

IDENTIFIABLE CHALLENGES WITH THE TEACHING OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANKPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KOGI STATE

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ABSTRACT

Christian Religious Knowledge is one of the earliest subjects in Nigeria curriculums. Teaching Christian Religious Knowledge is important because it instills discipline and obedience in the product. It helps in the moral training and academic pursuance of the students. It is not just a subject to learn but a way of life. In Ankpa Local Government Area today, the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge has not made any meaningful impact in the life of the products. There are cases of examination malpractice even in C.R.K. examinations, drug and sexual abuse, disrespect for elders and authorities. The number of students who offer Christian Religious Knowledge in West African school certificate examination is not encouraging. It is an attempt to find the reasons for not having interest in the study of the subject which might be derived from problems of teaching the subject that has necessitated this research. The paper adopted descriptive survey design. In taking decision, any identifiable challenges with mean values of 2.50 and above was regarded as required and otherwise as not required on the hypothesis tested, the null hypothesis of items whose p. values were greater than 0.05 level of significance. While hypothesis of no significance difference was rejected for items whose p-values are less than 0.05 level of significance. After the analysis it was discovered that there are no enough qualified teachers for the subject, no adequate instructional materials and the teaching methods used are not interesting.

Keywords: Identifiable challenges, teaching, secondary education, Christian Religious Knowledge, Kogi State.

Introduction

Christian Religious Knowledge has been an old subject in curriculum of Nigerian secondary schools. Its introduction can be dated back to 19th century when the missionaries first establish school in Badagry in 1842. Christian Religious Knowledge is unique among other subjects because of its value. Its importance in the Nigerian educational system cannot be overemphasized. To this effect, Onougbe and Mordi (2017), observed that the subject is fundamental to the development of sound education. The essence of teaching Christian Religious Knowledge is academic, moral, civil and spiritual objectives. The teaching of the subject instills discipline and obedience in the product. The focus of Christian Religious Knowledge curriculum among other things is for student's moral training and academic pursuance. Okoro (2010) further stresses on the importance of Christian Religious Knowledge thus:

Christian Religious Education promotes four religious virtues. The transcendental dignity of the human person, the transcendental ethnics, agape oriented love and an eschatological hope for the world. These four religious

virtues, in turn, promote four secular virtues; the intrinsic of the human person, principle based ethnics, self sacrificial love, and a broad and deep motion of the common good. All these four secular virtues are essential for the preservation and enhancement of a free society (p.2).

From the above, it is realized that the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge will help to reawaken, sustain and stabilize the moral life of the people. Any education which attempts to train children while excluding religion starts in a cripple state. Far from being a drug to pacify people, religion is the cohesive force behind any sound education (Farant in Okene, Samuel, Isah and Akubo, 2013).

Christian Religious Knowledge is not just a subject to learn but a way of life. That is why Anuwa (1996) asserted that,

the real value of Christian Religious Knowledge is in the fact that it helps man to live; it helps man to interact with another man; it helps man to know his true position as a man created by God; and war are his duties (p.4)

Teachers have the responsibility to teach the relevance of religion to life, encourage an understanding of obedience to God's laws and point their children to God so that godliness becomes one of their traits of personality. Every attempt should be made to teach the subject in an interesting and lively manner so that students will derive the maximum benefit from the subject.

A survey conducted by Adama (2020) shows that teachers succeed more in helping students to acquire some knowledge to simply pass their examinations, rather than helping them improve their moral life. Few indices of evidence of lack of Christian religious knowledge in the lives of the students include; cultism, disregards for examination ethics, rape, abortion, corruption, avarice, drug addiction and so on.

In schools where Christian religious knowledge is taught, there is need to know how a teacher could effectively combine the task of helping students accumulate a good deal of religious knowledge that would make them pass their examinations and at the same time, helping them to learn to apply, in their daily lives, the basic Christian ethics contained in the knowledge they possess (Okoro, 2010).

From all indications, the current teaching demands that the teacher must ensure that the classroom environment is lively for teaching and learning. Teaching and learning currently is geared toward child-centered activity. However, it is discovered that the cause of underachievement in Christian religious knowledge could be linked to the inappropriate method of teaching, lack of instructional materials and qualified teachers at the secondary school level.

Statement of the Problem

In Ankpa Local Government Area it seems that the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge has not made any meaningful impact in the life of the students who offer the subject. It seems that the teachers succeed more in helping students have some knowledge to simply pass their

examinations, rather than helping them improve their moral life. There are cases of drug abuse, cultism, violent demonstration in schools, fragrant disregard for examination ethnic, disrespect for elders and authorities and fashion craze. It seems that the objectives of Christian Religious Knowledge are not achieved.

Parents, teachers and authority concern believe that Christian Religious Knowledge is a simple subject that one can pass easily as far as you can read the bible. Those who study English, history, economic and so on are made to teach Christian Religious Knowledge as far as they are Christian.

At senior secondary school level few students offer Christian Religious Knowledge in the West African School Certificate Examination. What might be the causes of these problems? This study seems to find answer to this question.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study was designed to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) Determine the extent to which instructional materials are available in Christian Religious Knowledge.
- 2) Identify the methods used in teaching Christian Religious Knowledge.
- 3) Determine the disposition and willingness of students to Christian Religious Knowledge
- 4) Examine the quality of teachers for the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge

Research Questions

- 1) Are there enough adequate instructional materials for the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge?
- 2) What are the teaching methods used in teaching Christian Religious Knowledge?
- 3) What are the disposition and willingness of students to Christian Religious Knowledge?
- 4) Are there adequate qualified teachers for the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge?

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design. According to Okeke (2001) a survey is a descriptive study which seeks or uses the sample data of an investigation to document, describe and explain what is existent or non-existent, on the present status of a phenomenon being investigated. Descriptive survey according to Nworgu, (2015) is a study which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts about a given population.

In taking decision on the research questions, any identifiable challenges with mean values of 2.50 and above was regarded as required and otherwise as not required on the hypothesis tested, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for items whose p-values were greater than 0.05 level of significance while hypothesis of no significant different was rejected for items whose p-values are less than 0.05 level of significance results. The results of this study from research question and hypothesis are presented in table 1, 2, 3, and 4 below:

Research Question One

Are there enough instructional materials for the teaching Christian Religious Knowledge?

Ho1 There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of determining the extent to which instructional materials are available on Christian Religious Knowledge.

The data for answering research question one and testing hypotheses one are presented in table one below.

Table 1: Means ratings of response of the extent to which instructional materials are available on Christian Religious Knowledge

N = 76

S/N	Material Statement	$\bar{X}_{Im}$	$\bar{X}_{Tr}$	$\bar{X}_G$	SD	REMARK		
						P Value E	RQ	HO
1	Formulate objectives for instructional materials.	3.45	3.12	3.30	0.56	0.00	R*	S*
2	Review the objectives periodically base on educational resolution.	3.50	3.51	3.51	0.44	0.85	R	NS
3	Making plans on useable teaching methods	3.28	3.24	3.26	0.61	0.68	R	NS
4	Identify appropriate instructional materials for teaching.	3.55	3.52	3.53	0.56	0.81	R	NS
5	Identify important of map usage for teaching	3.56	3.55	3.56	0.60	0.62	R	NS
6	Students interest on instructional material	3.40	3.03	3.20	0.71	0.01	R	N
7	Teachers ability to use instructional materials	3.47	3.56	3.51	0.69	0.56	R	NS
8	Teachers motivation for the use of instructional materials	3.18	3.47	3.01	0.47	0.37	R	NS

Key

$\bar{X}_{Im}$ = Mean of instructional materials.

$\bar{X}_{Tr}$ = mean of teachers

$\bar{X}_G$ = overall grand mean

R = required level of significance.

S* = Significant

NS = Not significant

SD = Significant different

The data presented on table one reveals that the ground mean ratings of the responses of the respondent on the eight items range between 3.18 and 3.54 which were all greater than the cut off point value of 2.50 on a 4 point rating scale. This finding indicates that the eight identified

items in the table shows the extent to which instructional materials are available on Christian Religions Knowledge.

The data presented on table 1 on hypothesis one show that the p value of 6 out of 8 items in the table ranged from 0.37 to 0.85 which were greater than 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there are no significant differences in the mean ratings of the response of the extent to which instructional materials are available in Christian Religious Knowledge, there for the hypothesis of no significant differences in the mean rating of the responses. On the group of respondents is accepted on the 6 items. The p value on the remaining 2 items on the table specifically items 1 and 6 are 0.00 and 0.01 respectively which on less than 0.05 level of significance. This finding implies that there are significant differences in the mean rating of the responses of the extent to which instructional materials are available on Christian Religious Knowledge on remaining 2 items of the extent to which instructional materials are available on Christian Religious Knowledge, therefore the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses is rejected on the remaining 2 items.

Research Question 2

What are the teaching methods used in teaching Christian Religious Knowledge Ho₂: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the responses of the method used in the teaching method used in the teaching Christian Religious Knowledge. The data for answering research question two and testing hypothesis two are presented in table 2 below:

S/N	Material Statement	$\bar{X}_{Im}$	$\bar{X}_{Tm}$	$\bar{X}_G$	SD	REMARK		
						P Value E	RQ	HO
1	Follow regulation on the uses of approved teaching method.	3.66	3.54	3.60	0.56	0.57	R	NS
2	Selection of good teaching method for teaching	3.59	3.57	3.58	0.50	0.55	R	NS
3	Draw lesson plan for teaching	3.35	3.70	3.52	0.71	0.01	R	S*
4	Application of MAP in teaching	3.33	3.40	3.36	0.45	0.34	R	NS
5	The use of chalk board during teaching	3.51	3.53	3.52	0.62	0.22	R	NS
6	Usage of Bible reading method	3.88	3.32	3.35	0.63	0.58	R	NS
7	Usage of discussion method	3.45	3.34	3.39	0.66	0.3	R	NS
8	Students interest on the Bible reading	3.46	3.48	3.47	0.58	0.46	R	NS
9	Students interest on the discussion	3.41	3.44	3.42	0.54	0.64	R	NS
10	Evaluation of Bible reading	3.44	3.43	3.43	0.43	0.32	R	NS
11	Evaluation of discussion	3.45	3.45	3.49	0.64	0.45	R	NS
12	Evaluation of Bible map reading	3.41	3.75	3.58	0.74	0.03	R	S*
13	Effect of Bible reading on morally	3.43	3.46	3.44	0.60	0.21	R	NS

14	Effect of discussion on morality	3.34	3.71	3.52	0.64	0.02	R	S*
15	Societal influence of the Bible reading morals.	3.40	3.41	3.40	0.61	0.63	R	NS

Key

$\bar{X}_{Im}$ = Mean of instructional materials.

$\bar{X}_{Tm}$ = mean of teaching methods

$\bar{X}_G$ = overall grand mean

R = required level of significance.

S* = Significant

NS = Not significant

SD = Significant different

The data in table 2 revealed that all the 15 items have their mean values ranged from 3.31 to 3.60 which are greater than the cut off point value of 2.50 4 point rating scale. This indicates that all the 15 items are acceptable method of teaching Christian Religious Knowledge. The standard deviations value of the 15 items is written the range of 0.35 to 0.64 which indicates that the responses of the respondents are close to the mean of one another. The data presented on table 2 hypothesis two reveal that the p. value of 10 out of the 15 items in the table range from 0.13 to 0.57 which are greater than 0.05 level of significance. This indicated that there are no significances in the mean rating of the responses of the respondent. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses is accepted on the 15 items the p. values on the remaining 5 are 0.01, 0.03, 0.02, 0.2 and 0.04 respectively which are less than 0.05 levels of significance. This finding signified that there are significant differences in the mean ratings of the responses therefore; the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses is rejected on the remaining 5 items in the table.

Research Question 3

Determine the disposition and willingness of students to Christian Religious Knowledge.

Ho₃: there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the respondent on the disposition and willingness of students to Christian Religious Knowledge. The data for answering research question three and testing hypothesis three are presented on the table below:

S/N	Material Statement	$\bar{X}_{Im}$	$\bar{X}_s$	$\bar{X}_G$	SD	REMARK		
						P Value E	RQ	HO
1	Enrolment into Christian Religious Knowledge class	3.33	3.45	3.39	0.45	0.37	R	NS
2	Attendance to Christian Religious Knowledge class	3.0	3.28	3.29	0.72	0.81	R	NS
3	Students' interest in Bible reading	3.54	3.52	3.53	0.54	0.23	R	NS
4	Students' interest in discussion	3.28	3.30	3.29	0.54	0.45	R	NS

5	Number of students that fail exam	3.61	3.55	3.58	0.54	0.34	R	NS
6	Number of average students	3.16	3.46	3.31	0.73	0.02	R	S*
7	Classroom comfort for Christian Religious Knowledge	3.53	3.68	3.50	0.62	0.31	R	NS
8	Students' response to questions in Christian Religious Knowledge class	3.49	3.51	3.50	0.56	0.63	R	NS
9	Tutorial class for Christian Religious Knowledge	3.53	3.50	3.51	0.54	0.43	R	NS
10	Students' exam performance above average	3.56	3.61	3.58	0.34	0.34	R	NS

Key

$\bar{X}_{Im}$ = Mean of instructional materials.

$\bar{X}_s$ = mean of students willingness

$\bar{X}_G$ = overall grand mean

R = required level of significance.

S* = Significant

NS = Not significant

SD = Significant different

The data presented on table 3 above showed that the grand mean ratings of the responses of the respondents on the 10 items in the table range from 3.29 to 3.58 which are all greater than the cut off point value of 2.50 on a 4 point scale. This finding indicated that all the 10 items in the table are the factors that determine the disposition of students and willingness to Christian Religious Knowledge the standard deviations values of the 10 items are within 0.45 to 0.73 which indicates that the responses of the respondent are close to the mean of one another.

The data presented on table 3 on hypothesis three show further that the p-values of the 10 items in the table range from 0.02 to 0.81 which are greater than 0.05 levels of significance. This indicates that there are no significant differences in the mean ratings of the responses of determining the disposition and willingness of students to Christian Religious Knowledge class of the 10 items. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses is accepted on the 10 items in the table.

Research Question 4

Are there adequate qualified teachers for the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge?

Ho⁴: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of respondent on the issue of adequate qualified teachers for teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge. The data for answering research question 4 and testing hypothesis 4 and testing hypothesis 4 are presented on the table below:

S/N	Material Statement	$\bar{X}_{Im}$	$\bar{X}_{Tr}$	$\bar{X}_G$	SD	REMARK		
						P Value E	RQ	H ₀₄
1	Numbers of PHD holders teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.56	3.55	3.56	0.60	0.62	R	NS
2	Numbers of masters degree holders teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.40	3.03	3.20	0.71	0.01	R	S*
3	Numbers of first degree holders teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.33	3.45	3.39	0.45	0.37	R	NS
4	Numbers of N.C.E.holders teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.47	3.56	3.51	0.69	0.56	R	NS
5	Numbers of WAEC holders teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.49	3.51	3.50	0.56	0.63	R	NS
6	Numbers of First school Leaving Certificate holders teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.33	3.75	3.54	0.66	0.04	R	S*
7	Number of school drop outs teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.45	3.54	3.49	0.64	0.45	R	S*
8	Numbers of theologians teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.41	3.44	3.42	0.54	0.64	R	NS
9	Numbers of inexperienced personnel teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.51	3.53	3.52	0.62	0.22	R	NS
10	Numbers of holders of postgraduate diploma in Religion teaching Christian Religious Knowledge	3.33	3.40	3.36	0.45	0.34	R	NS

Key

$\bar{X}_{Im}$ = Mean of instructional materials.

$\bar{X}_{Tr}$ = mean of teachers

$\bar{X}_G$ = overall grand mean

R = required level of significance.

S* = Significant

NS = Not significant

SD = Significant different

The data presented on table 4 above showed that the ground mean rating of the respondent on the 10 items in the table range from 3.20 to 3.56 which are all greater than the cut off point value of 2.50 on a 4 point scale. This finding indicates that all the 10 items on the table are dealing with enough availability of qualified teachers for the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge.

The standard deviation value of the 10 items are within 0.45 to 0.71 which indicates that the responses of the respondent are close the mean of one another the data presented on table 4 on hypothesis 4 revealed that the p values of 8 out of 10 items in the table range 0.01 to 0.64 which are greater 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significance in the mean ratings of the responses of the respondent. Therefore the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses is accepted on the 10 items. The p-values on the remaining 2 are 0.01, and 0.04 respectively which are less than 0.05 levels of significance. This finding signified that there are significant differences in the mean rating of the responses therefore the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses is rejected on the remaining 2 items in the table.

Discussion of Findings

This study is meant to find out possible constraints that affect the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge in secondary schools. Some of which include determining the extent of the usage of instructional materials in teaching Christian Religious Knowledge and formulating objectives for the usage of instructional materials and reviewing the objectives periodically based on the revolution in the educational sector by researchers. Making plans on the teaching methods with teachers motivations for the use of instructional materials. Further regulations on the use of approved teaching method.

This study identified 15 factors on the teaching methods where most of the teachers use reading and discussion. The result reveals that the methods constitute challenges. This is why Anyacho (2005) stated that this method does more harm than good not only to the subject but also to the students. Students regard Christian Religious Knowledge class as literature equivalent and as in any literature, the importance is to know the facts contain in the chapter. He further stated that Bible is not meant to be read verse to verse in the class for teaching of religious studies topics. It is meant to be reference materials and that there is a tendency to interpret passages subjectively and this is most dangerous to students.

On the issue of the number of teachers that are involved in the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge, the table reveals that there are few qualified teachers. To this effect Oribanjo in Adama (2013) observes that teachers of home economics, biology, English, histories and so on as long as they are Christian and can read Bible were allocated Bible knowledge in secondary schools. This constitutes a setback to effective teaching of the subjects. Because of lack of qualified teachers, teachers emphasize their objective on cognitive domain in which the learner is expected to remember facts while the emphasis according to Ahunanya (1984) should be on affective domain in which the lesson is to reflect in the learner's life.

Regarding the disposition and willingness of the students to Christian Religious Knowledge, because of the other factors that constitute challenges to the teaching and learning of Christian Religious Knowledge. The student's enrolment and attendance to classes is not encouraging.

Fellow students also discourage Christian Religious Knowledge students because they feel that only students who cannot make science or the so called tougher subjects offer religious studies. There is also lack of commitment on the part of teachers. This is in line with Ernest (1991) and Nweze (2007) who stated that students lack of interest in the subject, teachers lack of commitment and inadequate trained personnel constitute problems to the teaching of the subject. This means that students and teachers interest are paramount to the teaching of the subject which will in turn help in molding moral behaviour of the students.

Regarding the availability of instructional materials, the study reveals that there is no enough instructional material for the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge. To this effect Nglass (1986) states that though there are different kinds of teaching aids that can be profitably used by the teachers, only very few are provided, and therefore used. This is the major problem that affects the degree of pupil's interest in understanding their work. This applies also to the teaching a Christian Religious Knowledge. According to Adama (2013) many principals see the subject as a soft option and feel reluctant to vote money for its instructional materials.

Recommendations

- 1) Effort should be put in place by the government and non-governmental organizations to provide funds for teaching material in Christian Religious Knowledge to alleviate the moral degeneration in the adolescence stage.
- 2) Teachers of Christian Religious Knowledge be considered for scholarship by the government to enable them study further as to withstand the current trend of educational challenges.
- 3) Means should be devised to equally encourage the enrolment of students through, scholarship, convenient learning environment and text books.
- 4) Curriculum should be designed in such a way that every student must participate in Christian Religious Knowledge class without discrimination

Conclusion

This paper investigates the possible constraints to effective teaching and learning of Christian Religious Knowledge in secondary schools in Ankpa Local government Area of Kogi State. Christian Religious Knowledge assists the students in ethical and moral formulation. The study reveals that instructional materials are lacking in secondary schools in the local government. It was also discovered that most teachers use discussion method with reading of the Bible and that there are no enough qualified teachers for the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge.

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