



Information Seeking Behavior Of The Clergy: A Study Of Parish Pastors In Redeemed Christian Church Of God In Agbarho, Delta State, Nigeria

Angela Chiwendu Nweke, Ademola Ferdinand Omosekejimi, Obioma Deborah Okoli

Abstract:

This study examines the information-seeking behavior of the clergy using parish pastors in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Agbarho community in Delta State as a case study. The study seeks to identify the information needs, the sources of information, the purpose of the use of information, and the challenges to information seeking among RCCG parish pastors in Agbarho. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The total population for the study comprises 44 parish pastors of the RCCG in two Zones of RCCG Delta Province 4 in Agbarho Community. The entire population was used as a sample using the total enumeration sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The data collected for this study were analyzed using simple percentage/frequency counts. The study found that RCCG pastors in Agbarho need and use the information for several issues such as sermon preparation, personal and church growth, church administration, evangelism, conflict resolution, meetings/programs, and personal/members' welfare among others. They get the information they need from formal sources such as the Bible, books including all RCCG publications such as Open Heavens and Sunday school manuals, magazines (RCCG Bulletins), etc. Also, RCCG pastors in Agbarho community, Delta State, Nigeria also gets information from informal sources such as senior pastors, colleagues, friends in the ministry, church members, and family among others. In their effort to seek information, RCCG pastors in Agbarho community, Delta State, Nigeria faces some challenges such as limited financial resources, lack of access to ICT facilities, language barriers, information overload, time factor, and poor awareness of information sources. The study recommends that the RCCG authorities in conjunction with other churches and community leaders should establish and equip a library in every community where they are present as a way of advancing their Christian Social Responsibilities (CSR) as this will allow their pastors to have access to free and timely information among others.

To cite this article:

Nweke, A. C., Omosekejimi, A. F., & Okoli, O. D. (2024). Information Seeking Behavior Of The Clergy: A Study Of Parish Pastors In Redeemed Christian Church Of God In Agbarho, Delta State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Librarianship*, 9(3), 125-138.
<https://doi.org/10.23974/ijol.2024.vol9.3.383>

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Information Seeking Behavior Of The Clergy: A Study Of Parish Pastors In Redeemed Christian Church Of God In Agbarho, Delta State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the information-seeking behavior of the clergy using parish pastors in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Agbarho community in Delta State as a case study. The study seeks to identify the information needs, the sources of information, the purpose of the use of information, and the challenges to information seeking among RCCG parish pastors in Agbarho. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The total population for the study comprises 44 parish pastors of the RCCG in two Zones of RCCG Delta Province 4 in Agbarho Community. The entire population was used as a sample using the total enumeration sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The data collected for this study were analyzed using simple percentage/frequency counts. The study found that RCCG pastors in Agbarho need and use the information for several issues such as sermon preparation, personal and church growth, church administration, evangelism, conflict resolution, meetings/programs, and personal/members' welfare among others. They get the information they need from formal sources such as the Bible, books including all RCCG publications such as Open Heavens and Sunday school manuals, magazines (RCCG Bulletins), etc. Also, RCCG pastors in Agbarho community, Delta State, Nigeria also gets information from informal sources such as senior pastors, colleagues, friends in the ministry, church members, and family among others. In their effort to seek information, RCCG pastors in Agbarho community, Delta State, Nigeria faces some challenges such as limited financial resources, lack of access to ICT facilities, language barriers, information overload, time factor, and poor awareness of information sources. The study recommends that the RCCG authorities in conjunction with other churches and community leaders should establish and equip a library in every community where they are present as a way of advancing their Christian Social Responsibilities (CSR) as this will allow their pastors to have access to free and timely information among others.

Keywords: Information Seeking, Information Behaviour, Clergy, Pastors, Redeemed Christian Church of God

INTRODUCTION

In the world today, there is no denying that religion is integral to societal development and humans cannot ignore its relevance because it is a worldwide phenomenon (Dankasa, 2015). Most religions have people who serve as clergy and are charged with the responsibility of administering to the adherents. In Christianity, the clergy is the entire class of religious officials, from priests to pastors to bishops and beyond. The word ‘pastor’ is a Latin word for herdsman (Harper, 2010). It is an official title for a priest or a preacher in a local church. Their qualifications and ordination vary from denomination to denomination. Pastors are trained people who have devoted their lives to serving God by imparting biblical wisdom and guidance to society. Their responsibilities include administration, evangelism, preaching, directing prayers or services, community development, public relations, youth services, accounting, members’ care, teaching, and counseling, including HIV and AIDS counseling (Matsveru, 2013). They give people emotional support and comfort in times of sadness or joy. Individuals, families, and nations rely on them in relation to a number of problems ranging from social to religious issues. Like other professions, pastors also need information to be effective in their ministries and carry out their everyday tasks. In Nigeria, pastors play a very important role in communities and as such, it is vital to understand their information-seeking behavior as their ministerial activities heavily relies on information to thrive.

Information-seeking behavior is a process of searching for information and utilizing the same to complete an assigned task or to fill a need. Information is basically structured or processed data (Tubachi, 2018). According to Ali and Jan (2020, p. 1), information-seeking behavior is a “consequence of a need perceived by an information user, who, in order to satisfy that need, makes demands upon formal or informal information sources or services, which result in success or failure to find relevant information”. Furthermore, information-seeking behavior involves a set of actions such as recognition of the need for information, information-seeking/search methodology/behavior, selection and evaluation of information if and when found, the use of information found, and the challenges to information access or use (Sultana & Ayesha, 2016). Generally, pastors encounter various issues that require information for solutions. In an attempt to provide the solution to their members' physical or spiritual challenges or needs, pastors search for information. Therefore, to ascertain the chain of activities that occurs when pastors are seeking for information to solve personal or ministerial problems, their information-seeking behavior must be investigated. On the basis of the aforementioned, this study will examine the information-seeking behavior of the clergy using pastors in the Redeemed Christian Church in Agbarho as a case study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite information's critical role in the effectiveness of clergymen in their pastoral duties, there is limited knowledge of the information-seeking behavior of parish pastors in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Agbarho, Delta State. The lack of understanding of the factors that influence their information-seeking behavior hinders the development of strategies that could enhance their access to relevant and timely information, thereby potentially affecting the quality of their pastoral work. This study, therefore, aims to investigate the information-seeking behavior of parish pastors in the RCCG in Agbarho, Delta State, with a view to identifying the factors that influence their information-seeking behavior and the challenges they encounter in accessing information.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to examine the information-seeking behavior of pastors in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Agbarho Delta. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. identify the information needs of RCCG pastors in Agbarho, Delta State;
2. examine the sources through which RCCG pastors in Agbarho access information;
3. identify the purpose for which RCCG pastors in Agbarho use the information they get; and
4. investigate the challenges of information seeking among RCCG pastors in Agbarho.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. what are the information needs of RCCG pastors in Agbarho, Delta State?
2. What are the sources through which RCCG pastors in Agbarho, Delta State access information?
3. What are the purposes for which RCCG pastors in Agbarho Delta State use the information they get?
4. What are the challenges of information seeking among RCCG pastors in Agbarho, Delta State?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature in this study were reviewed in line with the study's research questions.

INFORMATION NEEDS OF PASTORS

Pastors face unique difficulties inherent in their careers, most of which are connected to their church's growth. Pastors themselves say they're most concerned about seeing their churchgoers grow spiritually and making connections with those outside of their churches (Earls, 2022). As pastors serve in their different duties of administration, Christian education, church discipline, community service, counseling, evangelism, prayer, sermon preparation, social action, teaching, preaching, home visitations, weddings, premarital counseling, conducting funerals, and visiting the sick in the hospital, they definitely need information. Also, pastors train in different institutions and serve in denominations and congregations that vary socially, economically, politically and spiritually. Their information-seeking behaviors could therefore be affected by their different contexts.

While commenting on the information needs of pastors, Matsveru (2013) in his study of information needs and seeking behaviour of Namibian Pastors found that concerning the kind of information pastors were searching for, four areas of ministry were prominent: preaching, teaching, personal growth, and counseling. Only two out of the 16 pastors said that they did not counsel their church members because they had delegated this task to other members of the church who were qualified counselors. Preaching was regarded as the primary reason for information seeking. Although the pastors gathered information for specific tasks, they also gathered information for personal growth and future use. The study further revealed that pastors ranked counselling (47.83), community development (50.72%), administration (45.65%), evangelism

(86.96%), preaching (81.16%), directing prayers (75.36%), leading Bible study (74.64%), member care (62.32%), teaching (76.81%), public relations (39.13%), leading a service (71.74%) and youth programmes (65.22%) as highly required area where information is needed to carry out pastoral duties.

Furthermore, Hussain and Hussain (2021) conducted a study on the systematic literature review of information needs and sources of clergy and found that there were certain information challenges that were faced by the religious professionals in their everyday life and to meet them, they need information. The most prominent reason identified in the articles reviews according to Hussain and Hussain (2021) was preaching. Some other reasons were also identified, like counseling, caregiving, administration and personal development as well. In fact, these were the roles that were being performed by clergy in their everyday life.

Sources of Information for Pastors.

An information need often leads the user to search for information, making demands upon a range of information sources. According to Hayden (2011), these information sources include information systems (university and public libraries); human resources (experts, professors, colleagues); and other resources (personal libraries and media). Case (2006) as cited by Matsveru (2013) averred that information sources can be formal or informal. Formal sources refer to the author refers textbooks, encyclopedias, or daily newspapers, while informal sources tend to be friends, colleagues, and family. Though since the primary responsibility of pastors is to preach to their congregation, one would assume they will most likely consult the bible for information when preparing their sermons. However, pastors utilize many sources of information in an attempt to meet their information needs.

Commenting on the sources of information for pastors, Matsveru (2013) in his study of information needs and seeking behavior of Namibian Pastors found that 64 (46.38%) participants indicated that pastors turned to church documents, 69 (50%) indicated they turned to the Internet, and 106 (76.81%) indicated they turned to personal libraries “very often”. Fifty-nine (42.75%) participants indicated “quite often” to other pastors, 69 (50%) to radio, and 71 (51.45%) to newspapers. The table also reveals that 58 (42.03%) indicated “not very often” to television, 68 (49.28%) to public libraries, and 66 (47.83%) to university libraries. The report of the interview conducted by Matsveru (2013) further revealed that three of the respondents (pastors) said that they made use of the Internet. The pastors pointed to several information sources which helped them to keep abreast with current issues. Among them were websites, news outlets, blogs, radio and television. According to Matseru, they also mentioned interaction with the community as a way of getting to know about new developments. They go to places where people meet, such as weddings and soccer stadiums. All sixteen pastors also pointed out that they always read the Bible as a way of equipping themselves with current issues.

Alos, Hussain and Hussain (2021) conducted a study on the systematic literature review of information needs and sources of clergy and found that the clergymen acquired information from different sources. These sources were different in nature. To maintain uniformity and to provide an analysis with clarity, the researcher arranged these scattered sources thoughtfully, under three generic terms which are print, digital, and fellows. Hussain and Hussain (2021) noted that the term print represented religious books like Quran, Hadith, Bible, Commentaries, religious documents, and other printed material like encyclopedias, dictionaries, journals, newspapers, notes, and biographies. The term digital indicated internet (email), websites, online newspapers, databases,

audio-visual material, web 2.0 applications (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube), and mobile apps. Whereas, the fellows described fellow clergy, spiritual directors, the committee of ulama, friends, family, and colleagues.

Purposes for the Use of Information by Pastors

Pastors use information for a variety of purposes, all of which are focused on supporting and serving their congregation and community. An example is spiritual guidance. Pastors use information to provide spiritual guidance to their congregation. They may draw on religious texts, personal experiences, and insights from other spiritual leaders to help their congregants deepen their faith and understanding of religious teachings. They may also offer pastoral counseling and support to help individuals cope with challenges and struggles in their lives. Also, they use information for teaching and educating their followers. Pastors play a crucial role in educating their congregation about religious beliefs, practices, and traditions. They use information to develop sermons, lead Bible studies, and teach classes that help people learn more about their faith and how to apply it in their daily lives. Pastors also apply information for community building. Pastors use information to build and strengthen their communities. They may use social media, email, and other communication channels to keep their congregation informed about events, initiatives, and opportunities to get involved in community service projects. In the same vein, pastors utilize information for administrative purposes. Pastors are often responsible for the day-to-day management of their church or organization. They use information to plan and execute events, manage budgets, and oversee staff and volunteers (Matsveru, 2013). It is also worth noting that pastors need information to prepare for outreach. Pastors use information to reach out to people who may be interested in learning more about their faith or joining their congregation. They may use social media and other marketing channels to promote events and initiatives or engage with potential new members.

A study by Staman, et al. (2010) as cited by Matsveru (2013) revealed that pastors use different types of resources for each of the tasks they perform (administration, counseling, evangelism, sermons, directing prayers, community outreach, public relations, youth services, accounting, member care, and teaching). They use official religious books and websites, other books on theology and doctrine, and scholarly journals for preparing sermons. The study by Hussain and Hussain (2021) also found that clergies used the information they get for the purpose of preparing sermons, administrative responsibilities, caregiver roles, and counseling among others.

Challenges of Information Seeking among Pastors

It is no news that pastors use information for a number of purposes related to their ministerial assignments. Pastors use information to support their ministry and serve their community by communicating religious beliefs, providing emotional and spiritual support, leading and administering their organization, conducting research and studying religious texts, collaborating with other community leaders and organizations, staying informed about current events and issues, and developing and implementing programs and initiatives to support the practical and spiritual needs of their community. Phabha, Connaway and Olszowski (2007) discussed the factors that negatively impact information-seeking behavior (challenges). They included: the feeling of information users obtaining sufficient information and consulting trusted sources, lack of time, limited financial resources, nature of the problem to be answered or question to be solved, nature of task at hand and task-domain knowledge. Others are context, situation or

setting in which the information user is living or working, the particular search system engaged and motivation level of the information user and his/her information-seeking ability.

Perley, Gentry, Fleming and Sein (2007) itemized the factors (challenges) relating to information-seeking behavior contributing to why information seekers do not physically visit the library and why they tend to use library websites through remote access. These are limited time due to other works/tasks, convenient access to a computer with internet connection, lack of awareness of available library services, poor arrangement of a full range of library collection and resources, inconvenient library opening and closing hours, inconvenient physical location of library premises and availability of resources from the internet. Furthermore, data from the questionnaires and the interviews in the study of Matsveru (2013) revealed that pastors did not have computers, lacked computer skills, and they did not have money to subscribe to relevant Internet resources or to buy books. The study further indicated that pastors found it difficult to understand information sources not written in their mother language.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The total population comprised 44 parish pastors of the RCCG in two Zones of RCCG Delta Province 4 in Agbarho Community. As of the study period, there were two zones. Resurrection and City of Refuge, under RCCG Maranatha, Delta Province 4 in Agbarho community. Resurrection Zone included 23 parishes, while City of Refuge Zone had 21 parishes, each pastored by one individual. This totaled 44 pastors across both zones. The entire population was utilized as the sample due to its manageable size, employing a total enumeration sampling technique. For data collection, a structured questionnaire was developed. The development process included several key steps to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument. Initially, the questionnaire items were formulated based on a thorough review of relevant literature and consultation with experts in the field of pastoral studies and church leadership. Following the initial draft, a pilot or pretest phase was conducted with a small group of pastors (not included in the main study sample). This pretest aimed to identify any ambiguities or misunderstandings in the questionnaire items and to refine the wording for clarity and appropriateness within the context of the study population.

After the pretest, adjustments were made to the questionnaire based on feedback received from the pastors who participated in the pilot study. This iterative process helped ensure that the final questionnaire was clear, comprehensive, and relevant to the research objectives. To establish the validity of the questionnaire, both content validity and construct validity were considered. Content validity was ensured through careful selection of items that accurately represented the concepts being measured. Construct validity was assessed by examining how well the questionnaire items corresponded to theoretical constructs and by conducting factor analysis if applicable. A total of 44 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the pastors, resulting in 41 completed and usable responses, yielding a response rate of 93%. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and frequency counts to summarize the pastors' responses to the survey items.

FINDINGS

Research Question 1: What are the information needs of RCCG pastors in Agbarho, Delta State?

Data in Figure 1 provides an answer to the question.

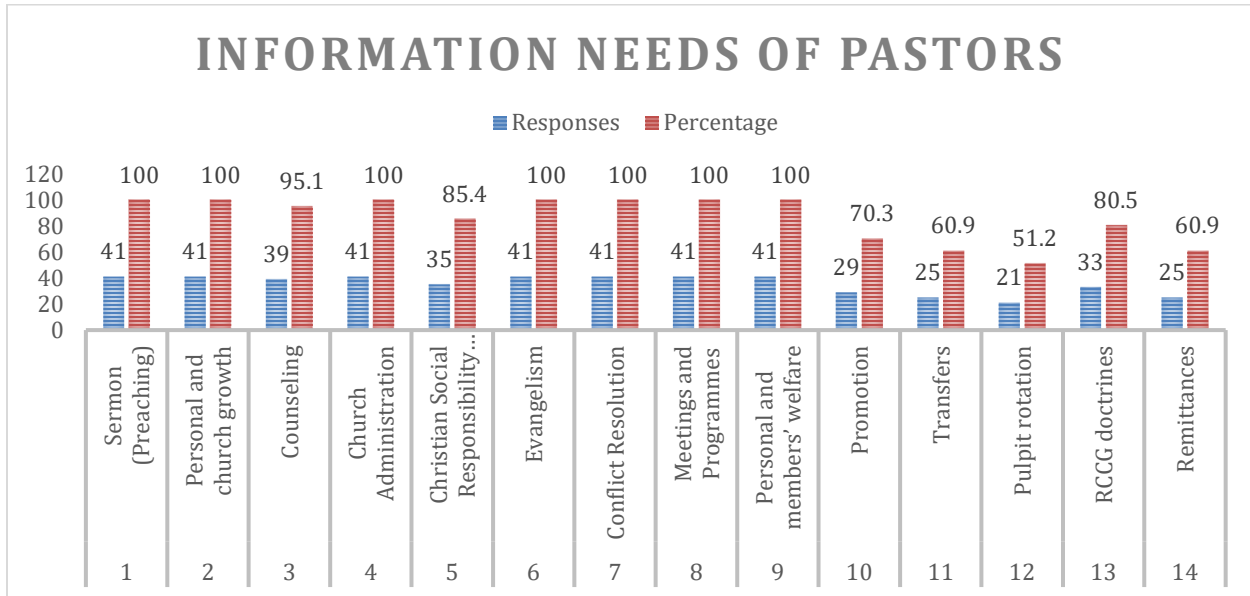


Figure 1. Information needs of pastors

Figure 1 reveals the information needs of pastors. In the top flight, 41(100%) of the respondents indicated that they need information on Sermon (Preaching), Personal and church growth, Church Administration, Evangelism, Conflict Resolution, Meetings and Programmes, and Personal/members' welfare. This was followed closely by 39(95.1%) who needed information on counseling, 35(85.4%) needed information on Christian social responsibility (CRS) (community development programme), 33(80.5%) of the respondents needs information on RCCG doctrines, 29(70.3%) need information on the promotion, 25(60.9%) needs information on transfers and remittance respectively and 21(51.2%) representing a little above half of the respondents needs information on pulpit rotation. This means that the information needs of the RCCG pastors in Agbarho include: information on sermons (preaching), personal and church growth, church administration, evangelism, conflict resolution, meetings and programs, and personal/members' welfare, counseling, Christian social responsibility (CRS) (community development program), RCCG doctrines, promotion, transfers, remittance, and pulpit rotation.

Research Question 2: What are the sources through which RCCG pastors in Agbarho, Delta State access information?

Data in Figure 2 provide an answer to the question.

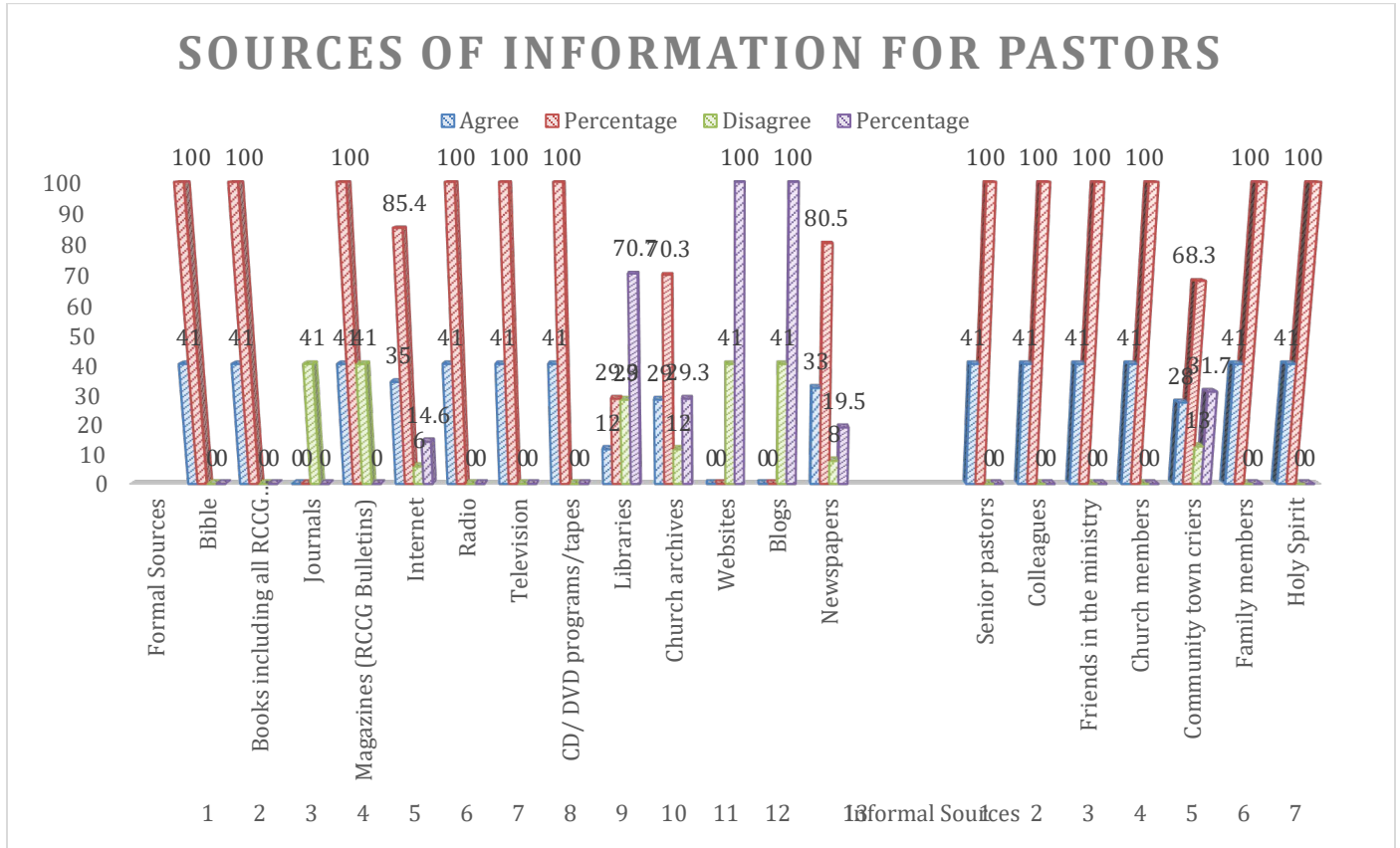


Figure 2. Sources of Information for Pastors.

Figure 2 revealed the sources of information for pastors. In the formal sources category, 41(100%) representing all the respondents agreed that they get information from Bible, books including all RCCG publications such as Open Heavens and Sunday school manuals, magazines (RCCG Bulletins), radio, television, and CD/DVD programmes tapes. Also, the majority 35(85.4%) get information from the Internet, followed by 33(80.5%) who gets information from newspapers, and 29(70.3%) who gets information from church archives. However, All the respondents disagreed with getting information from journals, blogs, and websites while majority of them disagreed with getting information from libraries. The table further revealed that in the informal sources category, all the respondents agreed to get information from senior pastors, colleagues, friends in the ministry, church members, family members, and the Holy Spirit why the majority 28(68.3%) agreed to get information from community town criers. This means that RCCG pastors in Agbarho Community in Delta State, Nigeria get information from formal sources such as the Bible, books including all RCCG publications such as Open Heavens and Sunday school manuals, magazines (RCCG Bulletins), radio, television, CD/DVD programs tapes, Internet, newspapers, and church archives. Also, RCCG pastors in Agbarho community, Delta State,

Nigeria also get information from informal sources such as senior pastors, colleagues, friends in the ministry, church members, family and friends, the Holy Spirit as well as community town criers.

Research Question 3: What are the purposes for which RCCG pastors in Agbarho Delta State use the information they get?

Figure 3 provides an answer to the question.

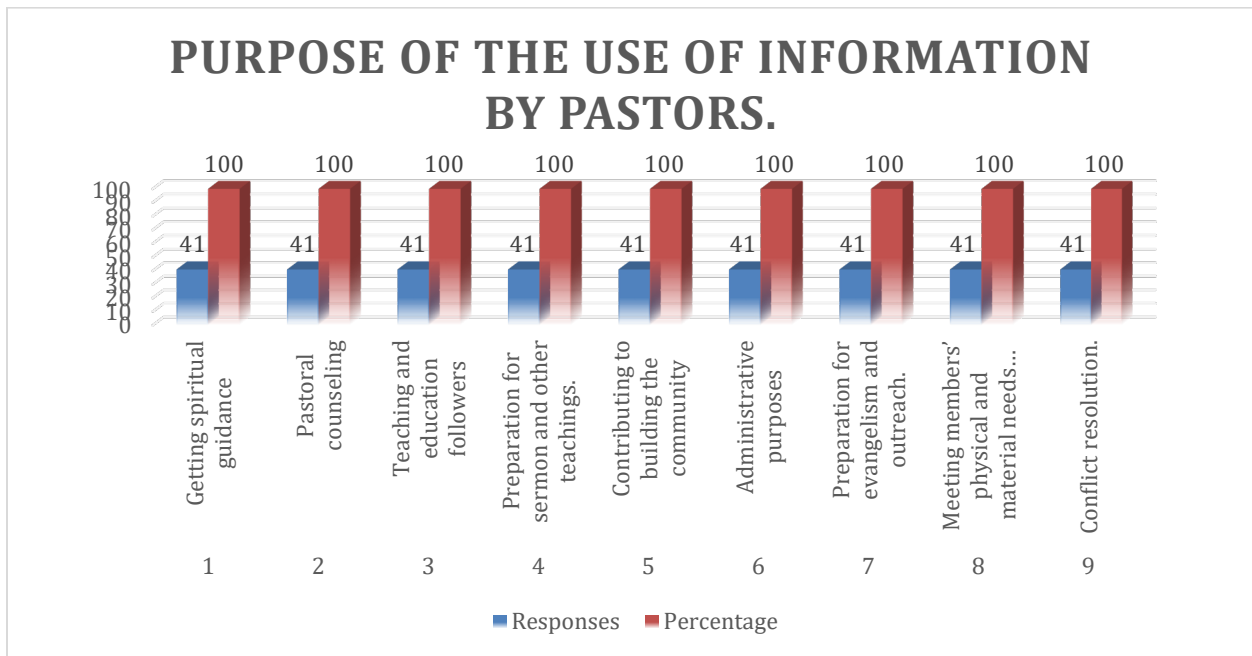


Figure 3. Purpose of the use of information by pastors.

Figure 3 reveals the purpose for which pastors use information. The table shows that 41(100%) representing all the respondents unanimously agreed that they use the information for getting spiritual guidance, pastoral counseling, teaching and educating their followers, preparation for sermons and other teachings, contributing to building the community, administrative purposes, preparation for evangelism and outreach, meeting members physical and material needs (welfare) as well as conflict resolution.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges of information seeking among RCCG pastors in Agbarho, Delta State?

Data in Figure 4 provide an answer to the question.

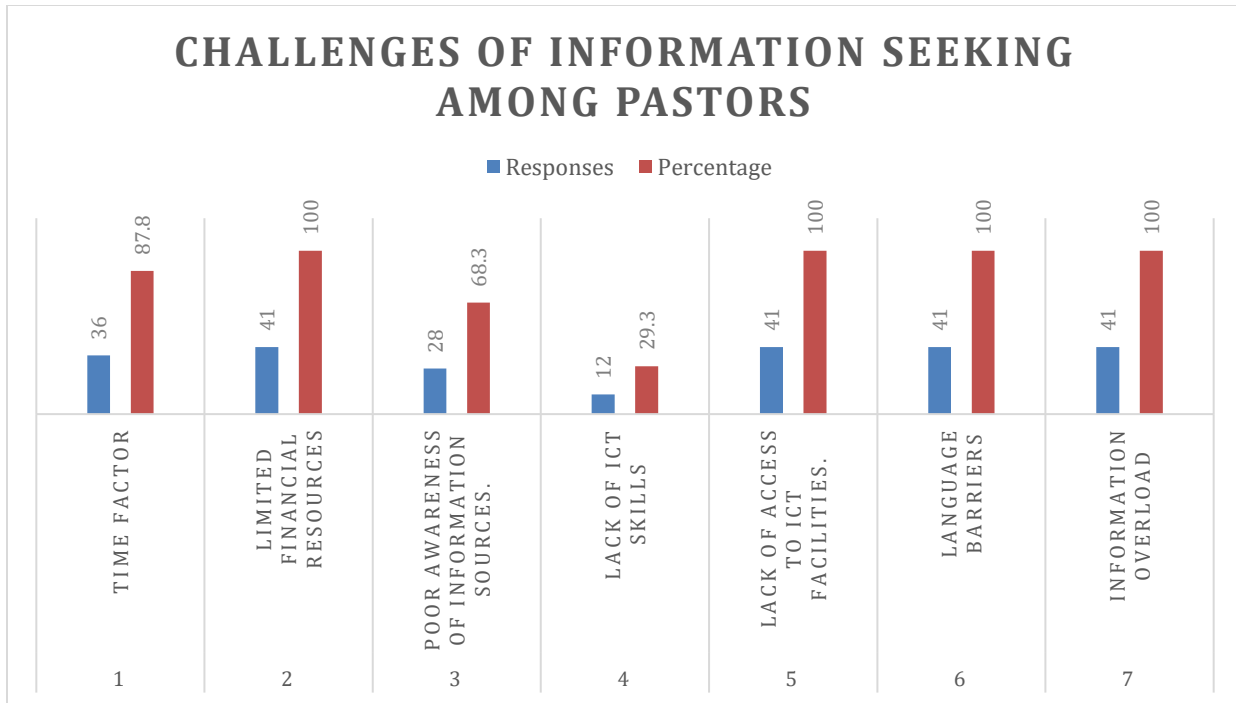


Figure 4. Challenges of information seeking among pastors.

Figure 4 revealed that 41(100%) of the respondents agreed that some of their challenges when seeking information are limited financial resources, lack of access to ICT facilities, language barriers, and information overload. The majority 36(87.8%) and 28(68.3%) of them agreed with the time factor and poor awareness of information sources as challenges while only 12(29.3%) of the respondents agreed that a lack of ICT skills was a challenge. This means that the challenges of information seeking among RCCG pastors in Agbarho community in Delta State, Nigeria include: limited financial resources, lack of access to ICT facilities, language barriers, information overload, time factors, and poor awareness of information sources.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study revealed clearly that the information needs of RCCG pastors in Agbarho include a broad spectrum of topics essential to their pastoral duties. These include information on sermon preparation, personal and church growth, church administration, evangelism strategies, conflict resolution, meeting and program management, personal and members' welfare, counseling, Christian social responsibility (community development programs), RCCG doctrines, promotion criteria, transfers, remittance processes, and pulpit rotation. This finding resonates with Matsveru's (2013) study, which similarly identified pastors' information needs spanning preaching, teaching, personal growth, counseling, community development, evangelism, prayer direction, Bible study leadership, member care, public relations, and youth programs.

Furthermore, this study identified the primary sources from which RCCG pastors in Agbarho obtain information. These sources include formal channels such as the Bible, RCCG publications (e.g., Open Heavens, Sunday school manuals), magazines (RCCG Bulletins), radio,

television, CDs/DVDs, internet resources, newspapers, and church archives. Informal sources also play a significant role, including interactions with senior pastors, colleagues, ministry friends, church members, family, friends, and spiritual guidance from the Holy Spirit and community town criers. This finding corroborates Matsveru's (2013) observation that pastors utilize both formal and informal sources for their informational needs. Hussain and Hussain (2021) further substantiate these findings by categorizing pastors' information sources into print (religious books, commentaries, journals), digital (internet, websites, social media), and personal networks (clergy, spiritual directors, colleagues). They emphasize that these diverse sources enable pastors to access information crucial for sermon preparation, administrative tasks, caregiving, counseling, and pastoral education.

In practice, the implications of these findings suggest several strategies for supporting RCCG pastors in Agbarho:

1. **Enhancing Access to Information:** Addressing barriers such as limited financial resources and lack of ICT facilities by providing subsidized access to relevant digital resources, training in computer literacy, and ensuring internet connectivity in church premises.
2. **Promoting Multilingual Resources:** Recognizing language barriers by translating essential texts and resources into pastors' native languages to facilitate better understanding and application.
3. **Training and Capacity Building:** Offering workshops and seminars on effective use of information sources, sermon preparation techniques, pastoral counseling skills, and community development strategies.
4. **Building Collaborative Networks:** Facilitating networking opportunities among pastors, both locally and globally, to share best practices, mentorship, and spiritual guidance.
5. **Managing Information Overload:** Providing guidance on managing information overload through filtering tools, prioritization techniques, and efficient time management strategies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the information-seeking behavior of the clergy using pastors in the Redeemed Christian Church in Agbarho community, Delta State, Nigeria as a case study. It is safe to conclude from the study that RCCG pastors in Agbarho need information for several issues such as sermon preparation, personal and church growth, church administration, evangelism, conflict resolution, meetings and programs, and personal/members' welfare, counseling, Christian social responsibility (CRS) (community development program), RCCG doctrines, promotion, transfers, remittance, and pulpit rotation. They get the information they need from sources such as the Bible, books including all RCCG publications such as Open Heavens and Sunday school manuals, magazines (RCCG Bulletins), radio, television, CD/DVD programs tapes, Internet, newspapers, and church archives. Also, RCCG pastors in Agbarho community, Delta State, Nigeria also get information from informal sources such as senior pastors, colleagues, friends in the ministry, church members, family and friends, the Holy Spirit as well as community town criers. In their effort to seek information, RCCG pastors in Agbarho community, Delta State, Nigeria faces some challenges such as limited financial resources, lack of access to ICT facilities, language barriers, information overload, time factors, and poor awareness of information sources. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that:

1. The RCCG authorities in conjunction with other churches and community leaders should establish and equip a library in every community where they are present as a way of advancing their Christian Social Responsibilities (CSR) as this will allow their pastors to have access to free and timely information.
2. RCCG as a ministry should assist their pastors with modern ICT facilities such as Android Mobile Phones and Tablets to enable them to access information sources that are available online and in electronic formats.
3. Information from the Church's headquarters should be disseminated through the appropriate approach (top-bottom approach) to ensure that pastors at the parish level will not be left behind.
4. Pastors should endeavor to get the locals to interpret any information passed in the local language that is not clear to them as this will help them to be aware of what is going on in their local church environment.

Despite the potential benefits of the recommendations, implementing them may face some challenges such as:

1. Financial Constraints: Limited church budgets may restrict investments in ICT infrastructure and subscription fees for digital resources.
2. Technological Literacy: Some pastors may lack proficiency in using digital tools effectively, requiring comprehensive training and ongoing support.
3. Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: Ensuring that information resources are culturally relevant and accessible in diverse languages may pose logistical and translation challenges.
4. Time Constraints: Pastors' demanding schedules may limit their availability for training and accessing information beyond immediate pastoral duties.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The researchers suggest future research in the following areas:

1. Effectiveness of Information Dissemination Channels: Researchers can investigate how different methods of information dissemination (e.g., top-down approaches from church headquarters, peer networks, digital platforms) impact the access and utilization of information by pastors in local communities.
2. Integration of Technology in Ministry: Researchers can explore the adoption and utilization of modern ICT tools (such as smartphones, tablets, digital platforms) among pastors and their effectiveness in enhancing pastoral duties like sermon preparation, counseling, and community engagement.
3. Impact of Information Access on Community Development: Researchers can investigate how pastors' access to information influences their ability to implement community development programs and Christian Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives within their local communities.

POTENTIAL METHODOLOGIES

Potential methodologies for the areas future research identified above could include qualitative studies such as in-depth interviews or focus groups with pastors to delve into their experiences

with information-seeking, exploring challenges faced and strategies employed. Quantitative surveys could be administered to pastors across diverse regions to quantify information-seeking behaviors, preferences for sources, and perceived barriers. Mixed-methods approaches combining qualitative and quantitative methods would offer a comprehensive understanding of pastors' information-seeking behaviors. Case studies could also be used to investigate specific RCCG communities to uncover contextual factors influencing information access and strategies for overcoming challenges. Experimental designs, like controlled experiments testing interventions such as ICT training or community library initiatives, could also be adopted to assess their effectiveness in enhancing pastors' access to information.

By addressing these future research areas, methodologies, and their broader implications, scholars can contribute to enhancing the support systems and resources available to pastors within RCCG and other religious organizations, thereby strengthening their capacity to fulfill their spiritual and community leadership roles effectively.

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