

APPRAISAL OF STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING CONVERSION EXPERIENCE INTO
DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM: A CASE STUDY OF THE REDEEMED COLLEGE OF MISSIONS, EDE

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ABSTRACT

This study looks into how conversion encounters can be incorporated into discipleship programs in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), a study of the Redeemed College of Missions. Data was collected by sending structured questionnaires (Google Forms) through WhatsApp to 49 students selected from a population of 132 from different RCCG regions. The study uses a descriptive research design and is supported by the Bridge Conversion Model by Richardson and Stewart (2021). Findings discloses that all participants (100%) have a personal conversion encounter, with 42.6% portraying it as sudden and 51.1% as gradual, while 80% considered their conversion highly significant to their Christian growth. Only 33.3% of respondents reported becoming a Christian to their leaders within a week, and 21.3% had no exposure to discipleship, indicating gaps in the conversion-to-discipleship process. Despite this, 83% of respondents engaged in discipleship activities and 89.4% attended baptismal classes; all respondents expressed satisfaction with the effectiveness of discipleship experiences in meeting conversion needs. 70.2% of respondents said that immediate mentorship was the most successful integration strategy. However, 83% of respondents identified insufficient follow-up as a significant obstacle. The study comes to the conclusion that although RCCG has robust discipleship programs, improved follow-up and individualised mentoring are essential for more effective integration of conversion experiences.

Keywords: Conversion experience, discipleship, RCCG, integration, spiritual formation

Introduction

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) was established in 1952 by Pa Josiah Akindayomi and is now led by Pastor Enoch Adeboye popularly known as daddy G O . RCCG is now one of the Africa's largest Pentecostal churches, with more than 14,000 parishes spread across 198 countries (Adedibu, 2020). While this growth highlights remarkable evangelistic success, many scholars continue to question how deep and sustainable discipleship really is within RCCG congregations (Ojo, 2021). Current research on church expansion points out a common concern: churches often focus more on numerical growth than on intentional discipleship (Chan & Beuving, 2023). This idea is especially common in Pentecostal settings, where the strong emphasis on salvation experiences and miraculous signs can sometimes overshadow qualitative growth (Anderson, 2022). Because of this, many converts may lack the biblical grounding and real training needed for mature Christian living and successful ministry.

Integrating conversion experiences into discipleship programmes offers a way to address this gap. Because conversion is often personal, life-changing, and dramatic, it can provide a strong motivation for spiritual growth (Paloutzian et al., 2020). But, if these experiences are not linked to structured discipleship, they may remain isolated experience instead of becoming the starting point for lasting transformation. This paper therefore examines how RCCG presently incorporates conversion experiences into discipleship training/programme. Focusing on the Redeemed College of Missions, the study seeks to evaluate existing practices and suggest improved strategies for developing holistic discipleship.

Concept of Conversion Experience

In Christian theology, conversion is understood as a transformative encounter in which a person moves from one spiritual state to another, often by accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (Zahl, 2022). This change may happen suddenly or gradually and is normally accompanied by shifts in thinking, emotions, and behavior that orient the individual toward Christian virtues. Contemporary scholarship sees conversion as a Comprehensive process that involves resolving inner struggles, rebuilding personal identity, and re-establishing ties with a faith community (Streib & Keller, 2021). The process includes identification of sin, an awareness of heavenly grace, repentance, and a commitment to live differently. In Pentecostal settings, conversion usually carries supernatural elements like healing, prophetic revelations, or speaking in a new tongue, which are seen as signs showing spiritual transformation (Miller & Yamamori, 2023). Psychological research further reveal that conversion has lasting effects on the brain, influencing decision, value formation, and patterns of behavior (Hood et al., 2022). These insights provide a scientific basis for understanding conversion as a powerful motivator of ongoing spiritual development and individual transformation.

Kinds of Conversion Experiences

Researchers identify different types of conversion encounters, each carrying different characteristics and implications for discipleship/spiritual transformation. Identifying these categories will help church leaders to design discipleship methods that honor individual stories while fostering well-rounded spiritual expansion.

Gradual Conversion: This form involves a slow journey toward faith, where individuals gradually recognize their spiritual need and move step by step toward commitment (Rambo & Farhadian, 2024). It often includes a series of small revelations, relationships with believers, and engagement in church life before making a formal decision.

Crisis Conversion: Sometimes called Damascus Road conversion, this is a sudden and dramatic shift in faith, it often triggered by crises, traumatic occurrences, or divine encounters (Gooren, 2022). People with this type of conversion usually describe strong emotional change, immediate lifestyle transformation, and clear “before-and-after” testimonies. However, they may also need ongoing support to sustain long-term growth.

Gradual Awakening: This happens mainly among those raised in Christian families, where faith is already present but deepens over time (Taylor & Chatters, 2020). Unlike crisis conversions, this path may not involve dramatic happenings but reflects steady growth in biblical understanding and constant spiritual practice.

Mystical Conversion: This type is characterised by supernatural encounters like visions, dreams, healing, or prophetic vision—that spark spiritual reformation (Kay, 2021). Such conversions are common especially in Pentecostal settings and often provide strong drive for lasting commitment.

Conversion Experience in RCCG

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) teaches that personal conversion is the starting point of true Christian life and is also necessary for membership in the church. RCCG's belief, which is classical Pentecostal teaching, emphasises the benefits of being “born again” and showing obvious signs of spiritual change (Ukah, 2021). In RCCG, conversion events normally include supernatural occurrences that shows God's power in people's lives. These may be healing from sickness, financial help in times of need, prophetic information about one's future, or deliverance from bad habits and destructive lifestyles (Adedibu, 2022). These experiences serve multiple functions within RCCG culture:

they validate the church's theological assertions about God's active involvement in contemporary life, provide compelling testimonial content for evangelistic purposes, and establish spiritual authority for individuals within congregational settings.

The monthly Holy Ghost Service of the Church is a major platform where such conversion events usually take place. The services include worship, prophetic prayers, and altar calls, all designed to assist people to have an encounter with God (Ojo, 2023). Lots of people testify that these meetings either brought them to faith for the first time or revive their spiritual commitment. But, research shows that although RCCG is very successful in assisting people experience conversion, there are weaknesses in how these experiences are followed up (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2020).

Concept of Discipleship

The name of the disciples was changed from “disciples” to “Christians” in the book of Acts after Jesus had gone to heaven because the world at that time observed that the disciples were like another Jesus Christ. However, the fact that the name was changed from “disciple” to “Christian” does not mean that God no longer wants His children to be disciples. In fact, Jesus instructed His disciples to go into the world and disciple all nations. From the disciples' experience, a Christian must first move through a discipleship experience before people around him can truly vouch that he is a Christian. Disciples follow Christ intimately; therefore, they learn how to live like Him. After conversion, an individual must learn how to live like Christ before he or she can truly become a genuine Christian. The discussion below looks at the concept of discipleship and its methods

Christian discipleship means the intentional process of helping believers grow in their faith, develop Christ-like character, and learn how to serve effectively. This occurs through constant teaching, mentoring from more mature Christians, and practicing biblical principles everyday. (Wilkins, 2023). Discipleship is not just about the moment of conversion; it continues throughout life as believers keep learning, growing, and serving.

The biblical foundation for discipleship comes mainly from Jesus' Great Commission: “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them... and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19–20, NIV). This reveals that discipleship involves both evangelism (bringing people to Jesus Christ) and teaching (assisting people to grow in obedience and maturity). Contemporary discipleship approaches focus on five key aspects:

1. Biblical teaching – learning Bible and Christian doctrine.
2. Spiritual disciplines – practices such as prayer, fasting, and personal devotion that strengthen a believer's connections with God.
3. Character formation – developing Christ-like behaviors like humility, love, and patience.
4. Ministry training – building Christians with practical skills for serving in the church and community.
5. Community life – building fellowship, accountability, and support among believers (Earley & Dempsey, 2024).

Research reveals that churches with strong discipleship activities are healthier and more productive. Such churches retain members better, develop more leaders, see greater qualitative growth, and engage more in evangelism and community service (Powell & Clark, 2022).

Methods of Discipleship

In churches today, different methods are used to disciple believers. Each has its own advantages and works best depending on the church's settings, resources, and the needs of the people. Knowing these strategies helps leaders choose the most effectual strategy for their people.

One-on-One Mentoring: This technique involves pairing a grown-up Christian with a new believer or someone still growing in faith, so that personal assistance can be given (Johnson & Smith, 2021). Its advantages are that it provides personal attention, moves at the learner's pace, encourages accountability, and allows for honest sharing. The disadvantage, still, is that it takes a lot of time and may not be difficult to practice in churches.

Small Group Discipleship: Here, small groups of about 6–12 people meet constantly to study the Bible, pray, share

fellowship, and support each other (Anderson & Thompson, 2020). This encourages learning from one another, promotes accountability, and allows diverse viewpoints to be shared. It is also affordable and can focus on diverse needs like new believer training, leadership growth, or ministry skills.

Classroom-Based Instruction: This method is more formal, using structured lessons, prepared curriculum, and trained teachers to provide theological and practical training (Williams, 2023). Its strength is that it covers material in an organized way, ensures quality teaching, and makes good use of resources. However, it may not give enough room for personal interaction or adapt well to different learning styles.

Experiential Learning: This practical activities such as service projects, mission trips, ministry involvement, and real-life application (Davis & Johnson, 2022). This helps believers to gain skills, develop in confidence, and apply what they have learned in real situations. It also develops servant leadership. It is often used as a balance to classroom-style learning.

Digital Discipleship: With technology, discipleship is now also carried out online through apps, videos, and even virtual platforms (Kim & Lee, 2024). This method makes discipleship accessible to people far away, reduces cost, and uses engaging media. It is also allowing people to learn at their own pace. Still, it sometimes don't have face-to-face connection and practical hands-on involvement.

Theoretical Framework: Bridge Model of Conversion Experience

The Bridge theory of Conversion Experience propounded by Richardson and Stewart (2021) aids us to understand how people's "born-again" events can be attached to their lasting Christian development. The model sees conversion not as the end of the journey, but as a bridge that connects a person's past life with their new spiritual journey in Christ. The framework explains this process in four levels:

Phase 1: Pre-Conversion Context: This is the stage before a person becomes born again. It includes their background, culture, personal struggles, and spiritual needs. Understanding Pre-Conversion Context will help church leaders to know how to guide them better after conversion.

Phase 2: Conversion Crisis or Catalyst: This is the real period of conversion, whereby someone experiences a real change. It can happen via a crisis, deep emotions, or supernatural encounters. This experience is very crucial because it becomes the drive for the person's new found faith.

Phase 3: Post-Conversion Integration: Immediately after conversion, people need assistance to comprehend what happened to them and how to live out their new faith. If they are not counseled properly at this stage, they may lose interest or struggle to grow.

Phase 4: Ongoing Discipleship Formation: This is the long-term phase where the new believer grows in faith through Bible teaching, character development, ministry training, and fellowship in the church. Here, the conversion experience becomes the basis for living a mature Christian life.

The Bridge Model depicts that every level must connect to the next one. This way, the conversion experience does not remain just an emotional experience but becomes part of a continuous growth process—touching the believer's mind, emotions, spiritual life, and practical daily living.

Results and Discussion

Section A: Demographic Information

Variable	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	18–25	7	14.9%
	26–35	21	44.7%
	36–45	15	31.9%
	46+	04	8.5%
	Total	47	100%
Gender	Male	41	85.4%
	Female	07	14.6%
	Total	48	100%
Marital Status	Single	29	60.4%
	Married	19	39.6%
	Widowed/Separated	-	-
	Total	48	100%
Membership Duration	<1 year	01	2 %
	1–3 years	11	23 %
	4–6 years	07	14 %
	>6 years	29	61 %
	Total	48	100%

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The Google Form questionnaire was distributed across various student platforms of the Redeemed College of Missions, including PGD, Diploma, B.A., and Advanced Diploma classes. Students in the Certificate class were excluded from the study. Out of a total population of 132, the table above shows the number of respondents who participated. The demographic analysis highlights key characteristics of the sample population as follows:

Age Distribution: The majority of respondents (44.7%) were between 26–35 years old, followed by those aged 36–45 (31.9%). Younger adults (18–25) comprised 14.9%, while only 8.5% were 46 years or older. This indicates that majority of the respondents are still young.

Gender Composition: Majority of the respondents were male, with males representing 85.4% of respondents and only 14.6% female. This gender disparity shows that male students are more than female student in redeemed college of missions (RCM)

Marital Status: (60.4%) were single, while 39.6% were married. No widowed or separated individuals indicated. The high percentage of single participants aligns with the relatively young age profile of the respondents.

Membership Duration: The sample showed considerable church experience, with the largest group (61%) having been members for over 6 years. Those with 1–3 years of membership comprised 23%, while 14% had 4–6 years of experience. Only 2% were relatively new members (less than 1 year). The above reveals that most respondents had substantial experience with the church's discipleship programs and could provide informed perspectives on conversion integration strategies.

Section B: Conversion Experience

Question 1: Have you personally had a conversion (born -again) experience?	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	46	100
No	-	
Total	46	100

Question 2	Sudden/instant (%)	Gradual (%)	Through crisis (%)	Other (%)	TOTAL (%)
If yes, how would you describe your conversion?	20(42.6)	24(51.1)	3(6.4)	2(4.2)	49(100)
Question 3	Very significant (%)	Significant (%)	Neutral (%)	Not significant (%)	TOTAL (%)
How significant was your conversion experience in shaping your Christian life?	40(80)	8(16)	-	-	48(100)
Question 4	Immediately (%)	Within 6 months (%)	After 1 year (%)	Not at all (%)	TOTAL (%)
After your conversion, how soon were you introduced to discipleship activities?	20(42.6)	10(21.3)	7(14.9)	10(21.3)	47(100)

Question 5	RCCG church service (%)	RCCG Holy Ghost Service (%)	RCCG special program/crusade (%)	At work, Home/personal prayer time (%)	Through personal Bible study (%)	Hospital/during illness (%)	Other denomination (%)	47 Responses
Where did your conversion experience take place? (Select all that apply)	9(19.1)	4(8.5)	6(12.7)	10(21.3)	8(17)	1(2.1)	26(55.3)	
Question 6	Yes, immediately (within 1 week) (%)	Yes, within 1 month (%)	Yes, within 6 months (%)	Yes, but after more than 6 months (%)	No, I never formally shared it (%)	I can't remember (%)	Total (%)	
Did you share your conversion experience with church leaders shortly after it happened?	16(33.3)	7(14.6)	3(6.3)	9(18.8)	9(18.8)	4(8.3)	48(100)	

Conversion Experience Analysis

This section examines the nature and context of respondents' conversion experiences within the Redeemed Christian Church of God.

Conversion Status (Question 1): The aforementioned table reveals that every participant (100%) reported having personally experienced a born-again conversion, indicating a completely converted sample population eligible to contribute insights on discipleship integration tactics.

Nature of Conversion (Question 2): According to the table above, conversion experiences were more often gradual (51.1%) than abrupt or instantaneous (42.6%). Just a tiny minority underwent conversion via other means (4.2%) or crisis situations (6.4%). This implies that different spiritual journeys lead to conversion in RCCG, with gradual transformation occurring slightly more frequently than abrupt encounters.

Significance of Conversion (Question 3): the aforementioned table shows that the larger majority (80%) described their conversion as "very significant" in shaping their Christian life, while 16% rated it as "significant." Notably, no participants see their conversion as neutral or insignificant, showing the profound impact of conversion experiences on believers' spiritual formation.

Timing of Discipleship Introduction (Question 4): the above table reveals that Nearly half (42.6%) were introduced to discipleship activities immediately after conversion, while 21.3% began within 6 months. But, 14.9% waited over a year, and, 21.3% reported never being introduced to discipleship activities at all. This gap highlights a serious area for improvement in conversion-to-discipleship integration.

Location of Conversion (Question 5): Conversions happened in different context, with other churches being the most

common (55.3%), followed by home/personal prayer time (21.3%), RCCG church services (19.1%), and personal Bible study (17%). Special programs/crusades (12.7%) and Holy Ghost Services (8.5%) also facilitated conversions. This shows that flexible discipleship methods are needed to be able to accept various conversion contexts.

Communication with Church Leaders (Question 6): Only (33.3%) told the church leaders about their conversion within one week, while 14.6% did so within a month. (18.8%) never formally shared their experience, and another 18.8% waited over six months. This delayed or absent communication pattern shows potential obstacles in connecting new converts with church leadership for discipleship training.

Section C: Discipleship Practices in RCCG

Question 1	Baptismal class (%)	Believers' class (%)	School of Disciples (%)	Sunday school (%)	House fellowship (%)	Mentorship by a leader (%)	Total (%)
Which of the following discipleship programs did you participate in after conversion? (Tick all that apply)	42(89.4)	26(55.3)	22(46.8)	24(51.1)	23(48.9)	16(34)	- 47 responses
Question 2	Very consistent (%)	Somewhat consistent (%)	Rarely consistent (%)	Not consistent (%)	-----	-----	Total (%)
How consistent was your participation in discipleship programs?	39 (83)	7(14.9)	-----	1(2.1)	-----	-----	47(100)
Question 3	Very deep(%)	Deep(%)	Moderate(%)	Shallow(%)	Very shallow(%)	-----	Total(%)
How would you rate the depth of teaching you received in discipleship?	26 (54.2)	14(29.2)	8(16.7)	-----	-----	-----	48(100)
Question 4	Strongly agree(%)	Agree(%)	Disagree(%)	Strongly disagree(%)	-----	-----	Total(%)
Did your discipleship experience adequately address your personal conversion experience?	28(59.6)	19(40.4)	-----	-----	-----	-----	47(100)

Discipleship Practices in RCCG

This part evaluates the nature, consistency, and effectiveness of discipleship programs experienced by participants after their conversion.

Participation in Discipleship Programs (Question 1): Baptismal class depict the biggest participation rate (89.4%), showing strong emphasis on baptismal preparation for the new convert in RCCG. Believers' class (55.3%) and Sunday school (51.1%) also had substantial participation. House fellowship (48.9%) and School of Disciples (46.8%) engaged

nearly half of respondents, while mentorship by a leader had the lowest participation (34%). The different participation rates indicates that while some programs are widely accessible to people, others like personal mentorship may require expansion to reach more converts.

Consistency of Participation (Question 2): (83%) respondents reported very consistent participation in discipleship programs, with an additional 14.9% being somewhat consistent. 2.1% Only were not consistent, and notably, no participants reported rarely consistent participation. This consistency rate depict strong commitment to discipleship among RCCG members and suggests effective program structure that encourages regular engagement.

Depth of Teaching (Question 3): (54.2%) rated the teaching depth as "very deep," while 29.2% sees it "deep." Only 16.7% perceived the teaching as moderate, with no respondents rating it as shallow or very shallow. This positive assessment shows that RCCG's discipleship curriculum provides substantive biblical instruction that meets members' spiritual growth needs.

Adequacy in Addressing Conversion Experience (Question 4): A strong majority either strongly agreed (59.6%) or agreed (40.4%) that their discipleship experience adequately addressed their personal conversion experience, with 100% expressing satisfaction. Remarkably, none of the respondents disagreed with this statement. This positive response shows that RCCG's discipleship training successfully integrate and build upon members' personal conversion experiences, creating a cohesive spiritual formation journey from conversion through ongoing discipleship.

Section D: Strategies for Integrating Conversion into Discipleship

Question 1	Very well (%)	Well (%)	Fairly (%)	Poorly (%)	Not at all (%)	Total (%)
In your opinion, how well does RCCG integrate new converts into discipleship programs?	23(48.9)	14(29.8)	8(17)	2(4.3)	-----	47(100)
Question 2	Immediate mentorship (%)	Testimony -sharing groups (%)	Structured curriculum (SOD) (%)	Prayer and fasting (%)	Small group fellowship (%)	Practical ministry training (%)
Which methods are most effective in linking conversion with discipleship? (Tick all that apply)	33(70.2)	14(29.8)	21(44.7)	14(29.8)	25(53.2)	15(31.9)
Question 3	Lack of follow-up (%)	Inadequate mentorship (%)	Overemphasis on numbers (%)	Lack of trained leaders (%)	Other (specify) (%)	Total
What challenges hinder the integration of conversion into discipleship in RCCG?	39(83)	16(34)	14(29.8)	15(31.9)	3(6.3)	47 responses
Question 4	Spiritual growth	Character formation	Bible knowledge	Evangelism training	Leadership development	Total
Which areas of discipleship require more attention in RCCG?	19 (39.6)	16(33.3)	5(10.42)	4(8.33)	4(8.33)	48(100)

Strategies for Integrating Conversion into Discipleship

This section examines the effectiveness of RCCG's integration styles, also identifies successful methods, highlights obstacles, and shows areas that need improvement.

Effectiveness of Integration (Question 1): Almost of respondents (48.9%) rated RCCG's integration of new converts as "very well," while 29.8% rated it "well," indicating that 78.7% view the integration positively. However, 17% rated it as "fair" and 4.3% as "poor," suggesting that there is need for improvement. The absence of "not at all" responses shows that some integration effort exists, though quality varies across experiences.

Most Effective Strategies (Question 2): The most highly regarded strategy (70.2%) was immediate mentoring, underscoring the vital significance of one-on-one counseling for new converts. High ratings were also given to the School of Disciples' structured curriculum (44.7%) and small group fellowship (53.2%). Moderate support was given to prayer and fasting (29.8%), testimony-sharing groups (29.8%), and practical ministry training (31.9%). These results imply that relationship-based strategies—specifically, one-on-one mentoring and small group connections—are thought to be the most successful in fostering discipleship and conversion.

Integration Challenges (Question 3): The conversion-to-discipleship pipeline has a crucial gap, with 83% of respondents referencing lack of follow-up as the main obstacle. Significant issues included inadequate mentoring (34%), a shortage of qualified leaders (31.9%), and an excessive focus on statistics (29.8%). The prevalence of follow-up problems indicates that although conversions take place, new converts are not consistently tracked or engaged, which could lead to spiritual drift or disengagement.

Areas Requiring Attention (Question 4): Spiritual growth was identified as the top area that require more attention (39.6%), followed by character formation (33.3%). Surprisingly, Bible knowledge (10.42%), evangelism training (8.33%), and leadership development (8.33%) received significantly less emphasis. This pattern suggests that respondents prioritise deep spiritual transformation and moral development over knowledge acquisition or skill-based training, showing a desire for more holistic, life-transforming discipleship rather than ordinary informational meetings.

Section E: Recommendations and Suggestions

Question 1: How can RCCG discipleship programs better integrate conversion experiences? (Select all that apply)	Responses from 48 respondents	Percentage %
Create structured opportunities for testimony sharing	19	39.6
Develop conversion experience documentation templates	9	18.8
Train leaders in different types of conversion experiences	26	54.2
Provide individualized discipleship based on conversion type	22	45.8
Establish mentoring relationships with similar conversion experiences	30	62.5
Create small groups based on conversion experience types	17	35.4
Develop specific curriculum addressing different conversion types	15	31.3
Regular follow-up sessions focusing on conversion experience	30	62.5
Total		100

Question 2: What specific training should RCCG discipleship leaders receive regarding conversion experiences?	Response from 48 Respondents	Percentage %
Understanding different types of conversion	31	64.6
How to facilitate testimony sharing	7	14.6
Counseling skills for post -conversion issues	26	54.2
Creating safe spaces for sharing	13	27.1
Connecting conversion to spiritual growth	23	47.9
Cultural sensitivity in conversion narratives	17	35.4

Recommendations and Suggestions for Improvement

This section captures respondents' perspectives on how RCCG can enhance its discipleship programs to better integrate conversion experiences and equip leaders for effective ministry.

Program Integration Improvements (Question 1): Establishing mentoring relationships with similar conversion experiences and holding frequent follow-up sessions centered on conversion experience were the two strategies that were given equal priority (62.5% each). These results support previous research demonstrating follow-up gaps and the importance of mentorship. Strong support was also given to training leaders in various conversion experiences (54.2%) and offering tailored discipleship based on conversion type (45.8%), demonstrating an understanding that conversion experiences are varied and call for customised methods. Curriculum development for various conversion types (31.3%) and documentation templates (18.8%) were seen as less important than organised testimony-sharing opportunities (39.6%) and small groups based on conversion types (35.4%). According to the pattern, respondents favor individualised and relational strategies over administrative or programmatic strategies.

Leader Training Needs (Question 2): Leaders may not be aware of the variety of conversion experiences, as evidenced by the fact that comprehending various forms of conversion was identified as the main training need (64.6%). Second place went to counseling skills for post-conversion issues (54.2%), indicating awareness that new converts have difficulties that call for pastoral care beyond basic instruction. Significant support was also given to linking conversion to spiritual development (47.9%) and cultural sensitivity in conversion narratives (35.4%). Less urgent training needs were identified as facilitating testimony sharing (14.6%) and creating safe spaces for sharing (27.1%). According to these priorities, respondents prefer leaders who possess theological knowledge and counseling skills to deal with the intricate spiritual and emotional aspects of conversion, as opposed to just promoting dialogue or setting up spaces. The emphasis on understanding conversion diversity and providing post-conversion care aligns with earlier findings about the varied nature of conversion experiences and the need for individualised discipleship techniques.

Section F: Open Ended Questions

Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Responses

Question 1: Describe your conversion experience

Majority of the respondents experienced conversion through evangelistic preaching or personal witnessing, often in church programs or fellowship meetings. A smaller group experienced gradual transformation through Bible study and Christian family influence. Others reported deep conviction of sin, spiritual encounters, or healing experiences that led to surrendering to Christ. Overall, conversion was viewed as both a personal and divine process.

Theme	Description	Example
Evangelistic Encounter	Conversion through evangelism, altar calls, or preaching.	Invited to a fellowship and responded to altar call.
Gradual or Process Conversion	Conversion occurred gradually through study or environment.	A gradual process while in secondary school through Bible study.
Conviction of Sin and Repentance	Conviction of sin led to repentance and surrender.	God convicted me of fornication and I repented.
Influence of Mentorship and Family	Guidance from parents, teachers, or mentors.	My teacher's husband preached to me.
Supernatural Encounter or Revelation	Conversion through divine encounters or visions.	A Spirit told me to go to church and I was healed.
Healing and Deliverance Experiences	Healing or deliverance led to faith in Christ.	I was healed during a church service.

Question 2: Suggested improvements for RCCG discipleship integration

Respondents strongly agreed that consistent follow-up, intentional mentorship, and leadership training are key to integrating conversion into discipleship. They also suggested digital follow-up systems, structured believers' classes, and personalized pastoral care. The overall recommendation is for RCCG to build a consistent and relational discipleship pathway instead of treating discipleship as a one-time event.

Theme	Description	Example
Follow-Up and Mentorship	Strong follow-up and mentorship for new converts.	There should be more follow-ups.
Structured Discipleship Programs	Organized believers' classes and small groups.	Engage new believers in believers' class.
Use of Digital Tools	Use social media or apps to track and disciple converts.	Use WhatsApp to monitor converts' progress.
Training for Leaders	Train church leaders for effective mentoring.	RCCG should train competent leaders.
Personalized and Continuous Care	Understand and follow up on individual needs.	Listen to disciples' challenges and help them.
Integration into Church Life	Involve converts in ministry and church activities.	Involve them in workers' training.

Question 3: Strategies that helped spiritual growth after conversion

Spiritual growth after conversion was mainly sustained through personal devotion (Bible study, prayer, fasting), mentorship, and active participation in fellowship groups. Church involvement and guidance from the Holy Spirit also played important roles. Respondents emphasized that consistent spiritual discipline and community support are vital to sustaining growth after conversion.

Theme	Description	Example
Bible Study and Prayer	Daily Bible study and prayer strengthen faith.	Consistent reading of the Word of God.
Mentorship and Discipleship	Mentoring relationships support growth.	One-on-one mentoring helped my growth.
Fellowship and Small Groups	Participation in group study and prayer meetings.	Joining a Bible study and prayer group was a turning point.
Fasting and Spiritual Discipline	Practicing fasting, quiet time, and devotion.	Quiet time helped me in my early Christian life.
Active Church Involvement	Serving in church roles encourages maturity.	I was given responsibilities as a worker.
Holy Spirit Guidance	Relying on the Holy Spirit for strength and direction.	Holy Spirit leading and guidance.

Conclusion

This study reveals that the Redeemed Christian Church of God has established effective discipleship programs with high participation rates and substantial spiritual depth. The overwhelming satisfaction rate (100%) with discipleship adequacy in addressing conversion experiences and strong consistency in program participation (83% very consistent) shows that RCCG's discipleship model successfully builds upon converts' spiritual experiences. Still, critical gaps exist in the conversion-to-discipleship pipeline. The fact that 21.3% of converts were never introduced to discipleship and 83% identified lack of follow-up as a primary challenge shows that while conversion-integration methods exist, their implementation is inconsistent and requires systematic strengthening. The data shows that relationship-based approaches—particularly immediate mentorship (70.2%) and small group fellowship (53.2%)—are most effective, yet only 34% reported receiving direct mentorship. These findings suggest that RCCG has built a strong foundation for discipleship but must enhance the personalisation, systematic follow-up, and leadership training that is necessary to ensure all new converts transition smoothly from conversion experience to sustained spiritual growth and maturity in Christ Jesus.

Recommendations

Based on these findings and grounded in the Bridge Conversion Model by Richardson and Stewart (2021), which emphasises the critical importance of bridging the gap between conversion and discipleship through relationship-based intervention, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1. Implement Systematic Follow-up Protocols:** The RCCG should Establish a compulsory follow-up system for all new converts within 48 hours of conversion, with structured check-ins at 1 week, 1 month, 3 months, and 6 months. This is in line with the Bridge Model's emphasis on continuous connection and addresses the 83% identified lack of follow-up.
- 2. Expand One-on-One Mentorship Programs:** The Church should increase mentorship participation from the current 34% to at least 80% by training mentors to match converts with mentors who share similar conversion experiences (64.6% of respondents identified this as a priority need). The Bridge Model emphasises that personal connection is important for successful conversion integration.
- 3. Provide Specialised Leader Training:** RCCG should develop comprehensive training programs for discipleship leaders focusing on understanding different types of conversion experiences (64.6% need), post-conversion counseling skills (54.2% need), and connecting conversion to spiritual growth (47.9% need). This directly addresses the identified gap in leader competency.
- 4. Prioritise Spiritual Growth and Character Formation:** Redesign discipleship curricula to emphasise spiritual formation and character development as primary focuses, given that 39.6% and 33.3% of respondents identified these as top priorities, ensuring discipleship addresses holistic Christian maturity rather than mere information transmission.
- 5. Adopt the Bridge Model Framework in Practice:** Operationalise Richardson and Stewart's Bridge Model by creating structured "bridging activities" that intentionally connect personal conversion narratives to ongoing discipleship engagement, ensuring no convert falls through the integration gap identified in this study.

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