   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 29        |
| 3.4  | <b>Conclusion</b>  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 30        |
| <b>CHAPTER FOUR: EFFECTS OF THE USE OF WHATSAPP ON CSUC COMMUNITY CHURCH</b> |  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | <b>31</b> |
| 4.0  | <b>Introduction</b>  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 31        |
| 4.1  | <b>Effects of the Use of WhatsApp for Community Church</b>                                       | ... |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 31        |
| 4.1.1  | <i>Positive Effects</i>  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 31        |
| 4.1.2  | <i>Negative Effects</i>  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 33        |
| 4.2  | <b>Suggestions by Respondents that will help improve the Use of WhatsApp by Community Church</b> | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 34        |
| 4.3  | <b>Conclusion</b>  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 39        |
| <b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>                 |  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | <b>36</b> |
| 5.1  | <b>Summary</b>   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 36        |
| 5.2  | <b>General Conclusion</b>  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 37        |
| 5.3  | <b>Recommendations</b>   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 37        |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>  |  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | <b>39</b> |



# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Social media has become a very important tool in the world. The world has gotten to a stage where almost nothing can be done without social media. Social media has become indispensable in communication, education and all other aspects of life. One of these aspects is religion. The impact of social media tools like Facebook, Skype, YouTube, and others has been immense in contributions to the spread of religions, Christianity inclusive. Churches today have begun to integrate social media tools into various activities. The various social media platforms are used for different purposes by the church from sharing the gospel to getting feedback on the church's activities. As Dr. White puts it, "Social media as a new phenomenon has become a tool used by many televangelists and pastors all over the world."<sup>1</sup>

Christian Service University College is a non-denominational Christian institution started in 1974 that seeks to groom and train men and women, equipping them with skills and also empowering them through the word of God to make impact in their society. Community Church, its campus-based church was started by the late Prof. Emmanuel Frimpong and Rev. Dr. Mrs. Margaret Asabea Aboagye who thought of a way for residential students to have fellowship right on campus. It started in March, 20, 2012 and has seen students' participation since its inception.

Christianity on university campuses and the use of social media have become inseparable. As such, the lives of a lot of Christian youth in university have become affected by the use of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat and WhatsApp. Christian Service University

---

<sup>1</sup> Peter White, Fortune Tella and M.D. Ampofo. "A missional study of the use of social media (Facebook) by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors," *KOERS – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 81, no. 2 (2016): 1. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10108/koers.81.2.2250>

College is no exemption. The Christian population on the campus seems to may have taken advantage of this new phenomenon. One such group is the CSUC Community Church or Community Church for short. In recent times, the church has become an almost “paperless” society using WhatsApp for its circulation of relevant information. Almost every aspect of the church’s activities involves this social media tool. The programme outlines for service on Sundays for instance, are circulated through this social media tool. Also, the tool has been used in advertisements for special programmes and events of the church.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The Church has been on the campus for at least seven years and has used the social media tool for at least three years. There is therefore the need to identify the impact of the use of WhatsApp on its activities. This study sought to identify the effects of WhatsApp on the CSUC Community Church both positive and negative. It also sought to suggest ways by which the Community Church could utilize the tool in the spread of the gospel on the campus of CSUC in particular and the community of Odeneho Kwadaso at large.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

The research sought to answer the question, what has been the impact of WhatsApp on CSUC Community Church. It also sought to answer these questions:

1. What is WhatsApp Messenger?
2. How has the membership of Community Church been both before and since the use of WhatsApp?
3. What have been the effects of the use of WhatsApp on Community Church?

4. What ways can Community Church utilize WhatsApp effectively to spread the gospel and grow its membership?

#### **1.4 Aim and Objectives**

The main aim of the study was to identify the impact and effect of WhatsApp on the growth of Community Church.

The study also sought to achieve these objectives:

1. To identify what WhatsApp is.
2. To know the membership of Community Church both before and since the use of WhatsApp.
3. To investigate the effects of the use of WhatsApp on Community Church.
4. To suggest ways in which Community Church can utilize WhatsApp effectively to spread the gospel and increase its membership.

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study focused on how well CSUC Community Church has been able to use the WhatsApp Messenger since its integration into the church's activities in 2015 and its effects on the growth of the church.

It was meant to identify the challenges and successes of the integration of WhatsApp in the church's activities. In this sense, it sought to understand whether the church's almost "paperless" system brought about by the use of the said social media tool has been effective for the church.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

According to Kothari, “Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. In it we study the various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying his research problem along with the logic behind them.”<sup>2</sup> There are three main methods of research under methodology namely qualitative, quantitative and the mixed method.

The methodology employed by the researcher was mixed. This means that it included both the qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative method involves the use of procedures like interviews. This is because the work focuses on the opinions of the members of the church who are the primary source of information for this work.

The researcher here in effect undertook interviews of some new members of Community Church who experienced the use of WhatsApp Messenger by the church. The interviews also included some past and current executives of Community Church.

There was also an administration of questionnaire to some of the members, which is the use of quantitative method.

In other words, although the work sought the opinions of the members, it also sought to be objective as possible with the use of the mixed method.

### ***1.6.1 Methods of Data Collection***

The main methods of data collection included primary sources, secondary sources and participant observation.

---

<sup>2</sup> C. R. Kothari, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques* (New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 2004), 7.

#### *1.6.1.1 Primary Sources*

The primary sources of data include administering questionnaire with the members of the church, and current executives of the Church.

#### *1.6.1.2 Secondary Sources*

The secondary sources of data include textbooks, scholarly journals, brochures, dissertations, newsletters and the internet as assistance in gathering data for the study.

#### *1.6.1.3 Participant Observation*

The researcher gathered some of the data through participation and observation of some of the church's activities.

### ***1.6.2 Sample Size and Population***

The church as at the end of 2018 had an average membership of 41 and was the initial sample population for this research. However, only 25 respondents were immediately available. As such, this number was the population that was used for this research.

### ***1.6.3 Data Analysis***

In analyzing the data gathered from the various respondents, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used.

## 1.7 Literature Review

### 1.7.1 Defining WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a smartphone application that operates on nearly all current types of devices and operating systems. The application has been on the market since 2010; the declared purpose of the developers was to replace the existing SMS platform for a system that is free of charge in an ad-free environment<sup>3</sup>. WhatsApp is a form of social media tool that allows friends and family to relate to each other over long distances in effect disregarding the barriers of communication over such long distances. Christian Montag and seven other researchers define WhatsApp as a communication app facilitating the exchange of instant messages, pictures, videos and voice calls via an internet connection, which has been installed on smartphones over half a billion times all round the world. It represents one of the most important features of a smartphone, as it enables easy communication via text or voice messages between two or more persons<sup>4</sup>. It is part of the social media concept that is known as 'Web 2.0'. According to Constantinides and Fountain:

Web 2.0 is a collection of open-source, interactive and user-controlled online applications expanding the experiences, knowledge and market power of the users as participants in business and social processes. Web 2.0 applications support the creation of informal users' networks facilitating the flow of ideas and knowledge by allowing the efficient generation, dissemination, sharing and editing of informational content<sup>5</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> Dan Bouhnik & Mor Deshen, "WhatsApp goes to school: Mobile instant messaging between teachers and students," *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research* 13 (2014): 217-231. Retrieved from <http://www.jite.org/documents/Vol13/JITEv13ResearchP217-231Bouhnik0601.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Christian Montag, Konrad Błaszczewicz, Rayna Sariyska, Bernd Lachmann, Ionut Andone, Boris Trendafilov, Mark Eibes and Alexander Markowetz, "Smartphone usage in the 21st century: who is active on WhatsApp," *BMC Research Notes* 8, no. 331 (2015): 2. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s13104-015-1280-z>

<sup>5</sup> Cited in Peter White, Fortune Tella and M.D. Ampofo, "A missional study of the use of social media (Facebook) by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors," *KOERS – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 81, no. 2 (2016): 3. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10108/koers.81.2.2250>

This social media has come to replace the messaging service on our phones that came at a cost. However, over its years of existence, it has been updated severally to allow for the sending of videos, pictures and documents. Even in education, it has become a tool that cannot be left out in the transmission of information. Dan Bouhnik writes, for instance that, it turns out that class WhatsApp groups are used for four main purposes: communicating with students; nurturing the social atmosphere; creating dialogue and encouraging sharing among students; and as a learning platform<sup>6</sup>. It is obvious that this tool has become indispensable in the lives and people in the society.

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study is meant to serve as a guide for CSUC Community Church in its future use of WhatsApp and other social media platforms. It also meant to create an awareness of the effectiveness of the use of social media as an effective tool for sharing the gospel.

### **1.9 Organization of the Work/Structure of the Work**

This research was divided into five chapters. The first chapter dealt with a background or basic introduction to the concepts of WhatsApp and the Church. Here, the researcher introduced the concept of WhatsApp. It also included a brief historical background of the CSUC Community Church.

---

<sup>6</sup> Dan Bouhnik & Mor Deshen, "WhatsApp goes to school: Mobile instant messaging between teachers and students," *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research* 13 (2014): 217-231. Retrieved from <http://www.jite.org/documents/Vol13/JITEv13ResearchP217-231Bouhnik0601.pdf>

The second chapter dealt with a history of Christian Service University College in general and CSUC Community Church in particular. Here, the focus was on how and why the Church was started and also the beginning of the use of the social media tool WhatsApp in the Church.

The third chapter dealt with the use of WhatsApp by CSUC Community Church. Here, the focus of the researcher was to investigate the effects of WhatsApp on Community Church.

The fourth chapter was concerned with the interpretation of the data gathered from various sources.

As such, an analysis of the data gathered from the people concerned was examined.

The fifth and final chapter was a summary of the work done and conclusion. Also included were suggestions from the data analyzed and by the researcher to improve the CSUC Community Church and its effective use of WhatsApp.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CSUC COMMUNITY CHURCH**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Christian Service University College, a University College based in Odeneho Kwadaso in Kumasi seeks to be a first class Evangelical Christian University that produces men and women with moral uprightness, academic excellence and passion to serve and transform society<sup>7</sup>. In pursuit of this vision of the institution, the CSUC Community Church was started. Therefore, it is important to have a history of the University College and also that of the establishment of the Church.

This chapter gives a historical account of the beginning as well as the values of both the University College and the church. Section 2.0 gives an introduction, 2.1 gives the history of the University College, 2.2 details the core values of the institution, 2.3 is a brief history of CSUC Community Church, 2.4 deals with the details of the integration of WhatsApp into the activities of the church and 2.5 is the conclusion.

#### **2.1 History of Christian Service University College (CSUC)**

Christian Service University College was started in the year 1974 by two different groups of missionaries with the same idea. And the idea was to start a college to train men and women in into the work of God. It began as a merger of the visions of these two groups in January, 1974<sup>8</sup>.

With reference to the CSUC Students' Handbook, the two groups were:

---

<sup>7</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 12

<sup>8</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 12

A group of Ghanaian Christians who envisaged an inter-denominational, evangelical who envisaged an inter-denominational, evangelical institution of a high academic standard, which would train men and women for Christian Ministry.

The second group comprised expatriate missionaries who had a vision of an institution to train workers from well-established churches in southern Ghana for a thrust into northern Ghana and neighboring countries, where the church was relatively small<sup>9</sup>.

The Worldwide Evangelization for Christ (WEC), one of the missionary groups in the second group, had acquired property in Kumasi on which they had built four dwelling houses and a radio studio with plans to construct a large building to serve as the beginning of a training college. Soon the two visions merged<sup>10</sup>.

In January 1974, the University College started as an evening class in St. George's Church with four people<sup>11</sup>.

The early faculty members were Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, sent by the WEC mission. Mr. Chapman became the first Principal of the College (1973-1993) and was joined by Mr. Isaac Ababio (1974-1976)<sup>12</sup>.

In October 1974, the first residential classes were started with four students<sup>13</sup>. The four students were Daniel Buer (now with evangelizing group the Rural Child Fellowship), John Kojo Ntsiful

---

<sup>9</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 12

<sup>10</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 12

<sup>11</sup> Paul K. Nyame, "Students in Mission: An assessment of the Outreach Programme of Department of Theology in Christian Service University College" (B.Th. thesis, Christian Service University College, 2017), 17-18

<sup>12</sup> Paul K. Nyame, "Students in Mission: An assessment of the Outreach Programme of Department of Theology in Christian Service University College" (B.Th. thesis, Christian Service University College, 2017), 17-18

<sup>13</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 12

(Now Senior Lecturer, CSUC), Justin Frimpong (former Director of GILLBT) and Seth Nana Mintah (now Rev. Minister, Presbyterian Church of Ghana).

## **2.2 The Core Values of CSUC**

Every institution has values they operate with. CSUC is no exception. The University College was founded on five core values and prides itself in the upholding of these values even its pursuit of academic excellence. These values are:

- The Lordship of Jesus Christ
- Integrity
- Hard work
- Good Stewardship
- Mutual Support and care

### ***2.2.1 The Lordship of Jesus Christ***

The Lordship of Jesus Christ is the foremost and most important of the core values. Christian Service University College, being a Christian institution, is committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and living in obedience to His will. This involves trusting Him to meet every need (material, spiritual, emotional or whatever it might be) to fulfill His will. It also involves seeking and accepting His guidance for the institution and depending on His divine leadership. In view of this, members of the community are not only to join together for worship in concrete demonstration of their commitment to the Lordship of Christ, but are also encouraged to make a personal commitment to Christ our Lord and Saviour<sup>14</sup>.

---

<sup>14</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 14

### ***2.2.2 Integrity***

Another core value of the College is integrity. The University College believes in integrity, which is defined as moral uprightness, honesty, reliability, incorruptibility, wholeness and soundness of character. It involves transparency and gives no room for foul play either in public or private life. The University College sees this as important since character is vital to our calling and our work<sup>15</sup>.

### ***2.2.3 Hard Work***

The University College also upholds and commends hard work. CSUC is dedicated to hard, sacrificial, diligent and conscientious work; always striving to do things better and continuously improving and innovating to deliver the best possible outcomes. By this the College seeks excellence in all its endeavours and is committed to continuous improvement through perseverance even in the face of hardship and opposition. Hard work is therefore a necessary requirement to a successful academic life for every student<sup>16</sup>.

### ***2.2.4 Good Stewardship***

In addition to the aforementioned, the University College also believes in good stewardship. CSUC believes and upholds as a core value, the belief of Divine Ownership of the natural material and spiritual world as well as the souls of all humankind. It is therefore committed to accountability and responsibility in all our actions and adheres to the biblical principle that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2). As such, it is dedicated to the efficient and effective use of institutional resources (physical, intellectual, spiritual and financial) to achieve

---

<sup>15</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 14

<sup>16</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 14

maximum results. A good steward conscious of his time and uses it efficiently. Time is a unique resource that God has given to us and so punctuality at work, classes and all other programmes is to be adhered to strictly<sup>17</sup>.

### ***2.2.5 Mutual Support and Care***

The last but not the least of the core values is mutual support and care. As an academic institution, CSUC is human centered and oriented and therefore strives to provide excellent services to all work or call at the campus. CSUC upholds the Christian virtues of love and fellowship; and works for unity and oneness among members of the community. As such it is committed to the Biblical principle of carrying each other's burden (Galatians 6:1). This includes help and support (spiritually and physically). Members of the community also join together for worship and prayer, trusting that in worshipping the Lord together, we will grow together in Him. This is seen as a vital aspect of the College's service to God<sup>18</sup>.

## **2.3 Brief History of the CSUC Community Church**

During the term of office of Prof. Emmanuel Frimpong, he and the then University College Chaplain, Rev. Mrs. Margaret Asabea came up with the idea of starting a church on the university campus for the residents of the CSUC Executive Hostel and the other hostels around. This was in response to the approach employed by churches to pick students from campus to church and then back. This was to ease that burden.

---

<sup>17</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 14-15

<sup>18</sup> Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students' Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016), 14-15

CSUC Community Church is the result of that idea. It was started in 2013 with Pastor Paul Diboro Kang-Ewala as its first caretaker. Other caretakers included Mr. Emmanuel Johnny Otutey and Master Samuel Yaw Mwinterebu. The current caretaker is Master Emmanuel K. D. Koomson. The executives of the church are made up of students with the University College Chaplain as the ‘resident pastor/minister’. There are 17 executives. As at 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019, there is no documented history of the church. However, from observation, the researcher noted that the Church celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2019.

Also, the church has gained membership from the Odeneho Kwadaso community. This is as a result of a missions programme organized by the University College from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2018. As at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018, the average membership of the church is 41.

#### **2.4 The Integration of WhatsApp into the Activities of Community Church**

The Community Church WhatsApp platform was created in the year 2015 by Evans Marfo, the then organizer of the Church. Since that time, the page has been used in numerous ways. Currently, the church also has an executive page on which executives discuss issues pertaining the programmes and activities of the church. As at the end of 2018, the church has also started an associate page for the old executives and members who have graduated from the University College and were members of the church. This is to allow the current membership of the church to relate to these people and communicate with them.

As at 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019, the number of people on the Community Church WhatsApp page is ninety. However, this number includes old executives and members.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter provided details of the establishment of CSUC Community Church and its use of the social media tool WhatsApp. It also provided information about Christian Service University College, the mother institution of CSUC Community Church.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PLACE OF WHATSAPP IN THE ACTIVITIES OF CSUC COMMUNITY CHURCH

#### 3.0 Introduction

According to White, Tella and Ampofo “The emergence of social media has changed the face of communication all over the world.”<sup>19</sup>

The term social media refers to a broad family of electronic communication methods that are designed to create and exchange information with others within virtual networks<sup>20</sup>. In other words, the problem of distance in communication is solved by the use of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and others.

The use of social media for almost every activity of life has become inevitable. Social media has penetrated every aspect of human life to the extent that people share their life experiences through these platforms. The penetration rate of internet all over the world is estimated to be 56.8%<sup>21</sup>, showing that the world is gradually moving into the sphere of communication with social media.

The situation is no different in Ghana. Ghanaians all over the country share their ideologies with each other irrespective of age, religion, ethnicity and geographical location. As at 2015, Ghana’s internet penetration stands at 19.6% of the Ghanaian population<sup>22</sup>. And as at March 2019, the internet penetration stands at 33.6%<sup>23</sup>, signaling a significant growth in the last four years. For a

---

<sup>19</sup> Peter White, Fortune Tella and M.D. Ampofo. “A missional study of the use of social media (Facebook) by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors,” *KOERS – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 81, no. 2 (2016): 3. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10108/koers.81.2.2250>

<sup>20</sup> Mark D. Johnson, “Social Media as Mission: Digital Ministry for Today’s Church,” *Mission of the Church Today* (2014):6.

<sup>21</sup> Internet World Statistics, 2019, viewed 19 May 2019 from <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>

<sup>22</sup> Cited in Peter White, Fortune Tella and M.D. Ampofo. “A missional study of the use of social media (Facebook) by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors,” *KOERS – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 81, no. 2 (2016): 4. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10108/koers.81.2.2250>

<sup>23</sup> Internet World Statistics, 2019, viewed 19 May 2019 from <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>



country whose population is presumably dominated by Christians (71.2% is presumed to be Christian as at 2010<sup>24</sup>), this means that effective use of social media can help in evangelizing and winning of souls.

This chapter therefore gathered and analyzed data to show the effectiveness of the use of WhatsApp for CSUC Community Church.

### **3.1 Social Media and Its Missional Implications for the Church**

The boom of social media has been and should be seen as not only beneficial to the secular world but also to the church. In his work ‘Social Media as Missions: Digital Ministry for Today’s Church’, Mark Johnson states, “There are practical justifications for the church to employ social media and digital ministry”<sup>25</sup>.

Technology and social media have made much impact on the missional activities of the church and has been used as a medium for spreading the gospel as far back as New Testament time<sup>26</sup>. According to Justin Wise, the ink and scroll used by the Apostle Paul and others to propagate the gospel were the cutting-edge technologies of their time. During the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther, using the cutting-edge technology of his day, the printing press, produced and distributed the ‘Luther Bible’<sup>27</sup>.

---

<sup>24</sup> Ghana Statistical Service, 2012, *Population and Housing Census 2010*, accessed on 19 May 2019 from [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marqueeupdater/Census2010\\_Summary\\_report\\_of\\_final\\_results.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marqueeupdater/Census2010_Summary_report_of_final_results.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Mark D. Johnson, “Social Media as Mission: Digital Ministry for Today’s Church,” *Mission of the Church Today* (2014):7

<sup>26</sup> Peter White, Fortune Tella and M.D. Ampofo. “A missional study of the use of social media (Facebook) by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors,” *KOERS – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 81, no. 2 (2016): 3. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10108/koers.81.2.2250>

<sup>27</sup> Cited in Peter White, Fortune Tella and M.D. Ampofo. “A missional study of the use of social media (Facebook) by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors,” *KOERS – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 81, no. 2 (2016): 4. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10108/koers.81.2.2250>

The church is urged to use social media in the propagation of the gospel and in reaching out to prospective members especially as the world moves towards a paperless society. It is imperative that the church realize this and adapt to these changes in order to share the gospel. Also, the church must be willing to meet people at their point of need who are seeking to define and discern their spirituality. The church building should not be the only space for discipleship as social media can also be used as an approach to discipling people in the faith.

There is a perceived notion that the impact of social media on the church is generally a positive one. People who are actively practicing their religious faith have the opportunity to interact with people they may not have otherwise had the chance to “meet”<sup>28</sup>.

However, just as social media can be helpful; it can also turn out to be very harmful to the Christian faith. Concerns of privacy, impersonation of Christian leaders on social media platforms and the spread of false doctrines on social media platforms have led to some religious leaders to avoid such social media platforms.

It is therefore, incumbent on the Christians that, in their use of social media, they exercise caution, restraint and care in its interactions with members and prospective converts.

### **3.2 Understanding the Place of WhatsApp in the Activities of CSUC Community Church**

A church is simply defined as group of people gathered together who share the Christian faith. The emphasis of the New Testament teaching on the Church is that there is no distinction among Christ’s group of people regarding race, gender, nationality or social standing<sup>29</sup>. In other words,

---

<sup>28</sup> Kunle Badmos, “Effect of Social Media on the Church” (paper presented at the 2014 annual conference of Theological Friends and Fellows, organized by the Redeemed Christian Bible College, Lagos, Nigeria), 4.

<sup>29</sup> Cited in Kunle Badmos, “Effect of Social Media on the Church”, (paper presented at the 2014 annual conference of Theological Friends and Fellows, organized by the Redeemed Christian Bible College, Lagos, Nigeria), 1.

the church is not about the building or the times of meeting but about the people and their growth in the faith. Community Church seems to follow this idea in its use of WhatsApp.

Communication is a very important aspect of the Christian faith. People can only hear the gospel when it is communicated to them. In order for the church to be able to keep in touch with her congregants, the adoption and integration of WhatsApp into the activities of the church was initiated. It is also necessary because the church needs to communicate with the outside world as a way of evangelizing or advertising the church.

CSUC Community Church began to operate its first WhatsApp page in the year 2015. This page was created by Evans Marfo, the then Male Organiser of the church. This was to enhance the mode of communication between leaders and members. It has been four years now since then, and the church has created three other pages namely the Community Chapel Leaders, CC New Executives and Community Church Alumni.

Since these pages were started, particularly the general church page (that is, CSUC Community Church), they have been used as a medium by which devotional and other God-centered messages are sent to the members. They have also been used as a medium of advertisement for church programmes, sending of information such as the semester and Sunday programme outlines, reaching out and interacting with the Alumni of the University College who were church members and also hearing the grievances and opinions of church members. Indirectly, they have also been a way for the church to reach the entire student body of the University College through the members of the church.

It is therefore necessary to understand the impact of this tool of communication on the church, its membership and activities. Understanding this aspect of the activities of the church will enable the leadership of the church to develop strategies to effectively use the social media tool.

### 3.2.1 The Use of WhatsApp in CSUC Community Church

In gathering the data for this research, the initial sample population size was 40. However, only 25 respondents were available. The data was analyzed using the frequencies tool of the descriptive statistics option in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.

Out of this number, 11 (44%) were males and 14 (56%) were females. 20 of the respondents representing 80% were between the ages of 16-25 while 5 representing 20% were between 26-35. For their academic level, there were 7 each for levels 100, 200 and 400 respectively (28% each) and 4 in level 300 (16%). With regards to length of membership in the church, 9 had been in the church for a year, 8 for two years and 4 for 3 years and 4 years respectively (36%, 32% and 16% each respectively). 11 of the respondents were executives representing 44% and 14 representing 56% were members.

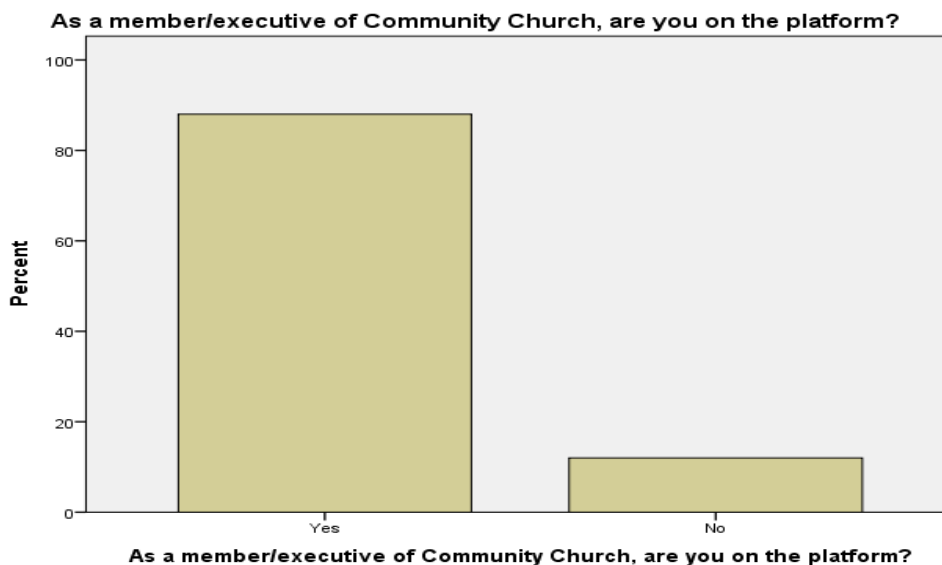


Fig. 1.0 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

The figure above details the percentage of respondents that are active on the church's WhatsApp platform. Out of the total number of respondents, 22 of them representing 88% were active on the

church platform while 3 representing 12% were not active on the platform. These three received information about the church from either a roommate or a text message.

#### *3.2.1.1 The Promptness of Information Posted On the Church Platform*

Despite the number of respondents on the platform, 14 (56%) were of the view that they receive information on time on the platform, while 8 (32%) answered in the negative. 3 of the respondents represented by 12% did not give any response to this question.

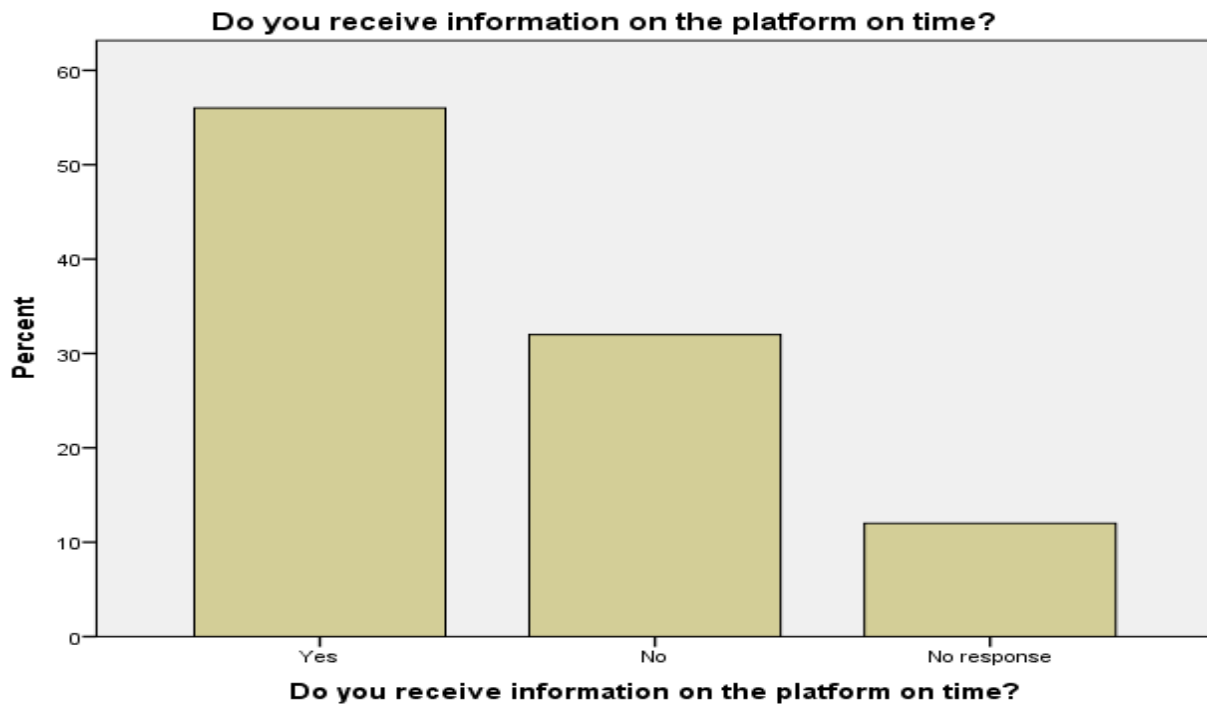


Fig. 1.1 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

#### *3.2.1.2 The Relevance of Information Posted On the Platform*

Regarding the relevance of information posted to the platform, 14 of the respondents (56%) affirmed the relevance of information posted on the platform, 4 (16%) were of the view that information was not always relevant while 7 (28%) did not provide any responses. This

information is represented below

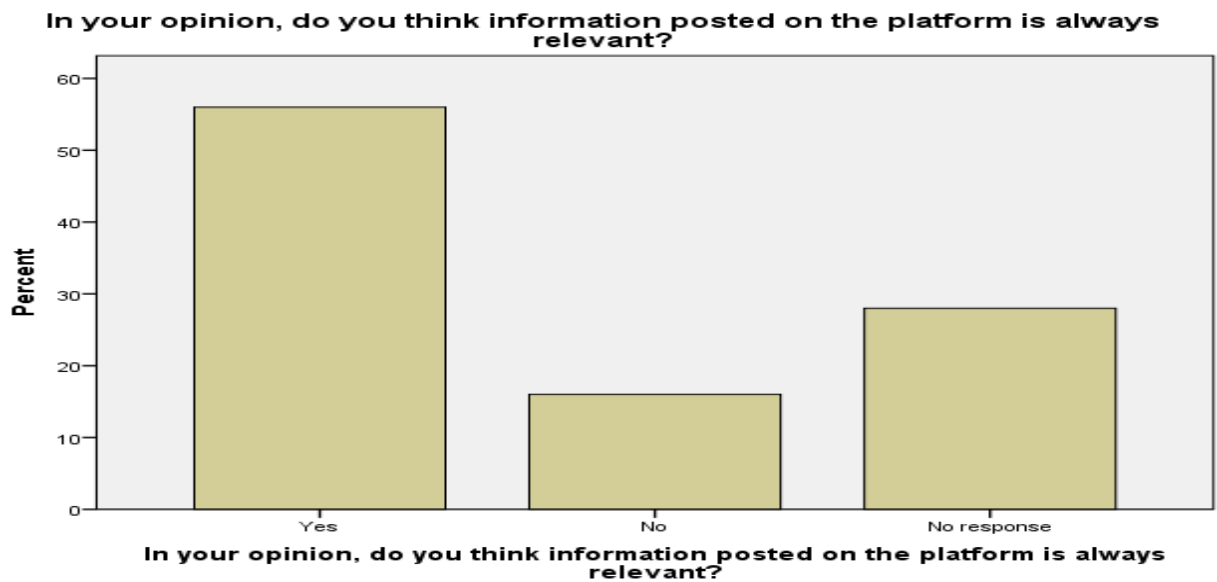


Fig. 1.2 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

### 3.2.1.3 Other Comments

On the relevance of the information posted on the platform, some comments were solicited from the respondents. Among the responses were:

#### A. *Positive responses*

1. Knowing the order of service for Sundays helps one to prepare adequately especially if you have a role to play.
2. It helps to know as a member the relevant activities of the church.
3. They help to know the status of the church

#### B. *Negative responses*

1. Some of the messages are advertisements about things that do not concern the church.
2. Some of the messages are thread messages that require forwarding to other groups/individuals but are not necessary.

### ***3.2.2 The Church's Platform as a Source of Devotional and Godly Messages***

The respondents for this study were required to answer seven questions under this heading.

#### **Question 1: There Are Devotional Messages on the Platform**

Out of the 25 respondents who provided answers, 2 representing 8%, were of the view that such messages were always on the platform while 4 representing 16% said it was often. 12 (48%) said sometimes, 3 (12%) said not often and 1 (4%) said never. 3 of the respondents representing 12% provided no responses.



Fig. 1.3 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

#### **Question 2: I Read These Devotional Messages**

When asked if they read the devotional messages on the platform, respondents answered as follows: Always – 1 (4%), Often – 3 (12%), Sometimes – 11 (44%), Not often – 5 (20%), Never – 2 (8%) and No Response – 3 (12%). This is represented below.



Fig. 1.4 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

### Question 3: Messages Inspire You to Draw Closer To God

In response to this question, 7 of the respondents said always (28%), 6 said often (24%), 6 said sometimes (24%) and 2 said not often (8%). None of the respondents chose 'never' as an option. However, 4 (16%) of the respondents did not answer this question. This is represented below



Fig. 1.5 (Source: Field Data, 2019)



#### Question 4: Messages and Discussions on the Platform Help Me to Understand the Bible Better

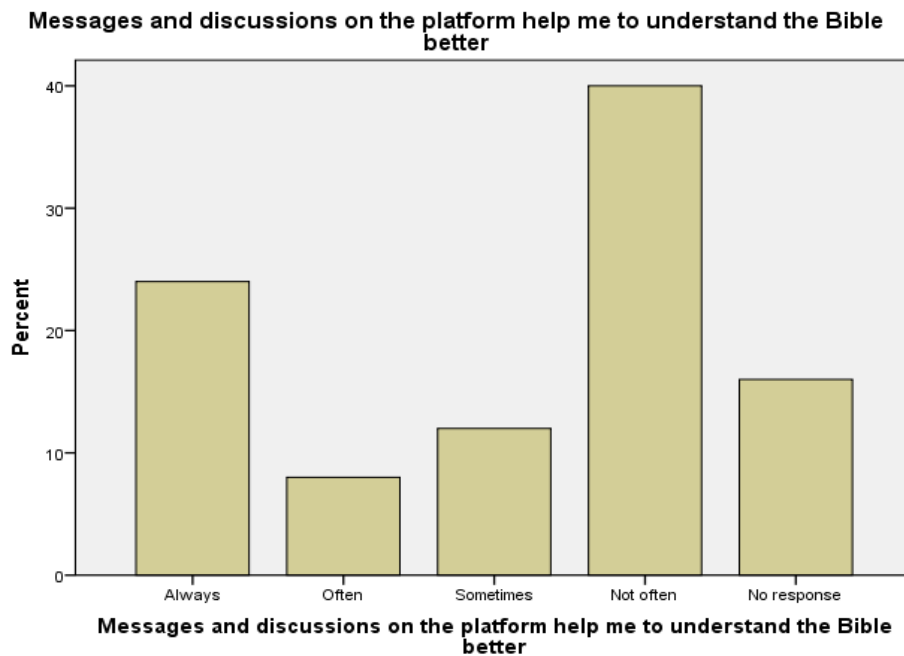


Fig. 1.6 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

The data gathered in response to this question is shown above. 6 (24%) of the respondents said always, 2 (8%) said often, 3 (12%) said sometimes and 10 (40%) said not often. Here also, none of the respondents chose the 'never' option. Again, 4 (16%) respondents did not answer this question.

#### Question 5: The Platform Is Used For Only Christian Discussions

On using the platform solely for Christian discussions, the number of respondents that chose Always were 3 (12%), Often were 5 (20%), Sometimes were 3 (12%), Not often were 8 (32%) and Never were 3 (12%). There were no responses from 3 (12%) of the respondents.

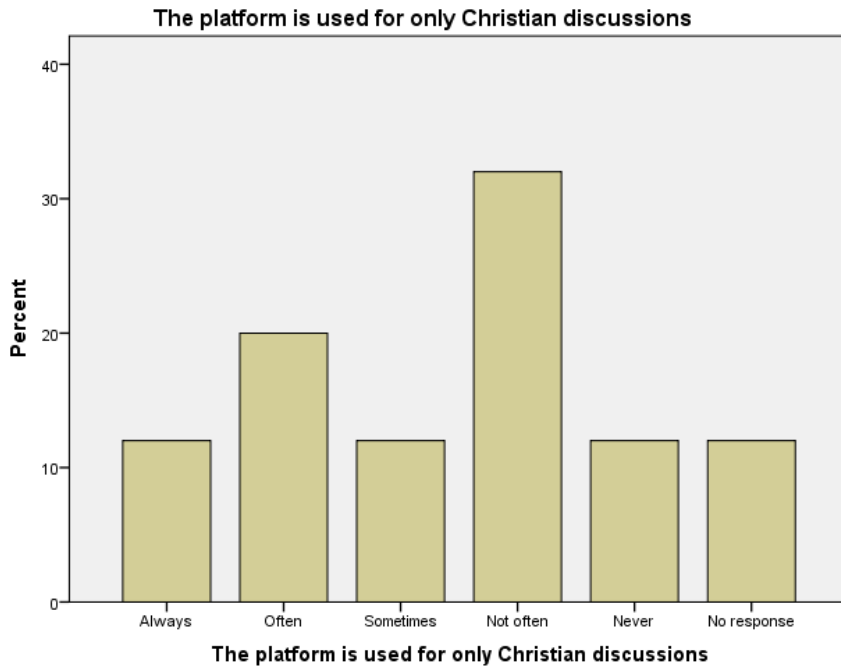


Fig. 1.7 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

#### Question 6: Messages on the Platform Only Talk about God and the Christian Faith

When asked if messages on the platform on speak only about God, 2 respondents said Always (8%), 5 of them said Often (20%), 8 (32%) said Sometimes, 6 (24%) said Not often and 1 respondent said Never (4%). 3 of the respondents provided no answers (12%) as shown below.

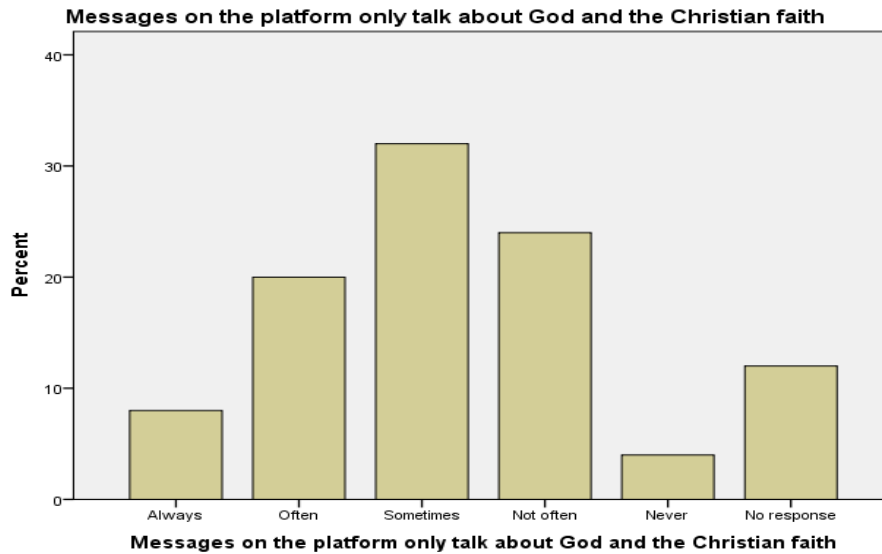


Fig. 1.8 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

#### Question 7: I Always Share the Devotional Messages with Friends and Family



Fig. 1.9 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

The chart represents the answers provided by respondents when if they share the devotional messages. 1 (4%) said Always, 3 (12%) said Often, 4 (16%) said Sometimes, 11 (44%) said Not often, 3 (12%) said Never and 3 (12%) provided no responses.

### 3.2.3 The Church's Platform as a Source of Information and Publicity

Respondents were also required to answer on the use of the platform as a source of information and for publicity of church programs. Here, respondents answered two questions; namely:

#### **Question 1: Information such as the programme outlines is always put on the platform on time**

With respect to the timeliness of messages on the platform, 6 each represented by 24% said Always, Sometimes and Often respectively. 4 of the respondents (16%) said Not Often and there was no response from 3 respondents (12%). This is shown below.

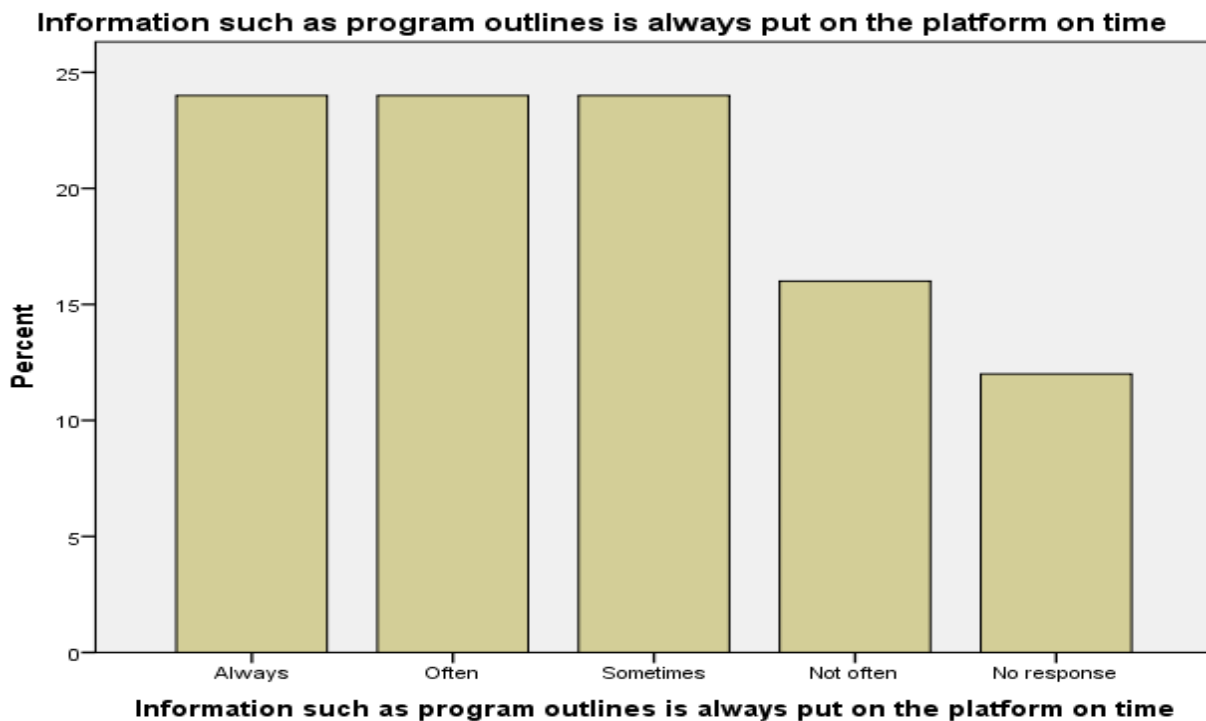


Fig. 2.0 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

## Question 2: Information provided on the platform is always reliable

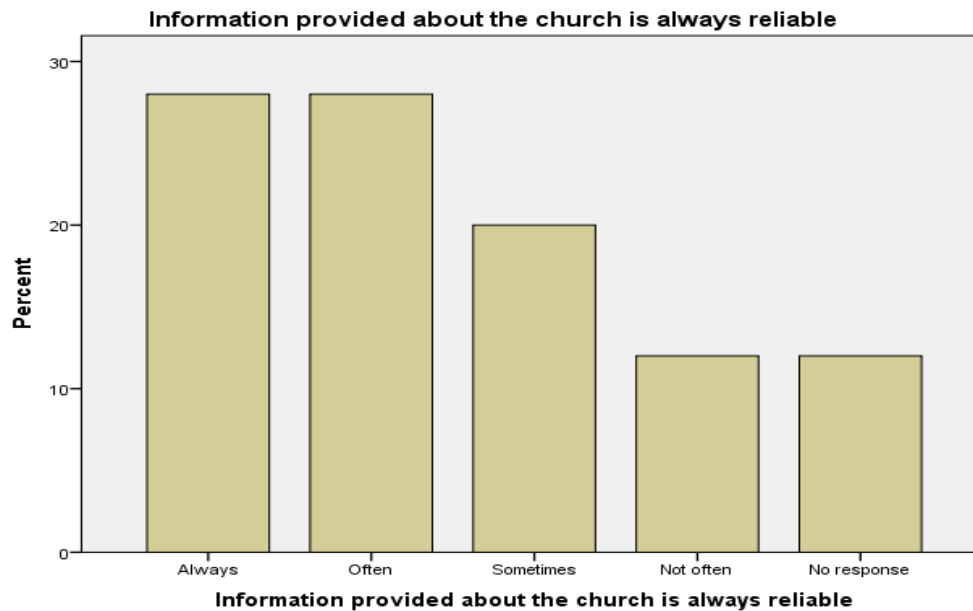


Fig. 2.1 (Source: Field Data, 2019)

The chart above shows the answers provided by respondents to this question. 7 (28%) of the respondents each said Always and Sometimes respectively while 5 (20%) said often and 3 (12%) said Not often. 3 respondents (12%) provided no responses.

### 3.3 Participant Observation

From the observation of the researcher having been an executive of the church, it could also be surmised that the data presented in this work almost reflects the use of the social media app, WhatsApp by the church. The researcher also asserts that the benefits of the use of this tool of communication have been immense for the church as compared to its disadvantages. For example, regular meeting of leaders was limited to only a few times in the course of a semester as most of such meetings were held on the WhatsApp platform.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The data gathered from the respondents for this study shows that the integration of WhatsApp into the activities of CSUC Community Church has been positive and beneficial to a very large extent. However, it also shows that there is more to be done to make the integration more useful and beneficial to the church.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **EFFECTS OF THE USE OF WHATSAPP ON CSUC COMMUNITY CHURCH**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, the effects of the use of WhatsApp on CSUC Community Church are discussed based on the information gathered from the respondents. The chapter also considered suggestions by respondents on improving the use of WhatsApp by Community Church.

According to Kunle Badmos, the popularity of social media means that some churches have started to embrace this technology to expand their church community into the virtual world<sup>30</sup>. From the data gathered, it is obvious that CSUC Community Church has not been left out of this move. The church in its own way is making very good use of the social media tool WhatsApp.

#### **4.1 Effects of the Use of WhatsApp for Community Church**

From the data collected and participant observation, there were a lot of effects raised from the use of WhatsApp by respondents. These effects would be classified into positive and negative effects.

##### ***4.1.1 Positive Effects***

From the data collected, it could be opined that the effects of the use of WhatsApp has been to a large extent positive for the church. From the various responses given, it could be surmised that respondents believed in the usefulness of the platform to the church.

For instance, one of the positive effects identified from the data gathered was that, the use of WhatsApp had improved the awareness of the members of the activities of the church. According

---

<sup>30</sup> Kunle Badmos, "Effect of Social Media on the Church" (paper presented at the 2014 annual conference of Theological Friends and Fellows, organized by the Redeemed Christian Bible College, Lagos, Nigeria), 4.

to the respondents, providing such information as programme outlines for Sundays and other important notices ensure adequate preparation for services and the other activities of the church.

It also kept one informed about the status and affairs of the church.

Another positive effect was the delivery of Godly and devotional messages to the platform. Here, quite a number of the respondents (2 for Always, 4 for Often and 12 for Sometimes, summing up to 18 out of 25 respondents) affirmed the benefits of such initiatives to them as individuals. However, 4 of the respondents (3 for Not Often and 1 for Never) did not necessarily believe in the benefits of such initiatives while 3 could neither agree nor disagree.

These messages, according to 19 out of the 25 respondents (that is, those that said Always-7, Sometimes-6 and Often-6), in another instance were a source of inspiration and motivation for them. Yet there were also those that did not really agree with this assertion (2 said Not Often) while 4 of the respondents did not make a choice.

Out of the 25 respondents, 8 (1 for Always, 3 for Often and 4 for Sometimes) said they were encouraged to share such messages with family and friends thereby spreading the Word of God to others. However, 14 of them said they either did it randomly or not at all (11 – Not often and 3 – Never). 3 of the respondents did not make any choices.

From participant observation, another benefit for the church has been reduction in expenditure. Before the integration of the social media tool in the activities of the church, there was always the burden of the cost of putting everything on paper as the church tried to provide to every member at the beginning of a semester the outline of programmes. In other words, from the programme outline for the semester to that of Sundays, everything had to be printed. However, since the church began its use of WhatsApp, the cost of printing such information has been taken out of the church's expenditure. Thus, the almost paperless system has helped the financial situation of the church.



Again, it helped the current members to keep in touch with the old members of the church. Being a campus church means that there are some members who have left the church after school. However, all these people are still part of the platform for the church, both leaders and members. As such, this allows current leaders and members to connect with these “associates” of the church as they are called. It also affords these associates the opportunity to make an input and share their ideas with current leadership of the church.

#### ***4.1.2 Negative Effects***

Despite the fact that the use of WhatsApp has been beneficial to the church, among the negative effects raised by respondents, the most occurring was the promptness in the delivery of messages. There were complaints about the late delivery of programme outlines for Sundays which could lead to unpreparedness on the part of members. According to 8 out of the 25 respondents, information especially that for Sunday services were not always delivered on time. As such, it did not help particularly those who were to perform a function during those services thereby hindering the smooth flow of services. However, 14 others disagreed with this assertion and were of the view that they received information on time while 3 of them did not provide any response.

Again, another concern was the use of the platform for sharing irrelevant information such as advertisements and thread messages. The belief was that if the platform is for the church, it should be used properly for the good of the church. Such messages only solicited interest that was not beneficial to the growth of members, especially the spiritual growth. Thus, such messages defeat the purpose of creating the page.

The researcher also observed, as an executive of the church that, inter-personal relationship was being affected by the use of the social media tool. There is reduction in the physical contact

between members and leaders of the church. Therefore, saying no or ignoring messages has been made easier than when there was face-to-face contact. This has led to a strain on the relationship amongst members and also with leaders.

Again the response time for important notices is a problem. For instance, the leadership sometimes tries to take decisions concerning the church on the WhatsApp platform. However, the problem here is that not all are online at the same time thereby making a physical meeting a priority for such decisions.

The last challenge here, perhaps, is the fact that not all members are on the platform. Although, from the data collected, most of the members were on the platform, it was also found out that a few members of the church were not on the platform. As such, for these people, the only way to get information about the church was either through announcements at church, text messages or from roommates. The challenge with this is that, not all of the members will be present at church on Sundays and the text messages are not used as often as the WhatsApp platform.

#### **4.2 Suggestions by Respondents That Will Help Improve the Use of WhatsApp by Community Church**

Although the research has shown that use of WhatsApp by the church has been by far very helpful, there were some suggestions by the respondents that need to be taken into consideration for better and improved use.

One of these suggestions or recommendations is the prompt delivery of messages. For most of the respondents, the belief was that there should be an improvement in the promptness of messages delivered to the platform especially those that concern Sunday services and special programmes.

It was suggested by some respondents that such important messages be delivered as early as possible (two or three days before the scheduled date).

Again, there was a suggestion to increase the incidence of Bible discussions on the platform. There was not enough, according to respondents Bible discussions on the platform to help with the spiritual life of the members. As such there should be place for such discussions

Another suggestion made was to use the platform as a tool for evangelism. It is believed that it is possible to reach most of the students on campus through the use of WhatsApp by the church. This can be done by encouraging members to share Godly messages put on the platform with family and friends especially those on campus.

One other suggestion by respondents was to limit or ban completely the advertisement of products, thread messages on the platform. Such messages were considered not to be important or necessary to help the achievement of the purpose for which the platform was formed.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

From the discussion above, it can be said that the use of WhatsApp in CSUC Community Church has been of an immense benefit to the church. Although this assertion can be considered as a good thing, there were also some negative aspects of the integration of this app into the activities of the church which need to be carefully considered by the administration of the church to ensure maximum, efficient and effective use of WhatsApp for evangelism in and out of the campus.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This research was meant to investigate the impact of social media on Christianity in universities with particular focus on the effects of the use of WhatsApp in CSUC Community Church on the campus of Christian Service University College. The researcher therefore sought to examine and understand the effects of the use of the said social media tool on CSUC Community.

The work also sought to identify gaps and problems associated with the use of WhatsApp on the church.

The first chapter was mainly a brief background and a review of the various literatures. Other information provided were the problem identified which led to this research and also the aim and objectives of the study.

The other chapters provided information such as a brief historical background to the establishment of CSUC Community Church, some details about the mother institution, that is, Christian Service University College, the collection and analysis of data using the mixed method. In addition to this, the effects, both positive and negative, of the use of WhatsApp on CSUC Community Church were also discussed.

The researcher carefully analyzed and examined the data gathered in order to arrive at a conclusion on the usefulness and effects of the social media tool WhatsApp to CSUC Community Church. A general description on the implications of social media use for the world church was also included.

## **5.2 General Conclusion**

The use of social media has been established to be very crucial to the world in this era and beyond. It has become almost a necessity for everyday life. It is needed in all walks of life from education, healthcare, politics and gradually, religion. Christianity as a world religion can therefore not ignore the use of social media to spread the gospel in fulfillment of the divine mandate given by Jesus Christ.

CSUC Community Church, founded on the principles of Christian Service University College, has integrated the use of the social media tool, WhatsApp into its activities since 2015. In accordance with the words of the anthem of the mother institution, "...Abroad to the distant lands", CSUC Community Church is making every effort to use the social media tool to effectively preach on campus and in its environs.

However, this choice is not without its problems.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

The researcher from the data gathered, observed that, there were still some members who were not on the church's platform limiting their access to information about the church. It is therefore recommended that, the church platform is updated on a regular basis in order to be able to include all new members of the church.

The researcher also recommends an increase in the frequency of devotional messages on the platform as these messages have been seen to be a source of inspiration to some of the members. There should also be an increase in the incidence of Bible-based discussions on the platform as this will help members in their understanding of the Word of God.

The church should also consider limiting the use of the platform for sharing unnecessary and irrelevant information such as advertisements and thread messages. It is recommended that the church prohibit, if possible, to a large extent the use of the platform for sharing such messages.

Lastly, as a recommendation for further research, it would be prudent to extend this research to include other Christian organizations and churches on other university campuses in the country in order to fully understand how social media is helping the preaching of the gospel on these campuses.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

Kothari, C. R. *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques* New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 2004.

### Journals and Articles

Bouhnik, Dan & Deshen, Mor. "WhatsApp goes to school: Mobile instant messaging between teachers and students," *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research* 13, (2014): 217-231. Retrieved from <http://www.jite.org/documents/Vol13/JITEv13ResearchP217-231Bouhnik0601.pdf>

Johnson, Mark D. "Social Media as Mission: Digital Ministry for Today's Church," *Mission of the Church Today* (2014)

Kunle, Badmos, "Effect of Social Media on the Church" (paper presented at the 2014 annual conference of Theological Friends and Fellows, organized by the Redeemed Christian Bible College, Lagos, Nigeria)

Montag, Christian, Konrad Błaszczewicz, Rayna Sariyska, Bernd Lachmann, Ionut Andone, Boris Trendafilov, Mark Eibes and Alexander Markowetz. "Smartphone usage in the 21st century: Who is active on WhatsApp?" *BMC Research Notes* 8, no. 331 (2015): 1-6 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s13104-015-1280-z>

White, Peter, Tella, Fortune & Ampofo, M.D. "A missional study of the use of social media (Facebook) by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors". *KOERS – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 81, no. 2 (2016): 1-10 Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10108/koers.81.2.2250>

## Internet Sources

Internet World Statistics, 2019, viewed 19 May 2019 from

<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>

Ghana Statistical Service, 2012, *Population and Housing Census 2010*, accessed on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2019

from [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marqueeupdater/Census2010Summary report of final results.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marqueeupdater/Census2010Summary%20report%20of%20final%20results.pdf)

## Thesis

Nyame, Paul K. “*Students in Mission: An assessment of the Outreach Programme of Department of Theology in Christian Service University College*” (B.Th. Thesis, Christian Service University College, 2017)

## Other Sources

Christian Service University College, *Under-Graduate Students’ Handbook for 2015/2016 Academic Year* (Kumasi: Christian Service University College, 2015-2016)