

# Knowledge Management and Performance of Pentecostal Churches in Southwest Nigeria

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**Abstract-** *This study investigates the impact of knowledge management practices on the performance of Pentecostal churches in southwest Nigeria. Employing a cross-sectional survey design with quantitative methods, the research targeted Pentecostal churches headquartered in Lagos State. A sample frame of ten churches was selected, with fifteen members from each church, resulting in 150 respondents. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire addressing knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application. A pilot test indicated high instrument reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.865). Multiple regression analysis, conducted using SPSS software, revealed that knowledge management practices significantly influence both membership growth and community development. For membership growth, the model explained 31.1% of the variance, with knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application all showing significant positive effects. Specifically, knowledge creation (B = .082), sharing (B = .091), storage (B = .094), and application (B = .088) were found to positively impact membership growth. Similarly, for community development, the model accounted for 24.7% of the variance, with significant contributions from knowledge creation (B = .021), sharing (B = .048), storage (B = .033), and application (B = .055). The findings align with previous research, highlighting the crucial role of knowledge management in enhancing organizational performance. The study recommends that Pentecostal church leaders prioritize strategies for effective knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application to foster membership growth and community development. Future research should explore moderating or mediating factors such as organizational culture, leadership, and technological infrastructure to further elucidate the relationship between knowledge management practices and church outcomes.*

**Keywords:** *knowledge management, membership growth, community development, Pentecostal churches*

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Pentecostal churches have experienced remarkable growth globally in recent decades, with adherents now numbering over 600 million followers worldwide (Jacobin, 2022). According to Pew Research Center, as cited in Majawa (2020), Pentecostalism has become a prominent feature of the religious landscape in Africa, with over 107 million adherents representing 12% of the population. The movement's growth has been particularly dramatic in sub-Saharan Africa since the era of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s (Uroko, 2024; Gathogo, 2022). However, this rapid expansion has also brought challenges. Some Pentecostal churches have been criticized for their prosperity gospel teachings, lavish lifestyles of their leaders, and lack of financial accountability (Ngetich, 2023). There are also concerns about the quality and effectiveness of their social services, particularly in areas like education and healthcare. Furthermore, Pentecostal churches have been accused of focusing too much on spiritual warfare and miracles at the expense of practical solutions to social problems (Magbadelo, 2004; Smith, 2021).

In Nigeria, Pentecostal churches have grown exponentially. However, they face similar challenges as their counterparts elsewhere in Africa. A study by Atoi (2019) found that many Pentecostal churches in Nigeria struggle with issues like poor leadership, lack of strategic planning, and inadequate record-keeping. These deficiencies might negatively impact their performance and ability to effectively serve their congregations and communities. Knowledge management (KM) may offer solutions to some of the challenges facing Pentecostal churches. KM is the process of creating, sharing, using and managing the

knowledge and information of an organization (Dickson & Isaiah, 2019). It has been successfully applied in various sectors to improve efficiency, innovation and decision-making (Imhanzenobe et al., 2021).

In the business world, KM has been shown to enhance organizational performance by facilitating the flow of knowledge, reducing redundancy, and enabling better use of intellectual assets (Dodla & Jones, 2023; Favoretto & Carvalho, 2021). While KM has been widely adopted in the corporate sector, its application in religious organizations is still emerging. A few studies have examined KM practices in Pentecostal churches. Cyster and Salubi (2023) conducted a case study of a Pentecostal church in an informal settlement in Cape Town, using the knowledge conversion model to assess its KM practices. They found that while some KM processes like socialization were occurring informally, the church lacked a systematic approach to managing its knowledge assets. Tacit knowledge was not being adequately captured, documented, or shared, hindering organizational learning and performance. Another study by Cyster et al. (2022) at a different Pentecostal church in Cape Town yielded similar findings. The researchers noted that while the church engaged in various KM activities, these were not strategically aligned with its goals and objectives. They recommended that Pentecostal churches develop KM frameworks tailored to their unique contexts and needs. The current study aims to build on this nascent body of research by examining the relationship between knowledge management and the performance of Pentecostal churches in Southwest Nigeria. It investigates the extent to which KM variables like knowledge creation, sharing, storage and application influence key performance indicators such as membership growth, and community development.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to both theory and practice. From a theoretical standpoint, it will expand the application of KM concepts to a new domain - religious organizations. Practically, the study will provide Pentecostal church leaders with insights and guidelines on how to leverage KM to enhance their organizational performance and better fulfill their mission. The results may also apply to other types of faith-based organizations.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. to determine the relationship between knowledge management practices (knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application) on the membership growth of Pentecostal churches in southwest, Nigeria
2. to examine the influence of knowledge management practices (knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application) on community development in Pentecostal churches in Southwest, Nigeria.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Knowledge Management

Knowledge management (KM) is a multifaceted concept that refers to the systematic processes and practices an organization employs to identify, create, store, share, and apply knowledge to enhance its performance and competitiveness (Ilechukwu et al., 2023). The key components of knowledge management include knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, knowledge storage, and knowledge application. Knowledge creation refers to the processes by which new knowledge is generated, such as through research, experimentation, or the combination of existing knowledge (Cyster & Salubi et al., 2022). This involves developing novel ideas, insights, and solutions that expand an organization's knowledge base. Knowledge sharing, on the other hand, is the dissemination and exchange of knowledge among organizational members, teams, and units (Cyster & Salubi., 2023). It facilitates the flow of knowledge throughout the organization, enabling individuals and groups to learn from each other and apply that knowledge to their work. Technology and social interactions play a crucial role in enabling and enhancing knowledge-sharing processes.

Once knowledge is created and shared, it needs to be preserved and made accessible for future use. This is where knowledge storage comes into play. Knowledge storage involves the preservation of knowledge in organizational repositories, databases, and other storage systems (Dickson & Isaiah, 2019). By storing knowledge in a structured and easily retrievable manner, organizations can ensure that valuable knowledge is not lost and can be leveraged when needed. Also, knowledge application is the utilization of knowledge to improve decision-making, problem-

solving, and the development of new products, services, or processes (Ilechukwu et al., 2023). It is the ultimate goal of knowledge management, as applying knowledge leads to tangible benefits for the organization, such as enhanced efficiency, innovation, and competitive advantage. These four components of knowledge management are interconnected and form a continuous cycle. Knowledge creation leads to knowledge sharing, which in turn enables knowledge storage. Stored knowledge can then be applied to generate new knowledge, starting the cycle anew.

## 2.2 Performance of Pentecostal Churches

Pentecostal churches in Nigeria have experienced remarkable growth and expansion in recent decades, becoming a dominant force within the country's religious landscape (Adedibu, 2023; de Arruda et al., 2022). Pentecostal churches have been highly effective in attracting and retaining members, particularly among the youth and urban middle class (Ogbe, 2019). The charismatic and experiential nature of Pentecostal worship, coupled with the prosperity gospel teachings that promise material blessings, have resonated with many Nigerians seeking spiritual fulfillment and upward social mobility (Uroko, 2024). This has led to the rapid proliferation of Pentecostal churches, with some megachurches boasting memberships in the tens of thousands (Adedibu, 2023; Uroko, 2024).

However, the performance of Pentecostal churches has also been criticized on several fronts. Some scholars have argued that the prosperity gospel emphasis has led to a focus on individual enrichment rather than social transformation, with Pentecostal leaders themselves accumulating significant personal wealth (Nyoni, 2018; Smith, 2021). There are also concerns about the quality and effectiveness of the social services provided by Pentecostal churches, particularly in areas like education and healthcare (Benyah, 2020). More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed significant challenges for Pentecostal churches in Nigeria, as with other religious institutions. The restrictions on large gatherings and in-person worship have forced these churches to adapt their practices and explore digital technologies to maintain engagement with their congregations (Obumneme et al., 2023). While Pentecostal churches in Nigeria have experienced remarkable growth and success in attracting members,

the prosperity gospel emphasis, concerns about social services, and the contribution to interreligious tensions highlight the need for these churches to address their shortcomings and align their practices more closely with their stated mission and values.

Scholars have employed various metrics and approaches to assess the performance and impact of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria and other contexts. Membership growth and retention have been examined as indicators of a church's appeal and effectiveness (Ngetich, 2023). Financial health and resource mobilization capabilities, including the ability to generate income through tithes and offerings, have also been studied (Adedibu, 2023). Social impact and community development, measured by the extent of social service provision and community projects, have been used to gauge the churches' contribution to local well-being (Adedibu, 2023). Spiritual vitality, member satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, and governance structures have been explored as additional performance indicators (Coleman, 2023; Olabimiji, 2023).

### 2.2.1 Membership Growth in Pentecostal Churches

Membership growth is a key indicator used by scholars to assess the performance and impact of Pentecostal churches. It refers to the ability of these churches to attract new members and retain existing ones over time. According to Uroko (2024), the rapid growth of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria has been driven by several factors, including the charismatic and experiential nature of Pentecostal worship, which resonates with many Nigerians seeking spiritual fulfillment, as well as the prosperity gospel teachings that promise material blessings, appealing to the aspirations of the urban middle class and youth. Adedibu (2023) further elaborates that the decentralized and adaptable nature of Pentecostal churches has enabled them to effectively engage with their target audiences and expand their membership base. The adoption of new technologies and the ability to tailor their message and practices to local contexts have also contributed to the impressive membership growth of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. However, the long-term sustainability of this membership growth remains a subject of debate. Therefore, membership growth remains a crucial metric for assessing the performance and impact of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria.

### 2.1.3 Community Development

Community development, a process where residents work together to improve their social, economic, and environmental conditions (Cornelis & Parker, 2023), serves as a valuable lens to assess the social impact of Pentecostal churches. These churches often extend their influence beyond religious services, offering a range of programs and initiatives that address community needs. For instance, studies in Ghana (Gyasi et al., 2022) have shown Pentecostal churches establishing vital social safety nets by providing food assistance, healthcare services, and educational opportunities, particularly in underserved communities.

This focus on social impact aligns with the core tenets of Pentecostalism, which emphasizes social justice and helping the less fortunate (Anderson, 2021). Church-run programs like skills training workshops and microfinance initiatives can empower community members towards greater economic self-sufficiency (Parrado, 2020). Furthermore, Pentecostal churches can foster a strong sense of social cohesion by providing spaces for community organizing and collective action (McIlwaine, 2018). By analyzing the reach and effectiveness of these social programs, we gain a deeper understanding of the positive contributions Pentecostal churches can make to community development.

## 2.3 Theoretical Review

### 2.3.1 Knowledge-Based View

The Knowledge-Based View (KBV) is a theoretical framework that emerged as an extension of the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm (Grant, 1996; Spender, 1996). The KBV was primarily propounded by scholars such as Robert Grant in the mid-1990s, who posited that knowledge is the most strategically significant resource of a firm (Grant, 1996). The central philosophy of the KBV is that an organization's unique knowledge resources and capabilities are the primary drivers of its competitive advantage and performance (Kogut & Zander, 1992; Spender, 1996). Unlike the RBV, which focuses on tangible resources, the KBV emphasizes the role of intangible knowledge assets, such as the tacit and explicit knowledge possessed by organizational members, in enabling firms to adapt to changing environments and achieve superior outcomes (Conner & Prahalad, 1996; Grant, 1996).

Scholars have widely applied the KBV in various organizational contexts. For instance, Alavi and Leidner (2001) used the KBV to examine the role of knowledge management systems in enhancing organizational performance. They found that effective knowledge management practices, such as knowledge creation, sharing, and application, can lead to improved decision-making, innovation, and competitive advantage. Similarly, Curado (2006) employed the KBV to investigate knowledge management in the banking industry, concluding that banks that effectively leverage their knowledge resources outperform their competitors. However, the KBV has also faced some criticism. One key critique is that the theory lacks clear definitions and operationalization of the knowledge construct, making it challenging to empirically test and validate (Eisenhardt & Santos, 2002). Additionally, some scholars argue that the KBV oversimplifies the complex nature of knowledge and its management within organizations (Foss, 1996). Despite these criticisms, the KBV provides a strong theoretical foundation for examining the relationship between knowledge management practices (knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application) and the performance of Pentecostal churches, as measured by membership growth and community development. The KBV suggests that the effective management of knowledge resources can lead to improved organizational outcomes, which aligns with the study's objectives.

Moreover, the KBV emphasizes the importance of tacit and explicit knowledge, which are particularly relevant in the context of Pentecostal churches. These organizations often rely on the tacit knowledge and expertise of their leaders and members, as well as the explicit knowledge embedded in their religious teachings, practices, and organizational processes. Applying the KBV can help elucidate how Pentecostal churches can leverage these knowledge resources to enhance their performance. Also, the KBV's focus on knowledge as a strategic resource can provide insights into how Pentecostal churches can develop and maintain a competitive advantage in their respective communities. By effectively managing their knowledge assets, these churches may be better equipped to attract and retain members, as well as contribute to the overall development of their communities.

### 2.3.2 Social Capital Theory

Social Capital Theory, developed by scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam, posits that social networks and relationships are a form of capital that can be leveraged to achieve various social and economic outcomes (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995). The central premise of Social Capital Theory is that the networks, trust, and norms of reciprocity within a group or community can provide valuable resources and benefits to its members (Adler & Kwon, 2002). These resources can include access to information, emotional support, cooperation, and opportunities for collaboration and collective action (Lin, 1999). Scholars have applied Social Capital Theory in various organizational and community contexts. For example, Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) used the theory to examine how social capital facilitates the creation and sharing of intellectual capital within organizations. They found that the structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions of social capital are crucial for enabling knowledge exchange and combination, which can lead to improved organizational performance.

In the context of faith-based organizations, such as Pentecostal churches, Social Capital Theory has also been employed to understand the role of social networks and relationships in enhancing organizational outcomes. For instance, Cnaan and Boddie (2001) applied the theory to examine the social services provided by congregations, highlighting how the social capital embedded in religious communities can contribute to community development and well-being. While Social Capital Theory offers valuable insights, it has also faced some criticism. One key critique is the difficulty in measuring and quantifying social capital, as it is an intangible and multifaceted construct (Portes, 1998). Additionally, some scholars argue that excessive bonding social capital can lead to the exclusion of outsiders and the reinforcement of in-group biases (Putnam, 2000). Nonetheless, the Social Capital Theory is highly relevant to the current study. The theory's emphasis on the value of social networks and relationships aligns with the study's objectives, which focus on the influence of knowledge management practices on the membership growth and community development of Pentecostal churches. Specifically, the Social Capital Theory can help explain how the knowledge management practices (creation, sharing, storage, and application) within

Pentecostal churches can contribute to the development and maintenance of social capital, which in turn can enhance the churches' ability to attract and retain members, as well as their capacity to contribute to the overall development of their communities.

Furthermore, the theory's insights on the role of trust, norms of reciprocity, and the different forms of social capital (bonding, bridging, and linking) can provide a valuable lens for understanding the complex dynamics between knowledge management and the performance of Pentecostal churches. The combined theoretical framework can shed light on how the effective management of knowledge resources, coupled with the leveraging of social capital, can enable these organizations to achieve their goals of membership growth and community development.

### 2.4 Empirical Review

Several studies explored knowledge management (KM) practices in religious organizations, particularly Pentecostal churches. Cyster & Salubi (2022) used a knowledge conversion model to assess KM practices in these churches. They found a low level of awareness and uptake of formal KM practices. While tacit knowledge was shared informally during meetings and dialogues, there was no systematic effort to document or convert it into explicit knowledge for future use. Leaders were sometimes hesitant to explicitly manage and share knowledge, despite members recognizing the value of documentation. A key limitation of these studies is their focus on a single church, limiting generalizability. Another study by Cyster and Salubi (2023) proposed a theoretical framework for human capital development in Pentecostal churches through KM. This framework highlighted the importance of a dedicated KM team or manager and a structured approach to codifying both tacit and explicit knowledge. The study emphasized aligning KM practices with the organization's human capital development strategies. However, the framework lacked empirical validation.

While the studies above focused on specific religious contexts, some studies examined broader relationships between KM and organizational performance. For instance, studies found a positive association between KM leadership and performance, particularly in collective cultures, developing economies, and the manufacturing industry (Henao-Garcia et al., 2020; Abuaddous & Sokkar, 2018; Darmanwan et al., 2023).

Another study (Inkinen et al., 2015) explored the relationship between KM and innovation in firms, demonstrating that KM activities directly and indirectly influence innovation and performance. However, both these studies were not specific to religious organizations, limiting their applicability to the topic at hand. Furthermore, Dickson and Isaiah (2019)'s study on faith-based organizations in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, using quantitative and qualitative methods, found a positive relationship between KM components like sharing, acquisition, and storage, and organizational performance, though it was limited to one state. Adedibu (2023)'s study using a case study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) highlighted the church's contribution to development

through social responsiveness and diaconal services but did not directly measure KM. These studies collectively emphasize the presence of KM practices in religious settings while highlighting the need for further research to directly correlate these practices with organizational performance.

The reviewed studies collectively highlight the importance of knowledge management (KM) in enhancing the performance of Pentecostal churches and faith-based organizations. The findings consistently show that while KM practices are crucial for organizational effectiveness, there is often a low level of awareness and formal implementation within these organizations.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

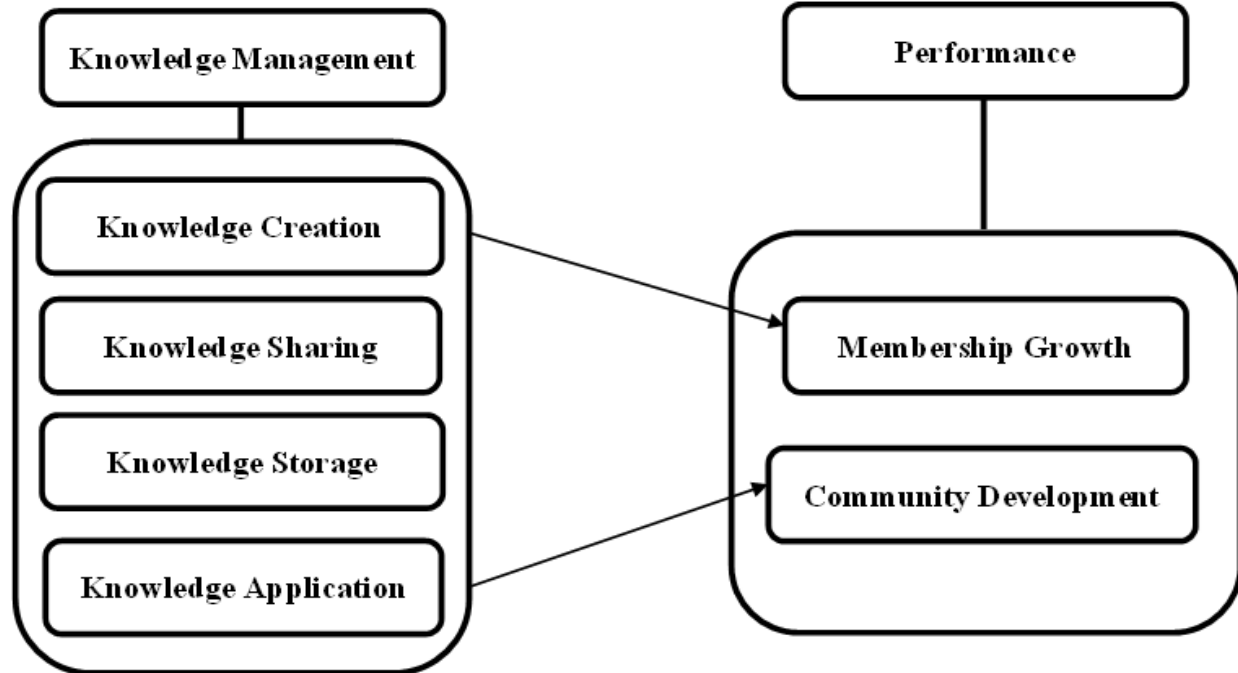


Figure 1: Researcher's Conceptual Framework (2024)

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in the understanding that effective knowledge management (KM) practices can positively influence the performance of Pentecostal churches. The key KM variables of knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application have been selected based on their prominence in the extant KM literature (Henao-Garcia et al., 2020; Abuaddous & Sokkar, 2018). These KM processes are crucial for religious organizations like Pentecostal churches to effectively leverage their knowledge assets and enhance organizational

outcomes. For instance, knowledge creation and sharing enable the capture and dissemination of tacit knowledge held by church leaders and members, while knowledge storage and application ensure this knowledge is preserved and utilized to improve church operations (Dickson & Isaiah, 2019). On the performance side, membership growth and community development are critical indicators for Pentecostal churches, as they reflect the churches' ability to attract and retain followers, as well as their social impact and responsiveness to community needs

(Coleman, 2023; Olabimiji, 2023; Adedibu, 2023). Examining the relationship between KM practices and these performance variables will provide valuable insights into how Pentecostal churches in Southwest Nigeria can leverage knowledge management to enhance their overall effectiveness and fulfill their mission.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a cross-sectional survey research design using quantitative methods. The population for the study consisted of all Pentecostal churches with headquarters located in Lagos State, Nigeria. Due to the lack of readily available data on the exact number of Pentecostal headquarters, a conservative estimate of ten (10) churches was used as study's sample frame. Furthermore, fifteen (15) members who served as workers were selected using purposive sampling, resulting in a total sample size of 150 respondents. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into sections covering the key variables of the study:

knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, knowledge storage, knowledge application, membership growth, and community development. A pilot test was conducted with 15 respondents to assess the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated, with a value of 0.865, which indicates a high level of internal consistency. The data collected was analyzed using multiple regression analysis to determine the influence of knowledge management practices on the performance of Pentecostal churches in terms of membership growth and community development. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used for the data analysis.

#### Test of Hypotheses

H0<sub>1</sub>: knowledge management practices have no significant relationship with the membership growth of Pentecostal churches in southwest, Nigeria.

H0<sub>1</sub>: knowledge management practices do not significantly influence community development in Pentecostal churches in southwest, Nigeria.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Regression Results: Knowledge Management and Membership Growth of Pentecostal Churches

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.558 <sup>a</sup>	.311	.292	1.10315

a. Predictors: (Constant), Creation, Storage, Sharing, Application

Table 2: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.632	4	3.158	2.595	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	177.672	146	1.217		
	Total	190.305	150			

a. Dependent Variable: Membership Growth

b. Predictors: (Constant), Creation, Storage, Sharing, Application

Table 3: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.425	.856		1.666	.098
	Creation	.082	.039	.072	.767	.000
	Sharing	.091	.040	.089	.984	.001
	Storage	.094	.047	.172	1.859	.000
	Application	.088	.039	.164	1.723	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Membership Growth

The regression analysis examined the relationship between knowledge management practices (creation, storage, sharing, application) and membership growth in Pentecostal churches. The model summary (Table 1) indicates that the predictor variables explain approximately 31.1% of the variance in membership growth (R Square = .311). Furthermore, the ANOVA results (Table 2) show that the overall regression model is statistically significant ( $F = 2.595, p < .001$ ). The coefficients table (Table 3) provides further insights into the individual contributions of each predictor. Specifically, knowledge creation has a coefficient of .082 and is significant at the .000 level, suggesting that an increase in creation activities is associated with a .082 unit increase in membership growth. Similarly, sharing knowledge has a coefficient of .091 and is significant at the .001 level, indicating a positive impact on membership growth by .091 units

for each unit increase in sharing activities. Knowledge storage has a coefficient of .094 and is significant at the .000 level, suggesting that effective storage practices lead to a .094 unit increase in membership growth. Moreover, knowledge application has a coefficient of .088 and is significant at the .000 level, indicating that applying knowledge results in a .088 unit increase in membership growth.

Based on the regression analysis results, the study concludes that all four knowledge management practices (creation, storage, sharing, application) significantly influence membership growth in Pentecostal churches. Therefore, we reject the null hypotheses that state these practices have no effect on membership growth. This study demonstrates that knowledge management practices are crucial for the growth of Pentecostal churches.

4.2 Regression Results: Knowledge Management and Community Development in Pentecostal Churches

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.497 <sup>a</sup>	.247	.226	1.15827

a. Predictors: (Constant), Creation, Storage, Sharing, Application

Table 5: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.915	4	1.979	1.475	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	195.874	146	1.342		
	Total	203.788	150			

a. Dependent Variable: Community Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Creation, Storage, Sharing, Application

Table 6: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.118	.898		2.358	.020
	Creation	.021	.041	.002	.017	.007
	Sharing	.048	.042	.105	1.152	.031
	Storage	.033	.049	.062	.659	.011
	Application	.055	.041	.128	1.324	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Community Development

Table 4 (Model summary) indicates that the predictor variables (creation, sharing, storage, application) account for 24.7% of the variance in community development (R Square = .247). The ANOVA results in Table 5 show that the overall regression model is

statistically significant ( $F = 1.475, p < .001$ ). The coefficients table (Table 6) also reveals that all predictors are statistically significant, each contributing differently to community development. Knowledge creation has a coefficient of .021 and is



significant at the .007 level, suggesting a positive but modest impact on community development. Knowledge sharing has a coefficient of .048 and is significant at the .031 level, indicating a positive influence, where an increase in sharing activities corresponds to a .048 unit increase in community development. Furthermore, knowledge storage and knowledge application shows a coefficient of .033 and 0.55 respectively with p values lesser than 0.005. This suggest that effective storage practices lead to a .033 unit increase in community development, while knowledge application results in a .055 unit increase in community development.

The regression analysis results reject the second null hypothesis the hypothesis that knowledge management practices do not significantly influence community development in Pentecostal churches. The model demonstrates that creation, storage, sharing, and application of knowledge management practices all contribute positively to community development. These findings emphasize the importance of knowledge management practices in enhancing community development efforts, thereby providing an effective framework for church leaders to develop and implement knowledge management strategies effectively.

#### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

The findings of the present study provide valuable insights into the role of knowledge management practices in driving membership growth and community development within Pentecostal churches in southwest Nigeria. These results can be compared and contrasted with findings from previous research on the topic. The study's finding that all four knowledge management practices - creation, storage, sharing, and application - significantly influence membership growth aligns with the conclusions drawn by Freeburg (2015), who found that the introduction of unique information encouraged productive inquiry and engagement in religious organizations. Similarly, Aziri et al. (2013) emphasized the importance of providing the right information to the right people at the right time and place for effective decision-making, which the present study's findings support. Furthermore, the positive relationship between knowledge management practices and community development corroborates the assertions made by Megan and Jon (2007), who posited that knowledge

management is a process through which organizations create value from their intellectual assets. The current study's findings also build upon the work of Nnabuife (2009), who argued that information generated internally is usually more cost-effective and can contribute to decision effectiveness.

However, the present study's findings diverge from the conclusions drawn by Aloyalat and Alhawari (2008), who suggested that successful knowledge management is determined by enlarging and sustaining the memory of the organization, as well as the utilization and preservation of knowledge. The current study indicates that all four knowledge management practices, not just storage and preservation, are crucial for both membership growth and community development. Additionally, the study's emphasis on the importance of knowledge application aligns with the views of Robbins et al. (2007), who stated that when carefully implemented, knowledge management can enhance an organization's competitive edge and improve performance by making employees smarter and more agile. This finding extends the existing literature by demonstrating the specific impact of knowledge application on Pentecostal church outcomes.

#### 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that knowledge management practices play a crucial role in driving both membership growth and community development within Pentecostal churches in southwest Nigeria.

The results indicate that all four knowledge management practices - creation, storage, sharing, and application - have a significant positive influence on these key organizational outcomes. Specifically, the study found that knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application each contribute meaningfully to increasing membership growth. This suggests that Pentecostal church leaders should prioritize implementing strategies that foster the generation, dissemination, preservation, and utilization of knowledge among their congregations. Initiatives such as encouraging member participation in educational programs, facilitating knowledge-sharing forums, investing in knowledge management systems, and empowering members to apply acquired knowledge in their daily lives could all help drive membership

growth. Similarly, the study's findings demonstrate that the same four knowledge management practices are also significant predictors of community development. This underscores the importance of knowledge management as a framework for enhancing a church's social impact and outreach efforts. By strategically managing the creation, sharing, storage, and application of knowledge, Pentecostal church leaders can better equip their members to identify and address the needs of their local communities, ultimately strengthening the church's role as a catalyst for positive change.

To capitalize on these insights, the study recommends that Pentecostal church leaders develop and implement comprehensive knowledge management strategies tailored to their organizational context. This may involve establishing dedicated knowledge management roles or teams, providing training and resources to support knowledge-related activities, and aligning knowledge management initiatives with the church's overall mission and goals. Furthermore, the study suggests that future research should explore the potential moderating or mediating factors that may influence the relationship between knowledge management practices and church outcomes. Investigating the role of organizational culture, leadership, or technological infrastructure, for instance, could yield additional insights to guide the effective deployment of knowledge management in religious settings.

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