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Assessing Whatapp for Communication in A Youth Organization: A Dual Method Approach

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ABSTRACT

Communication is pertinent to the existence of all human endeavours. Without communication, most sectors of our endeavours may be deformed. This study assesses the impact of communication among diocesan youth executives of the Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF) in the Diocese of Abuja. The scholars employed the dual methodology in conducting the study. Eighteen (18) executives from the diocese were interviewed and surveyed. Findings from the study reveal that the Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF) Diocese of Abuja to a large extent uses WhatsApp for communication purpose. It was also found that the affordability and ease of use of the application motivate the youth executives to use WhatsApp. The overarching themes that emerged in the qualitative study include ease of communication and manipulation, cost-effectiveness, purpose tailored, closely-knitted, distraction. Revelations from the quantitative survey show that a higher percentage of the respondents affirm that WhatsApp is a preferred tool for communication. The study is anchored on Media Richness Theory (MRT). Despite the gains of WhatsApp, albeit, the research found that there are distractions in the communication flow due to the sharing of unsolicited contents on the group, which may derail conversion. The study concludes that WhatsApp has proved to be useful in the youth organization.

Keywords: *Social media, WhatsApp, Communication, Youth, Organization*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of communication in society cannot be underestimated. Every human endeavour revolves around communication; from business, pleasure, education, conflict, peace amongst others. Information is the oil that engenders the smooth operation of varying sectors of any society. No doubt a saying goes thus: if you are not informed, you are deformed. Communication is a phenomenon that scholars (Poutanen et al., 2016) have tried to comprehend because information does not flow in emptiness.

Knowing how to communicate and the best way to deliver a message is pivotal so as to achieve the desired outcome because communication is need-based and is targeted to meet particular needs (Kariuki, 2017). Organizations have to factor their communication needs to the above assertion. If not, they may just be communicating wrongly. In order not to communicate in a vacuum, an organization may consider certain needs like the need to create content by organization members, connecting with others, and the need to collaborate with others within and outside the organization. In this information age, some of these needs are created met through social media (Bernoff and Li, 2008). Besides, most contents on social media are user-generated. The social media has allowed the audience to create communication contents at their own pace. This has triggered the emergence of literate and sophisticated audiences; an audience that has a mind of their own. Also, social media has equally made communication easier in no small extent.

UK Government, (2007) argues that changes in communication influence many factors such as message length, delivery time, and rate of response the latest addition to

communication refinement in the 21st century is the new media. New media is described as ... all things relating to the Internet and interplay between technology, images and sound (Socha & Eber-Schmid, 2012). There are a plethora of definitions of new media but WhatIs.com (2016) explains that new media includes social media which are cyber networks that allow community-based interactions and communication. The instantaneous characteristic of social media has endeared society to it (UDENZE, n.d.). However, the bottleneck of how to communicate with stakeholders is magnified by the evolution of social media (Bernoff and Li, 2008; Drago, 2015). The fast-paced metamorphosis of media technology is such that organizations are faced with the challenge of keeping in touch with digital communication technology and they, therefore, aim at leveraging on it (Bernoff and Li, 2008).

Mobile telephony is now an integral part of our daily life in the 21st century. Smartphones have enveloped humanity even to the extent that we feel a vacuum is left open whenever we are not with our phones. Mobile smartphones may have integrated almost every human activity. From communication, business, pleasure, travel, education, and healthcare are all built in into smartphones through software Applications. There are several Mobile Instant Messaging (MIM) Applications that are installable on smartphones. They are Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, LinkedIn, Vibe, WeChat. The numbers of MIMs keep increasing by the day. These MIM Applications may be installed on different operating systems like Android, iOS, and Windows devices. (O'Hara et al., 2014) describe these Applications as Over the Top (OTT) application because they are not exclusive and independent of network provider.

WhatsApp was launched in 2019 by Acton and Koun, former employers of Yahoo! WhatsApp has over 1.5 billion subscribers in more than 180 countries, and an average user checks his/her WhatsApp message more than 23 times in a day (99firms.com). WhatsApp has become the easiest and affordable means for communication (Ling, 2016; Church & De Oliveira, 2013; Silas Udenze, 2017; (S Udenze, 2019). WhatsApp accommodates the sending and receiving of multimedia messages like video, audio, document, and user location. A WhatsApp group can take a maximum of 256 members at a time. Its cross-border communication capability has also made it users' favourite globally (Kariuki, 2017).

The use of new media technology in communication has become a force to reckon with and its current trend which has been on the rise cannot be relegated to the background, especially now that it is so widely used even within organizations and institutions (Bouhnik et al., 2014). Going by this trend, where mobile data is affordable, and media technology has advanced significantly, it is crucial to understand how organizations use social media to communicate with its publics, particularly WhatsApp, which has become a critical communication sphere.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Organizational communication has become essential in various organizations, and it is an integral part of any institution that must be structured rightly. In the past nine years scholars (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010; Bouhnik et al., 2014; Ling, 2016; Yin, 2016; Church & De Oliveira, 2013; Silas Udenze, 2017; Yeboah & Ewur, 2014) have paid rapt attention to the study of WhatsApp. Despite the limitations of WhatsApp such as privacy setting, and the constant inflow of messages that may cause distraction (Church & De Oliveira, 2013), the application keeps making in-road, proffering communication solutions. This study investigates WhatsApp use in Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF),

Diocese of Abuja, and also informs the youth organization on the current situation, thus contributing to informed decisions as regards WhatsApp usage. It is also essential to reiterate that the scholarly domain is gaining attention. Scholars (Bouhnik et al., 2014; Jisha, n.d.; Ling, 2016; Mefolere, 2016; Yin, 2016; Church & De Oliveira, 2013; Silas Udenze, 2017; Yeboah & Ewur, 2014) have attempted to study WhatsApp as it concerns various human endeavour, but it not has been narrowed to Christian youth organizations like the AYF. With the growing penetration of social media among youths, precisely WhatsApp, it is crucial to know how they are employed in formal or informal communication within organizations. This study focuses on WhatsApp, and it examines its usage within the Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF) Diocese of Abuja. Research questions: To what extent do AYF Abuja Diocese and its executive use WhatsApp as a communication platform?, What motivates the organization to adopt WhatsApp as a communication tool?, hat benefit does AYF derive from using WhatsApp?, What other church-related WhatsApp group(s) are they in?

LITERATURE REVIEW

An Overview of the Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF)

The Anglican Youth Fellowship was founded in 1947 by the late Most Revd. The late Reverend invited Leslie Gordon Vining, a Briton from Bristol City, England In that year, some youths were invited from different secondary schools in Lagos (The Guardian newspaper, 2017). These schools include Christian Missionary Society (C.M.S) Grammar School, King's College, Igbobi College, and C.M.S Girl's School. The invitees assembled at the wooden storey building at number 29 Marina, Lagos. Bishop Vining aim for creating the fellowship was to bring the youth together in order for them to pray, and equally for them to be sympathetic to strangers that are in need. Every Wednesdays, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm was chosen as the meeting day. During meetings, there were light refreshments and tea was also served.

According to The Guardian newspaper (2017). The late Rt. Revd. Adelakun Williamson Howells, first Provost of the Cathedral Church of Christ, Lagos and late Archbishop of Lagos and the late Most Revd. T. O. Olufosoye, the first Youth Chaplain in Nigeria and first Archbishop of the Province of Nigeria had dedicated Bishops that assisted the late Most Revd. Leslie Gordon Vining in actualizing the dream of forming the AYF.

Notable among the pioneer members of the AYF is the late Samuel Akpabot and Bala Miller. Samuel Akpabot later became of a professor of music at the University of Ibadan. Bala Miller also grew to become a known Bandleader in Nigeria. It is worthy of note to reiterate that Samuel Akpabot and Bala Miller were both members of the Youth Fellowship Band back in 1947. Samuel was the bandleader, and Bala assisted him. Others include the late Col. Victor Banjo of the Nigerian Army amongst others. The AYF celebrated its 70th Anniversary in 2017. Without the vision and dedication of the persons mentioned above, this laudable youth organization in the Anglican Communion, Nigeria may not have come to fruition.

Organizational Communication: Formal and Informal

Most organizations adopt to formal communication, which is seen as communication that means flow of information through the official outlined organization's chain of command. In formal communication, messages flow downward, upward, and horizontally. Downward communication includes information like job instructions, job

rationale, employee performance, policy and procedures, and motivational appeals (Hamilton, 2008). Upward communication is essential for an organization's survival as, through it, top management get to obtain information that is used for strategic decisions like reports, suggestions, work problems employees' attitudes towards their work and team achievements. Upward communication mediums carry valuable information to superiors, which subordinates are aware of, and the top levels of the organization could not be open to (Zaremba, 2010). Besides, it allows employees to feel they are valuable resources which in turn improves their morale. (Hamilton, 2008) argues that upward communication needs not only to be accurate but fast as well in high-tech environments. This therefore, calls for communication technology that engenders fast delivery of information. Horizontal communication is critical for coordinating tasks, solving problems, resolution of conflicts as well as sharing of information between people of the same ranking. A system's orientation requires horizontal networks connecting departments as a way of ensuring that important messages get from one unit of the organization to the other.

As persons work together in organizations, they are required to actively communicate with each other so as to cooperate and collaborate. Without communication, team members in an organization may not achieve their desired goals. In this regard, organizations adopt both formal and informal communication. The same need for transmitting information also applies to groups. (Kraut et al., 1990) opine that informal communication is essential for coordination to occur as it helps members of an organization to learn about each other and their work. It also supports social relations and work production as well as provide the facility that collaborators rely on to start work, maintain it, and drive it to a conclusion. Also, (Gray & Laidlaw, 2002), believe that when employees are not satisfied with information provided through formal channels of communication, then they rely on informal ones.

In most organizations, the informal communication tends to thrive more than the formal. This may be attributed to the character of human beings who are social in nature. Most employees find it easier to consult with one another on work-related processes other than consulting a process document. Organizations know the pivotal role that informal communication plays and therefore use both, especially where the task is unpredictable as a means to achieve the roles' goals. Informal communication is seen as that communication that is carried out without hierarchies or rules. It is spontaneous, interactive, and vibrant and, therefore, ideal in the brainstorming of an issue, problem or need. Coordination in informal communication is achieved through an organismic communication network (Kraut et al., 1990), and in this case, WhatsApp is considered as one of these networks. It is paramount to note that informal communication networks lack pre-specifications, and therefore, causes of action are not pre-computed.

Social Media and Organizational Communication

Social media, according to (Andreas, n.d.), is the means of interaction amongst people that enables them to create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. It enables individuals to network with others who have similar interests, goals, and dreams. Social media and social networking sites play several roles. Richter and Koch (2008) proposed six basic functionalities of social networking sites. These include identity management, exchange, expert finding, context awareness, contact management, and network awareness. For this reason, social media has been

adopted by society as an excellent environment for discussing mutual topics of interest, as well as meeting and maintaining acquaintances with others in a virtual world.

Since inception, social media have changed people's lives, such as enabling content generation, online identification for users, which at times may be different from the real world, and relational networking. One of the major features of social media is the ability to present content communally, meaning that it can be easily accessed by other employees in the same network. (Efimova & Grudin, 2007), in their study on corporate blogging, concluded that a weblog provides an employee with a space to share a passion for work, document and organize ideas and work practices, and also engage others within and without the organization. In addition, they found out that the employer also benefits from accelerated information flow, reputation and increased productivity, improved customer engagement, a high dependence on personalities and a reduction in challenges brought about by hierarchy.

Many organizations have sought to understand the usage of social media and develop ways in which they can embrace it as part of the organizations' strategic communication channels. This is more so because social media brings about change in the way people communicate in the organization, and through its use, some benefits that traditional communication channels could not achieve are realized (Sitter & Curnew, 2016). (Zowislo-Grünwald & Beitzinger, 2013) assert that it pays off for organizations to communicate within the Web 2.0 since firstly, they can attain reputation benefits and brand awareness for specific stakeholders by way of target group-oriented content. Secondly, Web 2.0 offers dialogic communication, which is seen to create reciprocity since the users feel indebted to the organization and, therefore, payback through positive public relations. Thirdly, dialogic communication creates an environment where the organization gets added value as the information given through dialogic communication creates content.

Leonardi and Treem (2012) argue that social media are essential to organizational communication processes because they enable the organization to achieve the behaviors that were difficult or impossible to achieve before these new technologies entered the workplace. The considerable role that social media play in many people's lives is something that organizations should be acknowledgeable about and pay attention to (Andreas, n.d.). This is mostly because social media shape people's conversations within the environment that they operate from. These conversations eventually influence people's attitudes and behaviors (Bernoff and Li, 2008).

Whatsapp as a Communication Platform

Mobile applications provide a platform for interactive communication (Campbell & Park, 2008). Amongst them is the WhatsApp, which offers a wide range of communication opportunities for its users. Just like other social media platforms, it provides an avenue for entertainment, education, collaboration, instantaneous sharing of information as well as maintenance of a community (Jisha, n.d.). Unlike short message service (SMS), where the message sent is delivered to the recipient with or without their consent, WhatsApp gives the message recipient the leeway to accept or reject messages from different recipients. In addition, WhatsApp has the capability of group-formation where group members can interact. The maximum number of group members that a WhatsApp group can accommodate is 256 (WhatsApp, 2016). Aside from the group functionality of WhatsApp, it supports pdf, word document, xls (excel) file powerpoint and mp4 file. Furthermore, the platform has unlimited number character length and chats

per day, enables up to 2gb of video or picture when an xls file is edited (Boyinbode et al., 2017).

WhatsApp appeal amongst its users is linked to its capability and characteristics. Sultan (2014), in a study related to mobile text messaging, suggested that users of WhatsApp turn to it as a medium that enables them to keep contact with family members and friends, as well as for entertainment and acquiring information. As part of its users, WhatsApp has the capability of sending and sharing location information to recipients (Church & De Oliveira, 2013). The same study found that one of the benefits of using WhatsApp includes its affordability. Cost is seen as an element that affects persons' behaviour when deciding which medium to use in sending messages. Besides, WhatsApp was seen to give them a sense of collaboration. It was discovered that WhatsApp was used more often between partners than with other communities. (Ledbetter et al., 2011) submit that social networking sites are vital media for maintaining social connections, WhatsApp remains an integral medium for establishing and maintaining social connections amongst staff in an organisation, so long as its use is allowed.

The astronomic advances in communication technologies for social media has led to many scholars seeking to comprehend how diverse technologies appeal to the audiences and how the audiences tend to use them and for what purposes (Karapanos et al., 2016; Ibrahim et al., 2014). (Church & De Oliveira, 2013) and (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010) carried out studies on the factors that impact the acceptance, usage, and the booming popularity of WhatsApp. They found that social influence to be one of the main reasons for the adoption of WhatsApp and the scholars concluded that the nature and the intent of WhatsApp support social, informal, and conversational communication that leads to increased frequency in its use.

(Yeboah & Ewur, 2014) assert that with WhatsApp messenger, communication through mobile phones is more comfortable, faster, and cheaper. It is less expensive compared to conventional SMS. Individuals can chat with friends and family abroad through WhatsApp without having to incur global SMS cost. Past studies have concluded that WhatsApp satisfies a wide range of needs, including intimacy, nurturing relationships among families and friends, heightening a sense of presence in communication, and providing a private medium where members can interact freely with one another (Karapanos et al, 2016). Several studies have been conducted to explore the usage attributed to the WhatsApp (Ibrahim et al., 2014; Chiridza et al., 2016; Patil et al., 2015). (Jisha, n.d.) in their study on WhatsApp usage amongst the Chennai Youth aver that WhatsApp create a sense of belongingness, nearness and intimacy with friends and relatives. The medium created a psychological experience of being close and caring.

In spite the positive aspects attributed to WhatsApp, other studies have revealed some negative effects of WhatsApp. (Yeboah & Ewur, 2014) concluded that WhatsApp affected the performance of tertiary institutions students negatively. Contrary to the (Yeboah & Ewur, 2014) study, (Soliman & Salem, 2014) carried out a study on the usage of WhatsApp amongst college students to find out the factors that impact intention to use mobile instant messenger such as WhatsApp. The researcher adopted a sample of 450 students and concluded that besides perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of mobile instant messengers, sociability, perceived self-expressiveness, and enjoyment established by using mobile instant messenger could be considered as indicators of the use of mobile instant messenger. A similar study by (Ahad & Lim, 2014) uncovered that WhatsApp benefited the undergraduate students in Malaysia by affording them the

platform to discuss and share information that pertains to their studies and also facilitates their everyday communication with friends and family.

From the preceding reviewed studies, it is observed that the focus on WhatsApp studies has been on how diverse users utilize it and also the effects that come from the usage. From the studies that the researcher reviewed WhatsApp usage, there was none that addressed its usage in youth organizations. Therefore, this leaves a vacuum in this field of research. This study focuses on WhatsApp, and it examines its usage within The Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF) Diocese of Abuja. This would be crucial in bridging the identified literature gap that exists in the organizational context, specifically, youth organization.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on (Lengel & Daft, 1984) Media Richness Theory (MRT). The theory argues that media can transmit needed information. The theory is also known as the Information Richness Theory. The theory assesses and evaluates communication mediums within the organization in terms of their effectiveness. MRT ranks and evaluates the richness of specific communication media. For instance, a phone call cannot guarantee visual cues such as gestures which make it a lesser rich media of communication than video calls which afford the transmission of audio, and body cues. Going by the tenets of the theory, it is no doubt that WhatsApp is a media-rich medium.

The multimedia functionality of WhatsApp is in tandem with the MRT. WhatsApp has multiple media function. It encompasses, picture, audio and video call, document sharing (both PDF and Word), text functionality, and location mapping. The application also boasts numerous emojis. This explains the reason for underpinning the study on Media Rich Theory. (Boyinbode et al., 2017), found that in terms of content richness WhatsApp has better performance than Email, SMS, BBM, and Twitter. Besides, WhatsApp also has better performance than Email, SMS, BBM, and Twitter regarding media accuracy and adaptability. This current study sought to explore how the media-rich features of WhatsApp are employed for communication on the WhatsApp group.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The population for the study is the AYF diocesan executives on a WhatsApp group. The executives include the president, vice president, secretary, assistant secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, prayer coordinator, and provost amongst others. In all, they are 18 (eighteen). The authors purposively chose these persons as the census/sample size for the study due to the convenience it provides. Besides, the current study is primarily concerned with how these youths use a WhatsApp group platform to administer their association; hence the reason for the restricted, and small sample size. Besides, for ethical reasons, the respondents were clarified about the purpose of the research, and they freely consented to be part of the study.

The study adopted the dual research methodology, that is, quantitative and qualitative methodology. The quantitative methodology quantifies research data through numerical strengths. The reason for using this approach is because one method strengthens the weaknesses of the other. The researcher used a research questionnaire to collate primary quantitative data, and the data were analysed through a percentage table. The qualitative research method affords a researcher the flexibility of working with a considerable amount of primary data. The researcher has the opportunity to probe deep into his or her investigation in order to answer the research questions. Using the

unstructured interview format, the respondents were interviewed in-line with the research objectives/research questions. Each interview lasted an average time of sixty-three minutes. For the convenience of the research participants, the interviewees were allowed to decide the location of the interviews. Hence, an online interview was adopted as the means for collecting primary data. Most of the interviews were conducted through the WhatsApp platform. Data from the interview were analysed thematically. (Boyatzis, 1998) described thematic analysis as a method employed to identify, analyse and report patterns or themes within data. (Braun & Clarke, 2006) argues that thematic analysis encompasses five phases: data familiarisation, code generation, theme search, themes revision, and theme definition. The researcher was careful enough to an extent in manually following these procedures.

Scholars (Peshkin, 1988; Eisner, 1998) aver that it is pivotal to be aware of our subjective selves and the role that the subjective self plays in research because being aware is better than assuming we can rid of subjectivity. Being aware of my subjective-self entails being aware of the qualities that will enhance the study as well as the belief I have about the interaction that may alter my interpretation of the data if I were not aware of them. It is pertinent to state that the corresponding author is a member of a similar WhatsApp platform at the archdeaconry level of the diocese; hence the reason to reiterate the import of reflexivity in the research. The study was conducted from the month of November 2019 to April, 2020. After careful observation of the trends in communication on the platform, the researchers decide that it is worthy to investigate how executive members of the AYF use the platform for communication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results from the quantitative data are presented below. It is pertinent to clarify that the research questions formed the bases of the questions that were posed to the respondents. The table reveals the percentage of respondents that strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed or disagreed with the research questions.

Figure 1

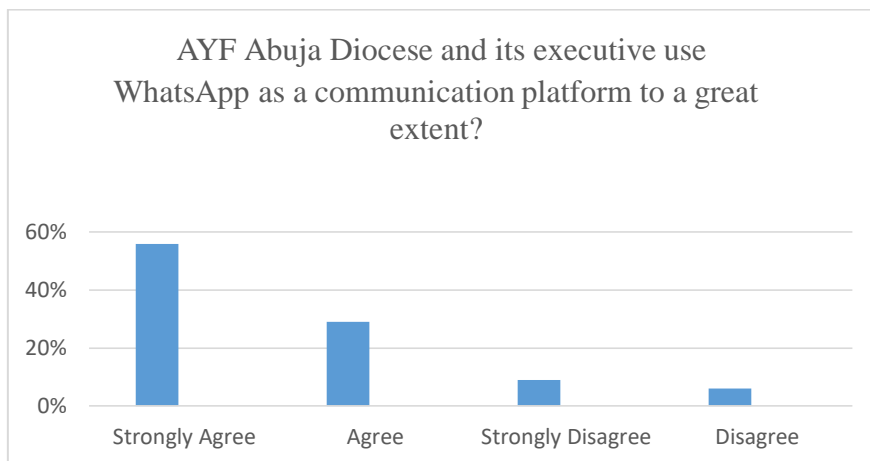


Figure 2

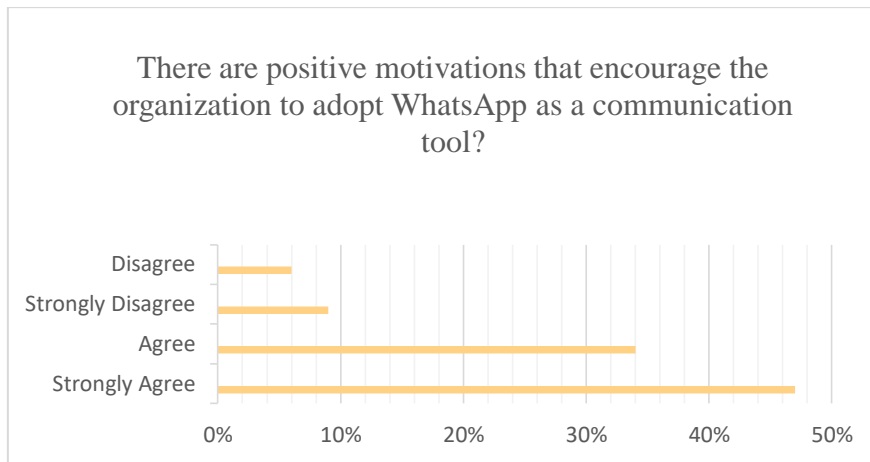


Figure 3

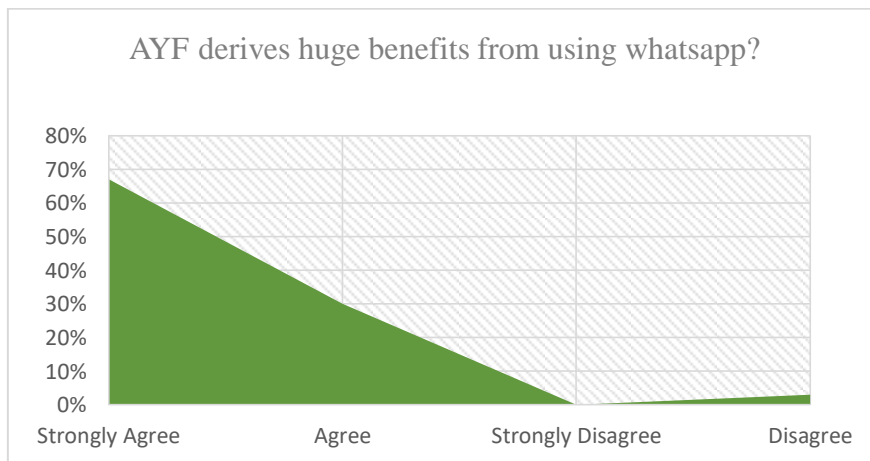
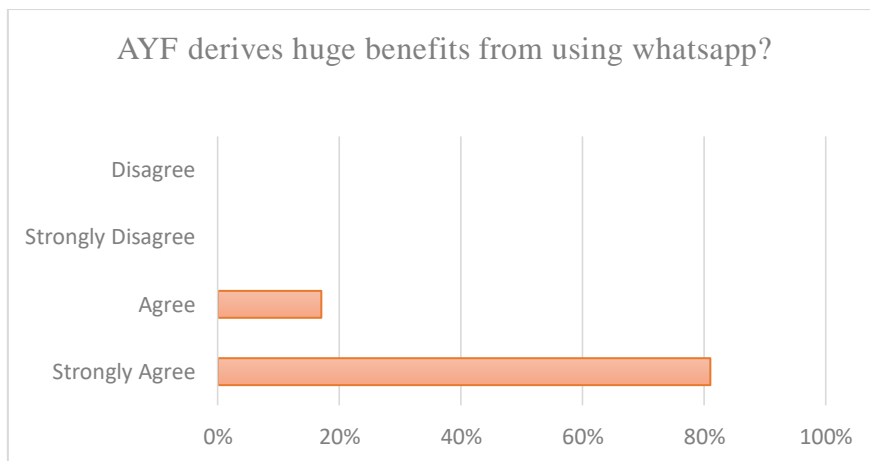


Figure 4



The analysis above shows the level to which respondents agree or disagree with

the research questions. 56% of the respondents strongly agreed that the diocesan executives use WhatsApp as a communication tool, while 29% agrees with the question. In research question number 3, 67% of the respondents strongly aver that the AYF derives enormous benefits from using WhatsApp. This percentage is contrary to 3% that that disagrees. The final research question posits that 83% strongly agreed that members of the diocesan AYF are in other church-related WhatsApp.

These analyses reveal that WhatsApp has positive impacts on the diocesan executives' use of WhatsApp for communication among its members. Similarly, the qualitative analysis shows some benefits and motives for using WhatsApp for communication. However, the analysis found some shortcoming that may breach smooth communication. From the thematic analysis of data, some dominant themes emerged. These themes reveal the thoughts that the participants re-echoed during the interview.

Ease of Communication and Manipulation

Assertions from the interviews point that WhatsApp is easy to use. Majority of the interviewees attested that the application is effortless in terms of use. A respondent says thus: *WhatsApp is straightforward to use. You don't need any special skills to use the application. All you have to do is just to download it with your phone number and start using it.* From the preceding statement, it is clear that getting the application to work is not difficult. Another participant affirms: *...with WhatsApp communication is easier. We don't struggle to communicate among ourselves in the diocese. In as much as you have Internet and data, you can reach members on the platform.* Another member of the executive reiterated the advantage of the multimedia functionality of WhatsApp. In his words *...we share documents on WhatsApp, and this makes our meeting easier. Even photos of events are circulated on the platform.* Other scholars (Bouhnik et al., 2014; and Jisha, n.d.; Ling, 2016; Yin, 2016; Church & De Oliveira, 2013; Silas Udenze, 2017; Yeboah & Ewur, 2014) have argued about the ease of using WhatsApp for communication. These revelations exemplify the affordance that WhatsApp has created in terms of communication among youth in the fellowship. It glaring that WhatsApp has made communication easy.

Cost-Effective

Another theme that emerged is the affordability of WhatsApp. Almost every research participant in the group believes that WhatsApp is cheap to use compared to other media of communication like phone calls, and SMS. WhatsApp has made our communication cheap. *...Most of us don't need to call or send SMS. Every communication flows in the group. In as much as there is data, you can participate in the conversation.* It is pertinent to point out that one does not need to pay to download WhatsApp. All that is needed is a phone number that it is configured to it, after which the phone number should be subscribed to Internet data. It is evident that one of the motivations for adopting WhatsApp as a communication tool is the cost-effective of the platform. *... this application affords us the opportunity to talk more even with a little amount of money. With just a 100 naira data I can participate in the communication in the platform at least for 2 to 3 days. However, the same amount of money won't guarantee a 5 minutes call.*

Purpose-Tailored

Pattern form the interviews show that WhatsApp groups are tailored to the purpose or mission of individuals that established the group. Further revelations show that the

executive members of the AYF are in 2 to 5 related groups. *Just like I am in this diocesan group, I am in my fellowship WhatsApp group, my church harvest committee group, and the media team WhatsApp group. I received messages from these groups all the time.* Another participant pointed out the relevance of these groups to the smooth functioning of the church. *I am in up to 5 WhatsApp groups that are church-related, and these groups have been so helpful to me in getting information that concerns the church. For example, I am a member of the choir in my church, and our WhatsApp group is full of activities like song sharing, meetings, and other social interaction.* WhatsApp groups are like businesses or organizations that are created for different purposes. Every WhatsApp group has a mission and vision statement, that is, the objectives that the groups set out to achieve.

Closely-Knitted

Also, the capability of the application to hold group communication is fundamentally important. We can communicate openly in our group, and every executive member sees what is discussed at any time of the day. Your location does not count, as long as you are connected to the Internet you are part of the discussion. On this note, it is worthy of mentioning that a WhatsApp group can hold a maximum of 256 persons at a time. So even if the executives in the diocese are up to this number, they can simultaneously participate in whatever communication that is going on. Another participant posits that one of the benefits we derive from WhatsApp aside from the ease of communication *...it gives us, is the opportunity to be closely-knitted under a group. In fact, our WhatsApp group transcends the barrier of time and space...*

Distractions

Another finding from this study is the distractions that the group encounters due to unsolicited contents that are shared on the group. Similar studies (Church & De Oliveira, 2013; Ling, 2016; Yin, 2016; Udenze, n.d.) have found a similar challenge. Sometimes, members of the group post information that is not in tune with the objectives of the group. This derails important discussions in some cases. *... though sometimes people share things that are needed in the group, especially broadcast messages... with a good internet connection, communicating in the group is seamless, but some messages that are not important may distract communication flow....* this point to the need for persons within the group to exercise a great level of self-control in terms of what kind of information they put out in the group. They could employ the selective sharing principle; sieve the information they intend to share, and taking into cognizance the objectives of the group.

CONCLUSION

The social media has revolutionized communication. It is the ingredient that oils the engine of information dissemination. Social media drive almost all aspect of human endeavour. Communicating at the organizational level has been enhanced by social media. Members of organizations communicate both formally and informally. Due to the flexibility and convenience of social media, people prefer it to other means of communication. This study affirms that WhatsApp eases communication among the youth in the discharge of their organizational duties, and it is equally easy to manipulate. Similarly, it was discovered that WhatsApp group create a sense of family. The executive members felt closely-knitted. This builds a sense of community among group members.

Also, the affordability of WhatsApp was noted. Due to its cost-effective, the diocesan AYF believes it is best to adopt it as a communication tool. Albeit these benefits, the study found that there are distractions in the group. Sometimes, members share unsolicited content on the group. This, as discussed earlier on, may derail essential conversations in the group. We suggest that WhatsApp should be adopted as a formal means of communication in other small youth organization. Besides, the authors believe that WhatsApp can help improve the efficiency of communication within a youth organization.

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