The Church's Missional Strategy in the Techno-Cultural Era

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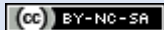
ABSTRACT

Technology has profoundly reshaped social and cultural institutions in the 21st century. For instance, social media has significantly impacted every aspect of human life, particularly in the realm of communication. Church and technology have become inextricably linked in the contemporary period, with social media playing a crucial role in shaping how churches operate and communicate. Social media has changed the way we communicate. This paper aims to demonstrate the influence of digitalization on the church's mission, providing insight into techno-cultural trends and theology from a missional perspective. This study employs a qualitative method with a literature review approach, including various journal articles and appropriate books, and analyzes them thematically. The primary argument of the study is that, with a well-planned strategy leveraging communication technology, a church's missional agenda can be effectively promoted and sustained, thereby enhancing church growth and sustainability. Findings showed that any institution, including the church, that fails to engage the digital space may cease to exist within the next 10 years. The paper contributes to knowledge by offering a pragmatic strategy bridging practical theology, cultural studies, and communication. The paper provides recommendations for a pragmatic approach to the 21st-century church for engaging with social media platforms theologically, professionally, and efficiently.

Keywords: *Church, Missional strategy, Techno-cultural, Digitalization, Digital evangelism*

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The techno-culture has impacted every aspect of human existence to such an extent that no institution, including the church, can survive without adapting to it. "It will be impossible for organizations to run smoothly in the post-COVID-19 pandemic without a clear definition of the role of technology.[1] The days when many organizations, especially churches, operated with a limited understanding of technology's significance are past. Any church or secular institution that fails to engage with technology effectively may not exist in the next decade.[2] "The church cannot live in the past and expect a miracle of inclusion and sustainability to happen."[3] The 21st-century church must strategize to engage cultural trends to achieve its missional purpose. "A missional church in the techno-cultural era emphasizes adapting traditional church practices to leverage technology and engage with a digitally saturated world, which maintains core missional values."[4] by using digital tools to extend ministry reach with diverse audiences and facilitate discipleship."[5] The integration of technology into the church's life has not been entirely smooth despite its opportunities; it has come with some challenges. However, there is an ongoing debate among church leaders over whether the church should engage with technology partially, entirely, or avoid it altogether, especially social media.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study employs a qualitative methodology with a literature review approach to analyze the phenomenon of the church's mission strategy in the techno-cultural era. The researcher collected and analysed theories, concepts, and findings from reliable sources, including books and journal articles, related to the topic under study in the literature review. This approach enabled the research to have a deeper understanding of the dynamics of techno-cultural trends within the context of the church's mission approach and evangelism strategies. Therefore, the study is anticipated to provide a significant theoretical and theological contribution to the development of the church's mission strategies in the techno-cultural era.

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review covers an approach to analyze the phenomenon of the church's mission strategy in the techno-cultural era.

3.1 Understanding the Concept of Church

This interpretation of 'church' (*ekklesia)* was echoed among the Greek-speaking Jews of New Testament times: an assembly of people in a covenant relationship with God, assembled for religious purposes.[6] Grudem explains that the church is "the community of all true believers for all time."[7] The recent COVID-19 pandemic has sparked debate among church scholars over whether a congregation needs a physical place of worship to fulfil the Great Commission.[8] This debate has raised

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[1] Klein Woolthuis, J.A, Rosalinde, Maureen Lankhuizen, and Victor Gilsing, "A System failure framework for innovation policy design", *Technovation,* vol. 25(6) (2005):505-619.

[2] Joseph.Atuahene Owusu, "A Practical Theological Exploration into the Methodist Church of Ghana's use of Social Media" (PhD Thesis: South African Theological Seminary, Johannesburg, 2022), 54-72.

[3] Krlev Gorgi, Eva Bund, and Georg Mildenberger, "Measuring what matters-indicators of social innovativeness on the national level,*" Information Systems Management*, vol. 31, no.3 (2014):200-224, accessed September 4, 2025. Doi: 10.1080/10589530.2014.923265.

[4] Godspower Ugboh, "The Church and Techno-Theology: A Paradigm Shift of Theology and Theological Practice to Overcome Technological Disruptions," Journal of Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Technology, vol. 3, no. 2 (2023):59-78.

[5] Ugboh, "The Church and Techno-Theology: a Paradigm Shift of Theology and Theological Practice to overcome Technological Disruptions," 61.

[6] Joseph Atuahene, Owusu, A Practical Theological Exploration into the Methodist Church of Ghana's use of social media, 52.

[7] Grudem Wayne, *Systematic Theology. An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Zondervan and Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).

[8] Afolaranmi Adebayo Ola, "Towards the possibility of Internet ministry as an alternative pastoral

questions about the previous understanding of a church as a specific place of worship.[9] Some scholars argue that without a building, missionary work could not be done.[10] Given virtual church worship due to COVID-19, how will they argue this stance? "It is our consumer mentality that causes us to think we need buildings."[11] Buildings can be great tools, but the church thrives every day without them. The church is not a building but rather the individuals who come together as one body in Christ.

The standard definition of a "church" as a particular place of worship would have seemed strange to the early church, as they held services in homes. For example, the Apostle Paul greeted the congregation that met in the house of Priscilla and Aquila in Rome. (Rom. 16:3-5). The "church" refers to the congregation, not the edifice.[12] After some years of Christian existence, the "church" became known as the place where believers met to fellowship. The local church is where the members of the universal church can apply 1 Corinthians 12, encouraging, teaching, and building one another up in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The church universal is a multitude gathered from all nations; it is divided and dispersed in separate places, but agrees on the one truth of divine doctrine and is bound by the bond of the same religion.[13] This view confirms that the church is not just the building, but the people; the church is wherever Christ is revered as the foundation of the church. It is possible that the COVID-19 pandemic prompted the church to shift its focus to other directions to spread the gospel during the lockdown.[14] Pillay cited Numberger in his work as providing insight into comprehending the invisible church:

> The invisible church (ecclesia invisible) is composed of all who have been reached by the Word of God and have responded in faith, wherever they may be. According to Luther, this is the true church. It has no head other than Christ. The power of the new life of Christ flows into the members and through the members into the world. In Paul's terminology, the Spirit of Christ permeates the Body of Christ and empowers its members to witness to Christ and build up the Body with their respective gifts.[15]

3.2 Wesleyan Model of Church

John Wesley's model of the church is one of the most effective ways to examine the concept of the church. Wesley used a particular method to execute his ministry strategy. Together with other preachers, they travelled around on horses to selected parts of England, where they held church meetings in various places.[16] They won many souls without possessing a building.[17]

The Apostle Paul urged believers to redeem the time because of the evil days in which they lived. Building space should not prevent the church from having fellowship and engaging in evangelism. Those who believe that the church is the building and, therefore, there is no longer a

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ministry in Nigeria during the Covid-19 pandemic," *International Journal of International Technology and Language Studies (*Lead City University, Ibadan: Nigeria, 2020).

[9] Jerry Pillay, "COVID-19 shows the need to make church more flexible, *An international Journal of holistic mission studies*," 2020, accessed September 4, 2025. https://doi.org/10. 1177/0265378820963156, assessed September 4, 2025.

10 Dan Kimball, "I was wrong about church buildings."Christianity Today, accessed September 14, 2025.http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2009/december-online-only/, 2009.

[11]Elizabeth L. Eisennstein, *The printing and agent of change: communications and cultural Transformations in early-modern Europe* 2025. (Cambridge University Press, 1980).

12 Joseph Atuahene Owusu and Isaac Boaheng, "Understanding the use of information communication technology from the missional perspective," *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* Vol. 6 No. 3 (2025):245-261. accessed September 19, 2025. Doi: https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.2025631.

[13] Jonathan Leeman, "The church: universal and local. The Gospel Coalition," 2025, accessed August 26, 2025, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org.

[14] Joseph Atuahene Owusu, A practical theological exploration into the Methodist Church Ghana's use of social media, 61.

[15] Jerry Pillay. COVID-19 shows the need to make the church more flexible.

[16] Paul Richard Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the people called Methodists (*Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995).

[17] Albert C. Outler, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral – in John Wesley", *WTJ* (1985): 7-8.

church must "move away from a customer-service mindset and not focus on consumers of religious goods and services."[18] Christians need to put more effort into virtual worship because the church is no longer limited to a building.

3.3 Biblical Antecedents of Technology in Missions

Biblical antecedents for the engagement of technology in church missions stem from creation in God's image and the mandate to steward the earth, and all that is in it, as outlined in Genesis 1:26-28. God's master was not to create robots but to create a human being in his own image (Imago Dei). Being made in the image of a creative God implies that humans have some of God's innovative skills and capacity. Bazel, for example, was filled with the Spirit of God, "ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship" to build the tabernacle (Exodus 31:1-6). Noah was instructed to build an Ark, which is a clear example of God commanding the use of complex technology (seafaring architecture) (Genesis 6:14-16). Tubal-Cain was a forger of all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron." All these examples demonstrate God's sanction for skilful work and technology in serving God's purposes or missions.

3.4 Understanding Techno-cultural Revolution and Communication

The explosive growth and widespread adoption of technology marked the beginning of a technology transformation and socialization, characterized by a stronger desire for information about everything.[19] The observed changes and their associated influences on interpersonal and community-level interactions underscore that something fundamental to our existence has changed or is in the process of changing. These gradually evolved into social media, which is significant for sharing information about people.[20] Social media is currently a key component in information and communication technology (ICT).[21] Social media applications are quickly becoming the default means of online communication.[22] Though these changes are very positive, they have become a challenge for Christianity in the 21st century.

The techno-cultural trend is transforming the way we communicate, both within the church and in individual interactions, to such an extent that we are living through a period of profound cultural change.[23] Pope Benedict XVI asserts that new technologies are transforming the way we communicate and the nature of communication itself. The Internet demands a profound reflection on the significance of communication in the digital age.[24] The world is currently in a digital era, where connections and connectivity are shifting away from physical presence and toward online communities and forums.[25] "It's radically changing the way we communicate with each other."[26] The digital era permeates our society to the extent that it has become a defining aspect of it. Still, it has become a part of our society.[27]

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18 E.D Stetzer, "Why your church should be on social media right now", 2015, accessed July 23, 2025, http" //www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2015/February/why-your-church-should-be-on-social-media.html, 2015.

[19] Helene, Fournier and Rita Kop, "New dimensions to self-directed learning in an open networked learning environment," *The International Journal,* vol. 7, No. 2, (2011):78.

[20] Joseph Atuahene Owusu. A practical theological exploration into the Methodist Church in Ghana's use of social media.

[21] George C Nche and Nkechi Onah, "The moral implications of social media phenomenonin Nigeria," Mediterranean Journal of Social Science. Vol. 5, no. 20 (2014) MCSER publication,

[22] Vester Madueno, "A social media toolkit for the journalism classroom.' *Rhodes Journalism Review. 3,* .2010.

[23] Marshall McLuhan, "*Understanding media: The extensions of man*, 1994, MIT Press,

[24] Lucas J. Brain. "Social communication. Vatican II and the Austrian Church," *Australian eJournal of Theology* 2 (2012) 155-171.

[25] Potgieter Annette, "Digitalization and the church – a corporeal understanding of church the influence of technology," 2019, accessed August 15, 2025, https://resipository-up.ac.za/handle/2263/2559.

[26] Mark Forrester, *Trending Up: Social Media Strategies for Today's Church (Boonville, USA: Salubris Resources*, 2017).

[27] Peter Nagy and Bernadett Koles, "The digital transformation of human identity: Towards a conceptual model of virtual identity in a virtual world," *The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies.* 20 30 (2014) :277-294

The church's potential to amplify the most crucial message in history through social media is epic.[28] Bourgeois and Lazarus predict that the change is occurring at such a rapid pace outside the church that the church risks becoming irrelevant if it cannot keep pace.[29] Every organisation, including the church, becomes irrelevant when external change exceeds its capacity for transformation.[30] Today, one of the most effective ways to establish your church's presence where people are is by being present on social media.[31] Despite the significance of using communication tools, negative trends accompany their use if employed unguardedly.[32]

Additionally, their use has significant legal and ethical implications. Theological Implications necessitate a more in-depth reflection and authentic dialogue.[33] Consequently, churches must examine and acknowledge these challenges while developing the capacity to understand and mitigate any harmful consequences that may arise. For instance, technology (social media) becomes an enemy of creation when we create "information-intensive, technique-oriented habits" that shape our values."[34]

3.5 Digital Transformation of Church Communication – Mission

Human beings have invented various forms of communication, from smoke signals and messenger pigeons to the telephone and email, that have constantly evolved how people communicate[35]. Technology enhances communication by facilitating closer and easier connections. In 1831, one of the most significant developments in communication—the electric telegraph—was invented. Digital methods have superseded almost all other forms of communication.[36] The world is now in a digital era where people often connect online rather than meet face-to-face.[37] The electric revolution and the digital age of communication began at the end of the twentieth century, marked by numerous advances in telecommunications, computing, digital technology, and information technology.[38] This period saw the availability of devices such as mobile phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), satellite communications, and digital television. The World Wide Web and the Internet have provided a global environment that has improved communication. Social media, network capabilities, and digital technologies are changing the way humans communicate. Digital technologies have provided new resources to enable people to socialise more effectively.[39]

The present age has witnessed a massive proliferation of digital communication technologies and pervasive computing devices, profoundly impacting all aspects of human life. This transformation has significantly altered the way people work, engage in leisure activities, receive education, and interact

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[28] Mark Forrester, *Trending up: social media strategies for today's church*

[29] Bourgeois A, Lazarus D.T., *Ministry in the digital age. Strategies and best practices for a post-website world*, (Illinois, USA: IVP Books, 2013).

[30] Joseph Atuahene Owusu, A practical theological exploration into the Methodist Church of Ghana's use of social media.

[31] Lazarus Natchi, "The connected Church. A social media communication strategy for churches, non-profit and individuals in ministry," 2017:56, accessed July 7, 2025, www.natchilazurus.com.

[32] Omololu Bajulaiye, Digital transformation in the hedge fund and private equity industry. *Lex research topic in corporate law & economics working paper* No. 2020-1 (2020).

[33] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding media: The extensions of man*, 67.

[34] Jeff Myers, *Understanding culture: a survey of social engagement* (2017):81.

[35] The Chaos Cabinet, the history of communication: From smoke signals to Quantum messaging, accessed September 4, 2025. https://vocal.media

[36] Rogers Sol, "The role of technology in the evolution of communication," (2019), https://www.forbes.com

[37] Potgieter Annette, Digitalization and the church – a corporeal understanding of church and the influence of technology

[38] Tracy Bowen and Antoine Pennaforte, "The impact of digital communication technologies and New remote-working cultures on the socialization and work-readiness of individualism WIL programs. Work-integrated learning in the century," International Perspective on Education and Society, vol. 32 (2017):99-112, Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley, accessed September 24, 2025. https//doi.org/10.1108/S1479-367920170000032006.

[39] Tracy Bowen, and Antoine Pennaforte, "The impact of digital communication technologies and New remote-working cultures on the socialization and work-readiness of individualism WIL programs" *Work-integrated learning in the century,* 5 (2016):109.

with one another. It has emerged due to the increasing availability and affordability of digital devices and media.[40]

With these digital communication tools, individuals and society have been shaped primarily by the possibilities for new forms of interaction and social group formation that these technologies enable.[41] Now, digital communication methods have enabled a different kind of community that supports rapid interaction through various communication tools, such as mobile or telephone conversations, Zoom conferencing, WhatsApp, email, SMS, and others.[42]

3.6 Theology of Technology (Social Media)
There is a biblical worldview approach to everything.[43] The emergence of technology and social media has redefined how things are done. They have [profoundly] impacted what it means to be human, significantly shifting our patterns of behaviour and communication.[44] While social media has had positive impacts on human life, studies have revealed that technology, particularly social media, has been detrimental to the church in terms of sound theological interpretation. As a result of this occurrence, two schools of thought have emerged – those in support and against its engagement. In this sense, what does God say about the use of social media technologies? The Christian worldview unmasks technology's illusion of neutrality.

Technology is never passive. "New technologies alter the structure of our interests: the things we think about. They alter the character of our symbols, the things we think with and about. And they alter the nature of community: the arena in which thoughts develop."[45] Meanwhile, it is the individual who has the right to decide whether technology should control their life.[46]

Christians should acknowledge that technology did not emerge solely from civilization and modernity. God is the God of technology, and He imparted skills to humanity during creation. In the Stone Age, stones and fire were also some forms of technology.[47] Just as computers and phones have shaped how humans live today, the creation of stone equipment also transformed how humans lived in the past.[48] "We make our technologies, and they, in turn, make and shape us."[49] The dilemma of adopting Information Technology has become a concern for theologians due to its impact on moral ethics and the Christian faith.[50] It has become expedient for theologians to answer whether God has a hand in technology or whether it is one of the devil's tools to fulfil its mandate.[51] For instance, Postman argues that new technologies redefine the old. "We do not even notice, embedded in every tool is an ideological bias, a predisposition to construct the world as one thing rather than another, to value one

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[40] Tracy Bowen and Antoine Pennaforte, "The impact of digital communication technologies and New remote-working cultures on the socialization and work-readiness of individuals in WIL programs," 105.

[41] Tracy Bowen and Antoine Pennaforte, "The impact of digital communication technologies and New remote-working cultures on the socialization and work-readiness of individualism WIL programs," 106.

[42] Joseph Atuahene Owusu, A practical theological exploration into the Methodist Church of Ghana's use of social media

[43] Jeff Myers. *Understanding culture: a survey of social engagement. U.S.A.: Summit Ministries,* 2017:145

[44] Mok B.K.M, "Public theology in the age of social media," International Journal of Public Theology, 15 3, 309-328, accessed September 4, 2025. https://doi .org/10.1163/15697320-01530002.
 Katie Cross "Thought and Prayers: A theology of social media crisis interaction and mental health," *Journal of Disability & Religion* vol. 29 Is. 2 (2025):144-156, accessed August 4, 2025. https://doi.org/10.1080/23312521.2024.2441431

[45] John Effiong Edet, Theology and Information Technology. *Methodist Journal of Theology (MEJOTH),* vol. 2, issue 1 (2015):160-178. Methodist Theological Institute, Sagamu, Ogun State, 167.

[46] Joseph Atuahene Owusu, A practical theological exploration into the Methodist Church of Ghana's use of social media.

[47] Ron McGivern. "Chapter 8. Media and technology," 2016, accessed June 16, 2025, https://opentextbc.ca.

[48] Joseph Atuahene Owusu and Isaac Boaheng, "Understanding the Use of Information and Communication Technology from a Missional Perspective."

[49] Jeff Myer, *Understanding culture: a survey of social engagement.* 156

[50] Effiong, Theology and Information Technology, 160-178

[51] Joseph Atuahene Owusu, A practical theological exploration into the Methodist Church of Ghana's use of social media

thing over another, to amplify one sense or skill or attitude more loudly than another."[52] But this view seems too extreme.[53] It is more likely that new technology will become the norm; still, it does not mean that previous generations — such as telegraphs and telephones — are forgotten, but rather that we acknowledge the old and accept the new. [54]

Postman devolves considerable power to technology, creating the impression that technology holds power over humanity.55 He failed to consider the conceptual basis that this is not inherent in the tool; instead, it lies in the user. Technologies do not act independently; they operate according to human directives and instructions.[55] Televisions, for example, do not gratify man instantly; man, rather, gratifies himself by watching television. The Postman's view may have some basis, but he pays little attention to people's ability to make their own choices about the influence of technology.

3.7 EVANGELISM
Evangelism is one of the church's core responsibilities. It is the fundamental aspect of Christian theology, aimed at spreading the good news of Christ. "Evangelization is a process of bringing the gospel to people where they are, not where you would like them to be. When the gospel reaches a people where they are, their response to the gospel is the church in a new place."[56] The core business of the church is to go and win souls, reaching out to people with the message of salvation. "The urgency of evangelism for the growth of the church lies in the biblical call to preach the gospel throughout the world (Matt. 28:19).[57]

There are significant challenges facing evangelism today, including secularism, socio-political and religious pluralism, the pandemic, and technological advancements. Bosch suggests that "evangelism needs to undergo a paradigmatic transformation to respond to the needs of the times.""The dissemination and interaction of the gospel have become more manageable with the emergence of social media." A new frontline of evangelism, based on Christ's approach to mingle with people where they are, sympathise with them, meet their physical and spiritual needs, and extend an invitation to accept and follow Jesus. Christian leaders need to develop the most effective strategies for sharing the gospel." [58]

3.7.1 Impact of Secularism on Evangelism
The term secularism refers to a theory of the separation of religion from public discourse. It is "the belief that religion and state should be separated, government should not promote or favour any particular religion."[59] The culture of secularism leads to a decline in religious activities and practices; at the same time, it provides a space for evangelism when it is appropriately engaged with "individuals who may be skeptical of traditional religious structures."[60] Secularism is a concept characterized by challenging the truth, morality, political authority, and social benefits of religion. This leads to religion losing its social significance and potency in public life.

3.7.2 Socio-Political Influence on Evangelism

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[52] Neil Postman, *Technology: The surrender of culture to technology,* (New York: Alfred. A Knopf, 1992), 32.
[53] JosephAtuahene Owusu, A practical theological exploration into the Methodist Church of Ghana's use of social media

[55] Neil Postman, *Technology: The surrender of culture to technology*, 68.
[56] Vincent Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered. Chicago* (University of Chicago Press, 2007).
[57] Sumarauw D Neyland, Hery B Yosef, Endang Pasaribu and Guntur H.S. Silaban, "A theological review of evangelism and its influence on church growth,"
[58] Joseph Atuahene Owusu, A practical theological exploration into the Methodist Church of Ghana's use of social media
[59] Sathee Neet, Ministry of Education, Government of India, assessed May 12, 2025. https://sathee.iitk.ac.in
[60] Neet, Ministry of Education, Government of India

The church faces challenges in addressing socio-political issues in the current millennium. The millennium presents significant challenges that call the church, theologians, and scholars to address them for the church's continued survival. "There have been socio-political issues at the core of the church's message and mission, even before the public ministry of Jesus Christ."[61]

However, it is imperative that the church effectively engage with socio-political issues confronting mission and evangelism. The "greater concern is that the evangelistic mission 'to reach all nations' has become misplaced.""The tension between the City of God and its present opponents, on the other hand, contrasted with its glorious future on the other."[62] It is evident that this tension confronts the church today: "the tension between the 'now and the not yet' which creates the problem of how Christians are to relate to society," and still maintain their identity.

3.7.3 Postmodernism
Postmodernism is a key product of the millennium. In this era, some people believe that evangelism is manipulative, an imposition, and a suppression of the poor. This school of thought sees no reason for the church to engage in evangelism because 'we are all on a faith journey.' Therefore, we need not force anyone, especially people with low incomes, to accept what we preach. Instead, we should care for the needs of the poor, feed the hungry, help the sick, and intercede for those facing injustice, regardless of their faith, without intimidation or coercion. The church in doubt must intensify our social actions to draw people to Christ; this school of thought failed to recognize that the church's core agenda is to care for the needy. Secondly, evangelism is neither a force nor manipulation, but rather a persuasion that appeals in love.

3.7.4 Impact of Religious Pluralism on Evangelism
Diverse and multireligious views and theological perspectives characterize religious pluralism. The current era of diverse spiritual beliefs and practices worldwide has impacted evangelism, necessitating a reconsideration of traditional approaches. The church needs new approaches to evangelism. Religious pluralism presents both opportunities for a deeper understanding of our faith when it is appropriately engaged and challenges to evangelism, as it involves diverse theories, perceptions of arrogance, debates over religious freedom, and a shifting of focus. Pluralism "is not simply a fact of life; it is a major consideration which must be addressed by all who are concerned with the maintenance of Christian integrity and the responsible proclamation of the gospel in the decade of evangelism."[63]

3.7.5 COVID-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on Evangelism
One of the pandemics that has affected the church is COVID-19, which has prompted a redefinition of the term "church" from a building where we meet to the people who have accepted Christ as their Saviour and follow His teachings. Church leaders now acknowledge that "in times of uncertainty, the greatest need is clarity."[64] COVID-19 did not bring only destruction but also transformations, particularly within the church. Many countries worldwide impose various restrictions to prevent virus infection; regulations vary from place to place, including a complete halt to in-person services, social distancing, and quarantine. It affected all facets of human life. The impact has been so significant that the world we knew will never be the same. COVID-19 has had a lasting effect on culture, shaping the future mission. There are views, especially among postmodernists, that traditional methods of

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[61] Kenneth Allen, "Kingdom consequences: socio-political dimensions of evangelistic preaching," DMin. Thesis, Liberty University, 2012.

[62] Melvin Thinker, "Reversal or betrayal? Evangelical and socio-political involvement in the twentieth century," *Churchman* (1999):113-168.

[63] Alister E. McGeath, "Pluralism and the decade of evangelism," accessed June 24, 2025. https://resipotory.globethics.net 1992

[64] Scott Ridout, "A pandemic impact on church: A reflection and response for churches during and after COVID-19," accessed June 24, 2025. https://www.nae,org 2021

evangelism, such as formalised preaching, hinder member engagement. Therefore, a new approach to evangelism has emerged, especially an effective means to engage the digital world. The gospel cannot remain in the chapel; instead, it goes to where the people are. Over half of the world's population is now found in digital spaces.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
4.1.Techno-Cultural Revolution
It is an era where technology determines "the emergence of a new form of culture. A network society culture, which is characterized by its informational, networked, and global-scale attributes."[65] The "dynamic between culture and technology that is implicitly seen in the establishment of network society exposure."[66] The influence of technology is so pervasive that no individual or organization in the 21st century can ignore it. "From the silicon chip to the internet and virtual reality."[67] There are real-world and virtual worlds today. The virtual world is now dominating the real world, as many services, including healthcare, finance, administration, education, and marketing, are increasingly transitioning to virtual platforms. "Technology plays a pivotal role in shaping cultural identities and practices across the globe."[68] Our world today has become interconnected, a global village with "technological advancements and innovations, particularly in communication, reshaping cultural landscapes."[69] The emergence and easy access to the Internet and mobile smartphones have led to an improvement in cross-cultural interactions, leading to the blending of cultural values and practices on a global scale."[70]

4.2. Church Leaders' Responses
Some church leaders, especially those in the mainline, view social media with cautious optimism for evangelism, recognizing its potential benefits while acknowledging its pitfalls. In contrast, some believe that the church should use social media to foster and strengthen relationships with both members and non-members, as well as to spread the gospel. Others have also expressed concern about its negative impact on the church. They hold the view that virtual services affect face-to-face interactions among community members. Another key concern is the misuse of these social media tools by users. The spread of falsehood and theological distortions has become a bane to Christian evangelism.

Therefore, church leaders are navigating engagement with social media tools, balancing enthusiasm and caution, recognizing their potential for evangelism and outreach while acknowledging the negative impacts associated with their use. Technology has played a significant role in promoting evangelism and fostering community relationships since the beginning of the church. The use of letters, radio, television, and telegram has immensely contributed to the spread of the gospel. "over the years, technology has been used as a medium for spreading the gospel from far back as New Testament times[71] Wise argues that the "ink and scroll used by the Apostle Paul and other early church leaders

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[65]Castells Manuel, "The contours of the network society," *Foresight,* 2, 2 (2000):151-157, accessed June 26, 2025. https://doi.org/10.1108/14636680010802591.

[66] Eko Wijayanto, "Technoculture as a 'culture revolution' in network society: a philosophical study of Manuel Castells' thinking," 2023, accessed June 26, 2025. DOI 10. 2991/978-238476-058-9_18

67 Kelvin Robins, "Times of the technoculture," 1999, accessed June 16, 2025, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282847735, 1999

[68] Alsaleh Abdullah, "The impact of technological advancement on culture and society," *Scientific Reports 14*, (2024):23-45.

[69] A Addullah, "The impact of technological advancement on culture and society," 24.

[70] A Addullah, "The impact of technological advancement on culture and society," 32.

[71] Obi-Ani A. Ngozika. Anikwenze Chinenye and Isiani Mathias Chukwudi, "Social media and the COVID-19 pandemic: Observations from Nigeria," *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 7, 1, accessed June 16, 2025. DOI: 10.1080/23311983.2020.17994837.

and scholars to propagate the gospel are considered cutting-edge technology of their time.[72] The printing press was a cutting-edge technology during the Protestant Reformation.[73] Martin Luther produced and distributed the 'Luther Bible.' "Social media platforms have been used by Pastors, Evangelists, Teachers, and Missionaries to preach the gospel."[74]

4.3 Digital Evangelism

Digital evangelism is the use of technological tools to spread the gospel. The use of these digital tools has become increasingly prevalent globally. It has affected every department of human life today, including communication, health, banking, and education. The widespread use of social media makes it necessary for the church to use it as well to spread the gospel. The widespread use of social media by individuals and organizations, along with its growing popularity, makes it imperative for the church also to take advantage of this phenomenon to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.[75] "It provides a way for people to share ideas, content, thoughts, and relationships online."[76] Social media offers evangelists the opportunity to engage with large numbers of people online. Yet other churches view it as "a dilution of traditional religious practices.[77] It is one of the fastest ways to reach people with the gospel on a larger scale. "Social media serves as a mode through which the community can be reached with the gospel." [78] Using social media to evangelise, people can accept the message of salvation without being physically present at a church meeting or service.[79] Digital evangelism accelerated as a critical and applicable tool for the churches during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the sole purpose of "to establish and maintain a relationship; to connect with members of the congregation."[80]

The popularity of social networks continues to grow. [81] The average person spends approximately two hours and twenty-four minutes online daily across about eight social media sites. Users from Africa are increasingly signing up for social media, and this has become a significant influence on communication.[82] Many users access social media daily, with over six in ten users of apps like TikTok, WhatsApp, and Instagram opening them every day.[83] It has been observed that 92.2% of the world's internet users now use social media monthly. [84] Hence, any church determined to fulfil the Great Commission cannot afford to reject social media engagement today.

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4.4 Techno-cultural Implications for the Church

The influence of technology on the church has been mixed. The impact has been both positive and negative, creating a new form of culture, known as "techno-culture," within religious communities. The church is navigating a complex relationship with digitalization, with both opportunities and challenges. No doubt, digitalisation enhances worship and evangelism through live-streaming services, allowing millions of people to be reached with the gospel wherever they are—expanding reach and accessibility, including for members who cannot attend in person due to work, illness, or other commitments.

The church can easily and quickly advertise events on its platforms and public platforms to invite members. During worship services, many churches use PowerPoint presentations for sermons and other teachings, enriching the service. The significant role of social media during the COVID-19 pandemic has given church scholars and leaders a new perspective on the definition of "church," leading to a reevaluation of church and liturgical practices. This perspective has prompted a critical reflection among church scholars, theologians, and leaders. Through this cultural trend, some churches that have effectively engaged with digitalization have improved their finances via e-transfer and other financial apps. This engagement enables members who cannot attend church to make donations through the church's app.

Despite all these opportunities offered by technology and its culture, the church must also strategically address other challenges to avoid a significant negative impact. There is a potential for isolation, as this techno-culture can create a sense of isolation that may reduce face-to-face interaction among members. The church is a community that loses its essence of effective human communication because isolation hinders the development of a deep spiritual community. The younger generation may prefer virtual services to in-person ones. The effect of this practice will be that these young people may lose or lack an understanding of some traditional church practices. There will be an increase in the spread of misinformation, and false teachings and theological distortions will become increasingly prevalent, primarily due to the widespread availability and accessibility of social media platforms. The church must strategically train its members to effectively handle and monitor these platforms, thereby preventing the spread of misinformation and false teachings and prophecies.

5.0 MISSIONAL STRATEGY AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON TECHNO-CULTURAL INFLUENCE

Christianity is not just something that happens within the four walls of a building; it extends beyond those boundaries to reach the unreached with the gospel. Any living church must be a "go" church—a mission-oriented church. The church adapts its message and ministry to meet the needs and cultural context of its community. The church, therefore, needs a well-calculated strategy to engage this trending culture to reach people with the gospel. The church's missional strategy focused on techno-cultural influence, equipping members to engage with the digitally driven world, promoting both spiritual growth and effective outreach. They require an approach that critically integrates digital tools to complement real-world interaction, foster community, and address ethical challenges. The strategic plan must include creating an understanding of techno-cultural trends, facilitating a conducive environment for all ages, and maintaining a well-structured digital presence.

5.1 Creating an Understanding of Techno-cultural Influence

In today's church work, it is necessary to carefully examine the cultural environment in which people live, as it shapes how they think and respond to the gospel message. One of the most significant influences at present is technology. It has permeated almost every aspect of life to the point where it is difficult to distinguish ordinary culture from the digital habits people adopt daily. The church cannot pretend that this change is far away or irrelevant. It affects communication, attendance, and even the expectations that members bring to church gatherings. Therefore, if the church wants to fulfil its

mission effectively, it must take the time to understand this technological and cultural influence, rather than operating as if nothing has changed.

The digital age has evolved gradually, yet it has become deeply ingrained in society. It shapes how people greet one another, how they search for information, and even how they settle disputes. A good number of church members, especially those in their teens and early adulthood, practically live inside this digital world. They move between WhatsApp, Facebook, and other platforms without much thought. When the church communicates only through the older channels, many of these young people simply do not see the message in time, or they overlook it. This is not because they are uninterested in church matters, but because their way of paying attention has changed. The church leadership must therefore make an effort to understand the habits and expectations of such members so that its message does not miss the mark. Techno-culture has also affected the style of modern communication. People respond more quickly to short, clear, and visually engaging materials than to long printed notices. Music, art, and the general sense of expression in society have all shifted in response to digital tools. One can see this even in how youth fellowships sing or how parish groups advertise their programmes. The church does not need to adopt every trend, but it should at least understand the direction society is moving in. Failing to appreciate these changes may leave the church sounding distant, even though its message remains important. By studying the influence of technology on culture, the church can refine its communication to speak more directly to people. This understanding will enable the church to remain faithful to its mission while remaining present and relevant in a rapidly changing world.

5.2 A Conducive Environment for All Ages

In the life of the church today, one reality that cannot be ignored is the clear distinction between the older and younger generations, especially in their approach to new forms of communication and everyday life. Many older people were formed during a period when information travelled slowly, and learning occurred mainly through direct contact with family, school, and community groups. Younger people, however, have grown up surrounded by phones, computers, and the Internet. These tools shape their thinking in ways that sometimes the older generation may not immediately understand. If the church truly wants to serve both groups well, it must, however gradually, try to hold these two cultural experiences together. When the atmosphere in the church leans too heavily towards one side, the other begins to feel out of place, and this has already happened in many congregations.

A growing number of young people are quietly stepping away from church activities, not because they lack a belief in God, but because they do not find spaces that resonate with their world. They are used to interactive and fast communication, where ideas move back and forth quickly. Digital natives, in particular, seek meaning that resonates with their daily experiences, and they require space to ask questions and express themselves. If the church wants to reach them, then it must take deliberate steps to make the message more practical and accessible without compromising its values. Creating a setting where both the elderly and the young feel at home, whether in worship, learning, or fellowship, will help reduce the distance between the generations. It may not happen suddenly, but a steady effort can create a community where all ages find their place and grow together in faith.

5.3 Establishment of a Well-structured Digital Presence

The church today cannot just wait for people to come to it. Most people are online these days, especially young people. They spend a lot of time on social media and websites. If the church is not online, it feels as though it does not exist for them. The idea of going to the people now means going to the places where they spend time, including the Internet. The church must have some presence on platforms like X, YouTube, TikTok, or Facebook.

It does not have to be on every platform at once. It can start small. Even a single page that posts announcements, sermons, or brief teachings is enough to begin with. Later, it can grow to do more, such as creating videos or live streams. What is important is consistency. People will notice if the church is missing from online listings. Being online is not about showing off or following trends; it's

about connecting with others. It is about making the gospel available to people where they are. Many people now know about the church only from what they see online. If the church ignores this, it risks losing touch with a whole generation. Even small efforts can help people feel connected. The church has to take the Internet seriously. Being present online is an integral part of our mission. It is part of going out to the people. If the church wants to reach more people, it must go where they are, and today, that is the digital space.

5.4 Employing Professional Media Personnel

A church that takes its mission seriously today must pay attention to its online presence. It is no longer enough to rely only on physical gatherings or traditional forms of communication. The call to "go" now includes entering the places where people actually spend their time, and for most of the world, that place is the digital community. Many people now receive news, learn, and even form their ideas of faith from what they see online. If the church stays out of that space, it quietly removes itself from the everyday lives of the very people it hopes to reach.

Having a digital presence is not simply about opening an account on a few platforms. It involves providing a structure for how the church communicates online so that anyone searching for it can find clear, dependable information. A basic website that explains the church's activities and beliefs can serve as a starting point. Additionally, utilising platforms such as X, YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and others enables the church to disseminate its message to individuals who may never attend its in-person services. The purpose is not to chase every trend, but to present the Christian message in a way that feels accessible and close to everyday life. When a church builds this digital presence with care, it widens its reach and keeps its mission alive in the places where people now gather.

5.5 Regular Training

Because culture is constantly evolving, the church cannot rely solely on a one-time set of guidelines for technology and social media. Members need regular workshops and seminars that educate them on how to use these platforms in ways that respect their faith. Many people, especially young people, spend considerable time online; however, not everything they encounter there is suitable for Christians. Regular training becomes necessary to remind the congregation of these boundaries.

The church also has a responsibility to monitor the pace of technological change closely. When leadership understands these developments, they are better positioned to guide members, explaining both the benefits and drawbacks of digital engagement. This guidance is crucial because the easy access to information online has created a situation where truth, half-truths, and outright falsehoods mix freely. Many of the false teachings and questionable spiritual practices circulating on the Internet gain attention precisely because people do not know how to examine them critically. For this reason, the church must take the task of training seriously, helping members check what they come across, verify claims, and avoid being misled. In doing so, the church not only protects its members but also strengthens its witness by promoting clarity, truthfulness, and sound judgment in an age of widespread misinformation.

5.6 Church Budgeting

A church that wants to reach people today cannot ignore the media in its plans. The church is not just the building; it is the people, and the people are online, on social media, and using different digital tools every day. To reach them, the church has to move where they are. This means budgeting for media and technology has become necessary.

Digital tools are not free. Buying equipment, setting up a streaming system, or recording messages all require financial investment, and not every church can afford everything at once. That is why planning is essential. A church can begin small, utilising free or low-cost tools initially. Later, as money becomes available, it can invest in better equipment. Sometimes, this may even require fundraising or careful allocation from the central budget. What matters is that it is intentional and not

left to chance. The goal is to make the gospel available to more people. If a church ignores digital tools, it misses out on reaching many people who spend most of their time online. Even simple tools for recording or streaming can make a difference. The church must be present in both the digital and physical spaces.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Our world today has been profoundly influenced by techno-culture to such an extent that the emerging culture has impacted every aspect of human existence. We speak technology, eat technology, and sleep technology. Therefore, no institution of our time, including the church, can either disengage or ineffectively engage with digitalization. Any institution that wants to achieve its business goals must strategically engage technology. The emerging culture has become so pervasive that failure to engage with social media platforms, whether intentional or unintentional, does so at one's own risk. Any organisation that fails to engage strategically with techno-culture may ultimately fail to exist as a meaningful institution. Churches, therefore, must incorporate effective ways to integrate technology into their yearly calendar to educate both leaders and members about the current culture. Christianity is not just something that happens within the four walls of a building; it extends beyond those boundaries to reach the unreached with the gospel. Any living church must be a "go" church—a mission-oriented church. The church adapts its message and ministry to meet the needs and cultural context of its community. The church, therefore, needs a well-calculated strategy to engage this trending culture and reach people with the gospel. Culture is dynamic, not static; hence, the church must be abreast of emerging cultures without losing its tenets, thereby fostering understanding among the people. Despite the benefits social media presents to the church, the church must indeed be careful in its engagement, as the platforms present significant challenges regarding falsehood, adulterated doctrines, privacy, security, content appropriateness, legal issues, and maintaining a credible community. While social media is a valuable tool for evangelism in today's world, it requires thoughtful and expert management to mitigate its inherent risks.

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