Information Communication Technology Use Related Challenges and their Coping Strategies in Monastic Religious Life

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Abstract

The study attempted to investigate the challenges that the monastic religious encounter in the use of information communication technologies with reference to internet, mobile phones, computers/laptops and digital televisions; and their coping strategies, a case of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing (MBST) in Nairobi Priory, Kenya. The world today is witnessing tremendous changes and development in the information and communication technologies. However, there is scanty literature that addresses the challenges and the strategies that can be used by religious consecrated men and women, to cope up with the modern communication technologies effectively. The study employed sequential explanatory mixed methods. The target population included the perpetually professed sisters, junior sisters in the leadership team (superiors, formators and administrators) of the monastic religious congregation of the MBST Nairobi Priory, Kenya. Questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussion (FGD) were the instruments used to collect data. The findings of the study in which both the challenges and the strategies were presented in a 4-point Likert scale and respondents were asked to indicate their choices from; 4=Strongly agree, 3=Agree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree revealed that: With the challenges the use of ICTs pose to the monastic lifestyle (community life and the evangelical counsels); majority of them in all the 14 challenges presented, agreed and strongly agreed to them. Likewise the interviews and FGD had similar experiences with the same challenges. The strategies for coping up with the challenges too showed similar responses to a greater extent in agreement. From the study it is clear that, as monastic religious, the MBST cannot not afford to be alien to the modern means of communication as they are the chief means of information and education, of guidance and inspiration. Since they are unavoidably embedded in daily life, the religious consecrated should use them conscientiously and responsibly to become a factor of humanization, which calls for a proper formation of conscience.
Keywords: *Information Communication Technology, Challenges, Coping Strategies, Monastic Religious Life, Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing, Kenya*

1.0 Introduction

The MBST is an international religious monastic congregation that serves in five continents: Africa, Europe Asia, and North America and South America. In Africa, the MBST have six regions; one in Namibia, another in Angola, two in Tanzania, one in Uganda and one in Kenya. Each region is independent and perhaps the researcher would have very much liked to find out the influence of ICT in the religious houses in these regions. However, the study was carried out in the Kenyan region, which consists of six independent communities that form one priory [region]. Information Communication Technology (ICT) is a term that focuses primarily on communication technologies and communication medium. Communication is a necessity as people need to express their feelings, pass on information to the other human beings and share their thoughts and feelings. ICTs come in as means that facilitate communication among human beings. The world of ICT is one that stretches from time immemorial for a long time, as long as people have been around, and because there were always ways of communicating through technology available at any point in the history of time.

However, a lot to do with ICT has changed overtime and today, one of the characteristics of the 21st Century is the reality that advanced technology has succeeded in transforming the world into a "global village" in the sense of shrinking of time and space and breaking down the barricade of distance in human relationships and communication as foreseen by McLuhan the 1960s. Currently, ICTs exists everywhere in varied forms. Taking into account that the human person is the main player in the communication process, whether the sender or the recipient, the drastic changes brought about by the ICTs are fast and alarming hence calling the attention of every rational human person to be cautious in their choices and use. In their use therefore, religious men and women by the very nature of their lifestyle ought to be even extra careful in their attempts to make the best out of them.

According to Pope Francis (2015), we are living in an era of information overload and confusion that leads to mental pollution and constipation. However, Pope Paul VI (1975) acknowledges that, the Church would feel guilty before the Lord if she did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is daily rendering more perfectly. Pope Benedict, in acknowledging that many religious, priests and nuns do not always responsibly make use of social networks, encourages the need to educate and lead in a positive way. In such a grounding, the religious, women and men can deepen their understanding of all ICTs as a means not an end. Hence, there is a need to understand that the use of ICTs in their everyday life and especially for evangelization is a constant battle to know how to make the best out of it so that the Church's consecrated men and women and its pastoral ministers are prepared to face the challenges that technological innovations constantly world of ICT is one that stretches from time immemorial for a long time, as long as people have been around, and because there were always ways of communicating through technology available at any point in the history of time.

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McLuhan the 1960s. Currently, ICTs exists everywhere in varied forms. Taking into account that the human person is the main player in the communication process, whether the sender or the recipient, the drastic changes brought about by the ICTs are fast and alarming hence calling the attention of every rational human person to be cautious in their choices and use. In their use therefore, religious men and women by the very nature of their lifestyle ought to be even extra careful in their attempts to make the best out of them.

According to Pope Francis (2015), we are living in an era of information overload and confusion that leads to mental pollution and constipation. However, Pope Paul VI (1975) acknowledges that, the Church would feel guilty before the Lord if she did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is daily rendering more perfectly. Pope Benedict, in acknowledging that many religious, priests and nuns do not always responsibly make use of social networks, encourages the need to educate and lead in a positive way. In such a grounding, the religious, women and men can deepen their understanding of all ICTs as a means not an end. Hence, there is a need to understand that the use of ICTs in their everyday life and especially for evangelization is a constant battle to know how to make the best out of it so that the Church's consecrated men and women and its pastoral ministers are prepared to face the challenges that technological innovations constantly require (Maradiaga, 2018).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The world of ICT has made it easier for people to share information and socialize in all spheres of life. However, it is slowly and subtly replacing interpersonal human relationships especially in the lives of the religious consecrated persons in the Catholic Church. The digital world has its downsides such as obsession, communal bond degeneration and dismantlement of social life fabric. The relationship between ICT and everyday life is therefore a subject of increasing concern to many religious congregations and persons living in an era which presents them with a variety of choices positive and negative alike. Religious communities are worried about the infiltration of ICTs among their members with the outside world as interpersonal relationships aimed at building communities are today challenged by technology. Tembo (2018) noted it saying; it's like "*religious community members have become smartphones, tablets, laptops and televisions.*" According to Morgan (2018), the over-reliance on technology can lead to several adverse occurrences such as exposure to inappropriate content, increased stress levels due to lack of sleep, laziness, and a faltering relationship with God, use of technological know-how for adulterated purposes, voice prejudices, illicit affairs, gambling addiction and slothfulness which is a deadly sin. Socially, all these challenges threaten religious life as a social institution. This study is timely on how the religious of this era live their identity in the present world blown up with information from left to right, back and forth by the their use of ICTs. Limited empirical studies on the use of ICTs exists, particularly in religious life of the consecrated men and women in the Catholic Church in Kenya to provide information on the best way to use the ICTs in religious life. Various studies have confirmed that ICTs have, and are greatly influencing religious life in all

manner of respects in the society and in the Church in which the religious persons are a part and parcel of. However, despite the marked increase of the use of new ICTs today in the institutes of consecrated religious life in the Catholic Church globally, there is still limited data and studies on their consumption patterns and influence by communities of different religious congregations. Researches on how ICTs have changed secular life in politics, businesses, relationships, and attention extents are many, but few people were writing about the ICT's impact on religious life in the Catholic. Several researches in the area of ICTs influence on religious life in the Catholic Church have been done intensively in the western world where religious life has grown over the years compared to the African world where it is still young and is a new lifestyle. This scenario therefore, motivated the researcher to carry out this study to investigate the ICT related challenges and their coping strategies in monastic religious life of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing, Nairobi Priory in Kenya.

1.2 Research Objectives

i. To determine the ICT related challenges to monastic religious life.
ii. To determine the coping strategies to the ICT challenges to monastic religious life.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This research work was anchored on Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) by Venkatesh at.al 2003. UTAUT considers factors that influence behavioural intention and use of technology. It holds that there are four key constructs namely: Performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions that explain user intentions to use an information system and subsequent usage behaviour. The first three constructs are direct determinants of usage intention and behaviour, and the fourth is a direct determinant of user behaviour. The theory integrates determinants across eight competing models namely: [Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Motivational Model (MA), Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), a combined [T P B and T A M], the model of Personal Computer Utilization (PCU), the Innovations Diffusion Theory (IDT), and the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)]. The theory has been widely used in research involving adoption and acceptance of technologies and aims at explaining user intentions to use an information system (IS) and subsequent usage behaviour. This theory was employed in this study to determine the strength of predictors for the MBST intention to accept and use internet, mobile phones, computers/laptops and digital televisions in their everyday life. It holds that there are four key theoretical constructs namely: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. UTAUT model uses behavioural intention as a predictor of the technology use behaviour in which, the first three are direct determinants of usage intention and behaviour, and the forth is a direct determinant of user behaviour. Gender, age, experience and voluntariness are the posited to moderate the impact of the four key elements on the usage intention and behaviour.
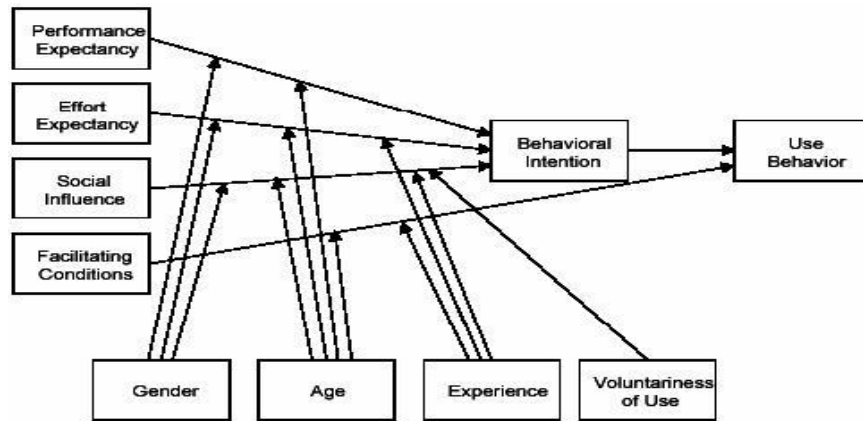
A diagrammatical representation of UTAUT

Figure 1: Venkatesh et al. (2003)

3.0 Research Methodology

The study employed sequential explanatory mixed methods. The target population included the perpetually professed sisters, juniour sisters the leadership team [superiors, formators & administrators] of the monastic religious congregation of the MBST Nairobi Priory, Kenya. Non-probability techniques namely, purposive and convenience were used to sample 57 MBST participants. Questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussion [FGD] were the instruments used to collect data. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented using frequencies and percentages in APA tables. The qualitative data alternatively was analyzed and presented thematically using summaries.

4.0 Research Findings

4.1 ICT Challenges to Religious Monastic Life

Respondents were asked to indicate thechallenges the use of ICTs pose to the monastic lifestyle (community life and the evangelical counsels) of the MBST in 4-point Likert scale. The scale used ranged from 1-4 where, 4=Strongly agree, 3=Agree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree. Results were interpreted as 3.5-4.0=Strongly agree, 2.5-3.4=Agree, 1.5-2.4=Disagree, 1.0-1.4=Strongly disagree. These results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Challenges Faced in the Use of ICTs by the MBST in Kenya

ICT Challenges	F=Frequency P=Percentage	SD	D	A	S A	T
Sisters have used individual ICT gadgets like mobile phones, tablets or computers and some media platforms to communicate through posting some community events and celebrations without the permission of those charged with the responsibility of doing so.	F	0	5	22	30	57
	P	0.0	8.8	38.6	52.6	100
Late night conversations with mobile phones after compline when all should adhere to monastic silence as laid down in RB.	F	0	2	20	35	57
	P	0.0	3.5	35.1	61.4	100
Addiction in the use of the means for communication hence wasting profitable time; shown by too much time spend on the gadgets and social media platforms, wallowing from one website to another, or from one platform to another.	F	1	4	24	28	57
	P	1.8	7.0	42.1	49.1	100
Sin of laziness created by the ICT devices whereby the religious find it easy with them to use a text message in cases where some things are best communicated face-to-face, or at least over the phone, and even worse is texting your neighbours next door.	F	0	4	26	27	57
	P	0.0	7.0	45.6	47.4	100
Some ICT gadgets and platforms of communication have sometimes interfered with the congregation's protocol of official communications that require discretion and confidentiality and should only be communicated officially by the right authority and as such are communicated by the wrong sisters as gossips, which leads to disunity and weakening of peaceful- coexistence, harmonious community life, and genuine relationships among the sisters.	F	1	4	19	33	57
	P	1.8	7.0	33.3	57.9	100
ICT platforms pose danger and increased opportunities for potential	F	1	6	24	26	57
	P	1.8	10.5	42.1	45.6	100

sin. For instance, Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter among others make it easy to fall into sins such as jealousy and envy, pride, lust with pornography, gossip and so forth.

Financial Sustainability in terms of purchase and maintenance of individual ICT gadgets such as mobile phones, tablets and laptops.	F	4	8	22	23	57
	P	7.0	14.0	38.6	40.4	100
Lack of enough knowledge and skills in the use of some ICTs especially those connected with the internet hence can be time-wasting at times and have also the potential to lead to scandal. The internet is a very delicate world as it offers too many possibilities, good and bad and therefore must be handled responsibly.	F	1	5	24	27	57
	P	1.8	8.8	42.1	47.4	100
Generational gap within the use of ICTs hence misunderstandings caused by different world view of ITCs between the young and the aged in religious community living.	F	0	6	25	26	57
	P	0.0	10.5	43.9	45.6	100
Excessive/frequent use of internet and some ICT gadgets like smartphones, computer/tablets etc. are often associated with a loss of sense of time, disturbed when the internet is inaccessible, intolerance, including the need for better computer equipment, more software, or more hours of use and negative repercussions, such as social isolation, and fatigue.	F	2	5	27	23	57
	P	3.5	8.8	47.4	40.4	100
Excess attachment to the use of smartphones, tablets, laptops and televisions have affected both in one way or another the congregation core-values of: prayer and work, community life, obedience and loyalty, simplicity of lifestyle, listening, silence, humility, hospitality, discipline, stewardship of creation, respect and reverence, peace and responsibility.	F	3	7	26	21	57
	P	5.3	12.3	45.6	36.8	100
	F	1	5	23	28	57

The challenge of living a simple lifestyle as the Benedictine monastic life demands; implicated by: having more than one phone, a table, a laptop and a computer At the same time, expensive ICT gadgets, and desire to have the latest models of the ICT gadgets.	P		1.8	8.8	40.4	49.1	100
Use of some ICT gadgets and platforms have created some degree of individualism in community living.	F	0	3	28	26	57
	P	0.0	5.3	49.1	45.6	100
Use of some ICT gadgets like mobile phones undermines enjoyment of face-to-face quality social interactions.	F	0	1	28	28	57
	P	0.0	1.8	49.1	49.1	100

Findings as depicted in Table 1 showed that majority of the respondents, 52.6% strongly agreed and 38.6% agreed that sisters have used individual ICT gadgets like mobile phones, tablets or computers and some media platforms to communicate through posting some community events and celebrations without the permission of those charged with the responsibility of doing so. More than half of the respondents, 61.4% strongly agreed that and 35.1% agreed that late night conversations with mobile phones after compline when all should adhere to monastic silence as laid down in RB was a challenge faced by the sisters. In addition, close to half of the respondents, 49.1% strongly agreed and 42.1% agreed that there was addiction in the use of the use of ICT as a means for communication hence wasting profitable time; shown by too much time spend on the gadgets and social media platforms, wallowing from one website to another, or from one platform to another. These results are shown in table below.

Moreover, respondents were asked to list other challenges not presented in the above list and those others from the interviews and FGD were as follows:

- ICT gadgets especially mobile phones have created poor relationships in the community as some prefer making friends outside the community.
- Unfaithfulness in the use of Mpesa.
- The challenge of living the evangelical vows of poverty, obedience and chastity authentically.
- Inconsiderable use of mobile phones at wrong monastic times and monastic places/spaces.

The study revealed the challenges the use of ICTs pose to the monastic lifestyle of the MBST was to a great extent. There was an agreement that sisters have used individual ICT gadgets such as tablets, mobile phones or computers and some media platforms to communicate, or posting some community events and celebrations without the permission of those charged with the responsibility of doing so. In fact, during the interviews with the MBST leaders, most of them expressed their disappointments that, many are the times

when they think they are carrying news to their sisters only to discover the sisters have already received the information from the wrong channels and are not news anymore.

In line with these findings, Vallikatt (2015) noted that The 21st Century is characterized by an alarming increase in digital connectivity through technology in all strata of society and creating a digital culture in which dissemination of various versions of truth often happens, and reaches an innumerable number of people instantly making even the ordinary people become sources of truth in the Church and a few indeed claim that they alone are truth. This contradicts the protocol of the universal Church that the dissemination of various versions of truth should officially be communicated in the right order other than landing to the laity through the modern communication technology and without due preparation by the religious authorities.

The results also revealed that, they agreed that late night conversations with mobile phones after compline when all need to adhere to monastic silence as laid down in RB was a challenge faced in MBST life. Interviews conducted among the leaders of the MBST (superiors, formators and administrators) in Kenya were all 100% in agreement to this challenge. Jonveaux (2013) also ascribes to this fact, stating that the introduction of this new media in monasteries also raises a lot of questions about the potential contradictions it poses with other aspects of monastic life, which may include common life, sharing hospitality, charity and so forth. ICTs do pose challenges to the evangelical vows of obedience, poverty and chastity embraced by the religious implicated in the mode of acquisition of the ICT gadgets and their use.

Similarly, Cherry (2020) noted that the ICT gadgets that are internet powered can be described as neutral tools which can be used for good or evil. For example, the temptation towards the vices of the ICTs which consists of inappropriate and immodest content such as pornographic contents, nudity sites, immoral videos and movies; inappropriate and hidden relationships through communication mediums challenge the vow of chastity. Further, Chávez (2017) postulated that the vow of obedience may be threatened by ICTs in the sense of being adamant to the authority especially when some degree of restriction is called for in the use of ICT gadgets and related platforms for the sake of order and decency in religious life. The world of ICT has created an aura where absolute freedom, the right to self-determination and self-realization, sexuality and pleasure and wealth makes a better life, making it very difficult for the religious people to consider obedience, chastity and poverty as values and a lifestyle of choice.

Carbajo (2015) also noted that human beings and, more specifically, to the consecrated life of the brothers and sisters are uprooted and caught in the Net, more connected but lonely, self-obsession and deception, hyper-connected and hyper-accelerated, and depersonalizing superficiality. Furthermore, there is evidence that most respondents were in agreement that there was addiction in the use of the ICT as a means of communication thus wasting profitable time as shown by too much time spend on the gadgets and social media platforms, wallowing from one website to another, or from one platform to another. Besides, ICTs' internet addiction is a challenge to many religious consecrated and it is

worth noting that it does not discriminate, nor care about your gender, colour, religious status or atheist. According to Block (2008), some signs that show a person is addicted to the internet include: Excessive use often associated with a loss of sense of time or a neglect of basic drives, withdrawal when the computer or the internet is inaccessible, tolerance, including the need for better computer equipment, more software, or more hours of use and negative repercussions, such as arguments, lying, poor achievement, social isolation, and fatigue.

Veissière and Stendel (2018) also have presented a deflationary account of smartphone addiction by situating this purportedly antisocial phenomenon within the fundamentally social dispositions of our species. While they agreed with contemporary critics that the hyper-connectedness and unpredictable rewards of mobile technology can modulate negative effect, they proposed to place the locus of addiction on an evolutionarily older mechanism: the human need to monitor and be monitored by others. Consequently, Mahapatra (2019) postulates that 'loneliness' and 'self-regulation' as the main antecedents for smartphone addiction along with family, personal conflicts and poor academic performance as the significant negative consequences of its excessive use. The 'smartphone addiction' is a popular theme in media. It has number of clear behavioral changes in addicts' life and some of these aspects are yet to get due research attention. In addition, Al-Barashdi, Bouazza & Jabur (2015) reviewed the relationship between Smartphone addiction among undergraduates and their academic achievement. The results demonstrated that while some studies have shown gender differences in Smartphone addictive use, others have proved that gender and Smartphone use are not significantly related.

4.2 Strategies to Overcome the ICT Challenges in Monastic Religious Life

A number of strategies that addressed the challenges in the use of ICTs among the monastic lifestyle of the MBST in Kenya, were proposed to the respondents as follows:

Strategy 1: The use of RB and Constitutions which are rooted in the scriptures for guidance in the use of the ICTs.

Strategy 2: Take the use of ICTs seriously and with discipline, responsibly use them for bearing witness to the Gospel of Christ.

Strategy 3: Cultivation of self-control. Avoid idling in the internet to overcome being caught there, for it has the potential to make us very miserable, very angry, or very dead. Not everything that pops up in the internet is good for the eyes and lifestyle of the religious persons.

Strategy 4: MBST need to conveniently adapt themselves to the new change. Since communication has changed drastically in the recent past, they must also dance diligently to the tune of the new digital world and learn to strike a balance in their use and religious life.

Strategy 5: Develop the Practice of moderation to avoid excessive use of the internet to overcome its addiction.

Strategy 6: To value individual relationships in the community than the ICT gadgets that promote loneliness, laziness and alienation.

Strategy 7: Learn to use the power of these new technologies to minimize irresponsible usage and improve time management in their use.

Respondents were asked to indicare their level of agreement with these strategeis in 4-point Likert scale. The scale used ranged from 1-4 where, 4=Strongly agree, 3=Agree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree. Results were interpreted as 3.5-4.0=Strongly agree, 2.5-3.4=Agree, 1.5-2.4=Disagree, 1.0-1.4=Strongly disagree. These results are shown in Table 2

Table 2: Strategies to Overcome ICT Challenges to Monastic Religious Life

Strategies		S D	D	A	S A	T
Strategy 1	F	0	2	20	35	57
	P	0.0	3.5	61	61.4	100
Strategy 2	F	0	0	17	40	57
	P	0.0	0.0	29.8	70.2	100
Strategy 3	F	0	2	16	39	57
	P	0.0	3.5	28.1	68.4	100
Strategy 4	F	0	2	24	31	57
	P	0.0	3.5	42.1	54.4	100
Strategy 5	F	1	1	16	39	57
	P	1.8	1.8	28.1	68.4	100
Strategy 6	F	0	1	17	39	57
	P	0.0	1.8	29.8	68.4	100
Strategy 7	F	0	2	22	33	57
	P	0.0	3.5	38.6	57.9	100

Results presented in Table 2 showed that more than half of the respondents, 61.4% strongly agreed and 35.1% agreed that RB and Constitutions which are rooted in the scriptures should be used for guidance in the use of the ICTs. Further, more than half of the respondents 70.2%, strongly agreed and 29.8% agreed that ICTs use should be taken seriously and with discipline, and used responsibly. According to table 4.22 F=Frequency; P=Percentage; SD=Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree and T=Total.

In addition, respondents were asked to give other suggestions apart from those suggested to them and the following were the strategies further suggested:

▪ Organizing talks for the sisters on the proper use of ICTs as monastics.

- Devise the use of personal checklist to see how much the use of ICTs in comparison to one's spiritual exercises.
- Have community meetings regularly as a checklist to keep on track to the proper use of ICTs.

The interview and the FGD findings shared the same views on the strategies that would help overcome the ICT challenges.

The study established a number of strategies that addressed challenges in the use of ICTs among the MBSTs to a greater extent. There was agreement that RB and Constitutions which are rooted in the scriptures need to be used for guidance in the use of the ICTs. In line with this argument, Carbajo (2015) postulates how ICTs are already unavoidably embedded in the daily life of the consecrated sisters and brothers changing their perception of self, others and the world. Therefore, he necessarily urges them to inhabit the new digital environment with the style that best fits to their religious life and mission.

Further, Pope Francis (2014) in his letter "Rejoice" to all the consecrated people addresses the challenge of the 21st Century by calling on them to approach media seriously for the success of their work of evangelization. He also urges every consecrated men and woman to overcome the challenges of the ordinary people becoming the sources of truth by bearing witness to the Gospel through the communications media. From the results, respondents demonstrated that they were in agreement that in ICTs use must be taken seriously and with discipline, and used responsibly. As alluded by Pope Francis (2014) that media should be approached seriously and take it up for the work of evangelisation in the 21st Century. Vallikatt (2015) also argues that since Christianity is all about coming and sharing, religious life shall be an example par excellence for it and therefore, the Church needs to learn skills of network and collaboration.

In similar perspective, Tembo (2018) noted that, interpersonal relationships, aimed at building communities are today challenged by ICTs. These technological gadgets if not used appropriately and with discipline can be very distractive endangering their call and the core of religious life. According to Jonveaux (2013), internet abolishes categories of space and time overriding the terms of the seclusion in monastic life and as a consequence, monks and nuns have to find a way to protect their seclusion as they make use of the internet and to maintain the fundamental characteristics of their life. Further, the results showed that most respondents were in agreement that people need to avoid idling in the internet to overcome being caught there, for it has the potential to make us very miserable, very angry, or very dead. Not everything that pops up in the internet is good for the eyes and lifestyle of the religious persons especially the inappropriate contents, the scam, and the gambling. In correspondence with this fact, Bauer (2013), postulates that because communication has changed drastically in the last decade, religious consecrated must also dance diligently to the tune of the new digital world.

According to Monterosso, Kumar and Zala (2019), it is very intriguing to discover that, student who is in spiritual practices have shown a higher level of addiction in relation to

students who do not practice. It is because the students who practice any form of spiritual practices are having more energy; hence, if not channeled properly it can result in social networking, or mobile addiction. The results also has depicted that MBST should conveniently adapt themselves to the new change. Similarly, Bauer (2013) ascribes that that television, newspapers, telephones; even the printing press has all required communities to adapt. Accordingly, women's religious communities have had to weigh progress versus their communities' purpose. For contemplative communities, it means balancing their call to a "real prophetic witness to the world" with values such as silence, reflection, reverence of each other, coming together in prayer, and living peacefully together in community. Swaim (2011) also provides practical suggestions for learning how to "unplug" from the obstacles to prayer inherent in our digitally-connected culture and incorporate prayer into one's daily life. This requires a certain level of discipline from individual religious persons to make it a success.

The final point is to value individual relationships in the community than the ICT gadgets as there was an agreement to it at a great extent. In line with these results, Dwyer, Kushlev and Dunn (2018) argued that phone use may undermine the enjoyment people derive from real world social interactions. It is noted that despite phones' ability to connect people to others across the world, they can undermine the benefits they derive from interacting with those across the table. Rotondi, Stanca and Tomasuolo (2017) also concur to this fact that because of its intrusiveness, the smartphone reduces the quality of face-to-face interactions and, as a consequence, their positive impact on well-being. Individuals who use the smartphone consider time spent with friends as worthless, in terms of life satisfaction. Horwood and Anglim (2019) also ascribes to the fact that problematic smartphone usage was correlated with lower wellbeing on almost all scales.

The results also indicate that individuals should avoid excessive use of the internet to overcome its addiction at a great extent. Many people nowadays are using mobile phones frequently for daily activities. According to Gezgin (2018), there were positively correlated relationships between ages, daily duration of social networking sites (SNS) use on Smartphone, duration of smartphone ownership, and FoMO variables and smartphone addiction. In addition, there are negatively correlated relationships between duration of sleep (DoS), checking frequency of SNS (CFoS) on smartphone variables and smartphone addiction. Finally, fear of missing out (FoMO), daily duration of SNS use on smartphone and duration of smartphone ownership predict smartphone addiction. Wyner (2019) also confirms the concerns of parents, educators and young people themselves, regarding the possible addictive nature of smartphone use and the potential impact of problematic use on psychosocial wellbeing

5.0 Conclusion

The study concluded that Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing cannot afford to be alien to the modern means of communication. ICTs have infiltrated into their communities and are aware that without their use and especially mobile phones, internet and computers, many of them would not get in touch with each other, their communities, employees,

subjects, families and their benefactors. Competence, effectiveness and success in their apostolic ministries highly depend on their use of internet, computers/laptops, mobile phones and TV as necessary gadgets. However, by using these modern means of communication rightly, the religious are just but being true to themselves and to their real vocation which is, the vocation to create communities through communication of the truth. Their use everywhere in the world has made life comfortable in the society due to connectivity, convenience, efficiency and increased productivity, greater accessibility, processing and storage of information, increased innovation, eased mobility and disability and creativity among others.

Before the dawn of ICTs, were the analogue techniques of communication like radios, the old television sets, print media such as magazines and newspapers; landline telephones, letters, fax and face-to-face daily communications. These methods of communication did not probably interfere much with the religious monastic practices such as prayer, meditation, community living, spiritual reading, daily manual labour, formation learning and everything that St. Benedict would call, "being in the school of the Lord" as their usage was centralized and controlled by the monastic religious authorities. However, the penetration of ICTs into every sphere of people's lives suggests that technology has to be embraced. In fact, technology is neither supremely good nor inherently evil, how it is used is what matters. The use of ICTs, therefore, calls for discernment to aid in making wise choices and with integrity on what is relevant and beneficial for consumption especially to the religious consecrated people; for not everything that technology offers is beneficial for their spiritual, physical, psychological, intellectual, emotional wellbeing in community living, and there lies the challenge! This conquers with Carbajo (2015) when he encourages the religious to inhabit the new digital environment with the style that best fits to their religious life and mission.

The fundamental characteristic of monastic way of life in the congregation of the MBST is seeking God in the community, under a rule and a prioress and their common life finds expression in praying and working together, sharing their goods both material and spiritual and in mutual service, support and encouragement. They strive to discern the will of God ever anew in order to respond more fully to their vocation. In regard to this, silence is a crucial core value against dictatorship of noise. Silence is an indispensable ingredient to authentic monastic life. In a time when technology penetrates religious life in so many ways and materialism exerts such a powerful influence over the religious, Cardinal Sarah (2017) like St. Benedict exalts silence saying that, the modern world generates so much noise, that seeking moments of silence to seek God has become both harder and more necessary than ever before. His conviction is that, silence is more important than any human work for it expresses God. Moreover, the true change comes from silence and leads toward God and others in humble service.

A proper balance is needed that is prudence and moderation in the use of ICTs, accompanied by community discernment, to help the community know better the complexity of the digital world, embrace the modern means of communication with awareness and a critical mind and, finally, evaluate their impact in relation to the community life, evangelical vows, various ministries at the service of the Gospel and in

relation to the fraternal way of life of the members of their congregation. In keeping with the choice of their specific state of life, characterized by a more marked separation from the world, monastic missionary communities should consider themselves more committed to preserving an atmosphere of recollection, being guided by the norms determined in their own constitutions about the use of the ICTs. This is because the modern means of communication break through into this basic characteristic of monastic life, making them too open to, and involved in the world. The modern means of communication can serve the consecrated religious well if embraced conscientiously.

6.0 Recommendations

Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing in Kenya today live in a digital era which presents them with a variety of choices positive and negative alike. In such an atmosphere, there is need for a proper formation of conscience to help in distinguishing between what is good and what is bad. Therefore, there is need for them to have more education on the incorporation of ICT's use with our Benedictine values, in order to increase their understanding on how to embrace and use them in a manner that best fits to their religious charism. This is in line with the thought of Pope Benedict XVI (2009) when he addressed the young people saying, "*I ask you to introduce into the culture of this new environment of communications and information technology the values on which you have built your lives*." These words should also speak loud to the religious as well. Maradiaga (2018), he also acknowledged that many religious, priests and nuns do not always responsibly make use of social networks, and hence encourages the need to educate them and lead in a positive way.

The proliferation of ICTs on current digital world has broken down the barricades of separation such as space, time, disability, language and culture among others, making the world a global village in which no genuine religious can claim incapacitated to evangelize in any way. Accessibility of mobile phones, computers/laptops, digital televisions combined with the internet connectivity, have opened up a range of means of communication that embrace vast evangelization. If properly utilized, they can be of immense service to humanity, since they greatly contribute to humanity's holistic instruction, entertainment, spread and support of the kingdom of God.

Strengthen the practice of equity, in source and provision for the sister's ICT gadgets and their maintenance as highlighted in the Rule of Saint Benedict 33 [5] "*but they must expect to receive all they need from the father of the monastery*." The constitution of the MBST chapter 2 number 8 states that, they use goods reverently and gratefully, aware that they are mere stewards of God's gifts and accountable for their use. This is to ensure faithfulness, transparency and accountability in the administration and use of ICTs. The call to accountability occurs 14 times in the Rule of St. Benedict as he constantly stresses that we shall have to render an account to God for all that is placed in our care. The Rule of St. Benedict chapter four on "*The Tools of Good Works*", he calls his followers to accountability on the use they make on what has been entrusted to them. If they make full use of them unceasingly day and night, then, when they give them back on the day of reckoning, they shall in return receive from the Lord that recompense which he himself has promised.

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