

THE CHALLENGES OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS
TECHNOLOGY ON PUBLIC WORSHIP
IN OGBOMOSO BAPTIST CONFERENCE

NBTS
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ABSTRACT

This research work titled “The Challenges of Information and Communications Technology in Public Worship in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference” focused on the usage of ICT equipment in the church. The objective of the research work is to investigate the types of ICT equipment that are available in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference churches and their possible associated challenges within the church. The study established the need for ICT in worship and the best way the church can handle the challenges of its usage to retain and maintain the sacredness of worship. Therefore having reviewed the concept of both worship and ICT, a descriptive research design was used to find out the usage of ICT and its challenges in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference. The findings revealed that there are ICT equipment in churches, and most worshippers come to church with their personal ICT equipment. It is also established that ICT usage has a lot of challenges and prospects in public worship. The greatest challenge which the church has today is the challenge of distractions caused by mobile ICT gadgets which worshippers bring to church, but proper use of the equipment and proper handling of the challenges will help the church in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference and the Nigerian Baptist Convention churches to break new frontiers and communicate the love of God to the dying world effectively. Based on the results of the findings therefore, the researcher recommends that; the church should maximize the use of ICT in public worship, make efforts to overcome various associated challenges, discourage the abuses of mobile communication devices in the church and that the church should not be desperate in acquiring ICT equipment unless there is need for it.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This research was conducted to ascertain the challenges of ICT usage in public worship and based on this research findings, the following were derived:

- i. Majority of churches in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference use ICT gadgets in worship and mostly, Public Address System and computers. Most churches have not been using the modern internet related equipment. Some of the few churches that are having modern equipment do not have hands that are competent enough to operate them.
- ii. Usage of ICT has a wide range of prospects for the church and some associated problems especially in the area of abuses. If the church can take bold steps to overcome the challenges and problems associated with it, the church can do more to expand the kingdom of God by breaking new frontiers through spiritual worship, proper church administration, mission and evangelistic works.
- iii. Worshippers come to church with all kinds of mobile ICT gadgets today, especially cell phones. The inscription “**please switch off your phones**” in many churches is an indication that mobile phones cause a lot of distractions in the church because many who bring them to church use them for activities that are not related to worship. The church can overcome this by properly educating the members on the implications of ICT abuses in the church, on

ethics and discipline and to take a stringent measure of installing mobile phone jammer in the church that will emit the signals on cell phones and intercepts communications. By this, it will be impossible for people to make or receive calls, send or receive messages in the church. Although Cell phone jammers are illegal in most countries, except to military, law enforcement and certain governmental agencies (www.wisegeek.org) but the church can seek legal advice and take necessary steps to get it installed.

- iv. Churches should not acquire ICT because of wrong motives. When external speakers are mounted outside the church and the volume becomes so high, it becomes noise to the community. The church of God should not be noise makers but peace makers.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- i Considering the global trend of ICT usage, the church should also maximize the use of it in public worship.
- ii The church should make efforts to overcome the challenges associated with ICT usage before it renders the church worldly and unspiritual.
- iii. The church should discourage abuses of cell phones and other mobile gadgets in the church. Where it is necessary for a worshipper to be at alert because of the nature of their work, such individual should be encouraged to be decent in the usage.

- iv. The church should not be so desperate in acquiring ICT equipment if there are no needs for them. Churches need to be focused on the divine mission set before her. The Church should not be distracted by uncontrolled cravings for socialization of the church.