

THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIGERIAN CHILD: A CASE STUDY OF OHAUKWU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EBONYI STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study was on the impact of CRS in the moral development of the Nigerian Child. A case study of Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi state. Three objectives were raised which included: To examine the relationship between Christian religious studies (CRS) and the level of morality among pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi state, to determine the effect of Christian religious studies on the behavioural pattern of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State and to investigate on factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies. The total population for the study is 75 staffs of selected primary schools in Ohaukwu local government area of Ebonyi state. The researcher used questionnaires as the instrument for the data collection. Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for this study. The data collected were presented in tables and analyzed using simple percentages and frequencies. Among the findings of the study are that there is moral decadence in the society; religion plays a prominent role in the society; religious education brings about moral development; and that religious education is being handled with levity. The study recommended among others that, for religious education to bring about the desired moral development the curriculum had to be restructured to contain the necessary ingredients and the teacher should also exemplify the moral standards he teaches. The study concluded that religious education has no significant improvement of the level of secondary school students.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

Christian religion is generally regarded as one of the most vital subject in Nigeria today; it is evident that the study of Christian religious studies is the subject that plays a significant role in the morals development of pupils in most of the Nigeria societies. The subject gains its root into Nigeria education system through the European Missionaries who introduced the subject as a means of converting Nigerians into white man religion (Christianity). Ajere, G. (2006)

The introduction of Christian religious studies as one of the subjects in arts came into being with the introduction of other categories like science and technological subjects when the federal government of Nigeria takeover most of the schools in Nigeria. It is believed that the

introduction of CRS will help in the moral teaching and development of pupils in Nigeria especially the youths (Falade, D.A. (2007)

Morals define the kind of behaviour that the society wants from the people. Certain behaviours are considered to be unacceptable in the society. For most societies, however, morals are not written in stone, or proclaimed by God above, but instead reflect local sensibilities. Many societies have different ideas about what is acceptable and not acceptable.

According to (Dombeck and Wells-moran, 2008) which stated that there are only a relative few behaviors (usually including murder, and various forms of abuse, including incest and adult-child sexual contact of any sort) that are universally despised by stable societies. However, People are not born knowing their society's morals. Instead, these understandings grow and mature over time.

According to (Kohlberg, 2009) stated that children have very little or no moral sense, because they are not born with an understanding of the nature of human relationships. As children reach elementary school age, they enter into the first major stage of moral comprehension, known as the pre conventional stage. Pre-conventional children are importantly selfish in orientation. They do not think about what behaviours will serve the greater good, but rather think in terms of what will most benefit them. They respond primarily and think of morality as a matter of following principles so as to avoid punishment. As children grow into adulthood, they typically enter into the stage of conventional moral understanding. Some children will be developmentally delayed in this regard and becomes adults who have the moral understanding of children; we call them sociopaths, narcissists, and anti-social personalities. The majority of people that do make it to the conventional moral understanding start thinking in terms of responsibility; a duty to promote the greater good. The study in this regard wishes to examine the impact of Christian religious studies on the morals development of pupils using Apapa local government Lagos State as the case study.

Statement of Research Problem

What really instigated the study was due the high level of immorality in most of the Nigeria societies especially in the Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi state. One of the major problems observed in this area is as a result of large number of immorality committing by young people in most areas of Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi state. The study of CRS was taught in fewer areas in Ohaukwu local government; some of the students tend to leave the class during CRS classes. Most of the pupils that were opportuned to have knowledge on the impact of CRS on the morals development of pupils tend to forget the moral teachings of CRS because of family background and belief. To reduce the non-adherence to morality in the society to manageable level, a vital constituent of an effective moral learning experience need to be developed for schools and homes (Ajere, 2006). It is also believed that the government has a role to play in the effective teaching of CRS in schools, families and other social gatherings.

According to scholars like Njoku (2012) attributed the breakdown in moral behaviour of the school pupils to teachers' attitude and government lack of commitment to the teaching of CRS as

some that are committed do not handle the subject well, which has made it almost impossible for learners to attain the set goals.

Purpose of Study

The following objectives were determined:

1. To examine the relationship between Christian religious studies (CRS) and the level of morality among pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi state.
2. To determine the effect of Christian religious studies on the behavioural pattern of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State.
3. To investigate on factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies.

Research Questions

The following research questions was formulated:

1. What is the relationship between Christian religious studies (CRS) and the level of morality among pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State?
2. what is the effect of Christian religious studies on the behavioural pattern of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State?
3. What are factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies?

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

H0: there is no significant relationship between Christian religious studies and the morals development of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State

H1: there is significant relationship between Christian religious studies and the morals development of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State

Hypothesis 2

H0: there is no mean difference in gender responses of the respondents that Christian religious studies influences the morality level in most of the Nigerian societies

H1: there is mean difference in gender responses of the respondents that Christian religious studies influences the morality level in most of the Nigerian societies

Hypothesis 3

H0: there are no factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies

H1: there are factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies

Significance of the study

The study on the impact of Christian religious studies (CRS) on the morals development of pupils will be of immense benefit to the entire Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi state as it will discuss the roles the importance of CRS on the morals development of pupils in Ohaukwu local government area, Ebonyi state. The study will also address the method that offers maximum advantage in attaining the learning outcomes as stated in the objectives of the subject. Since the affective and the cognitive aspects of the lessons are equally important, there is need to select appropriate methods that shall nurture the learner's sense of wellbeing so that the desired habits, attitudes and skills will manifest in their ethical behaviour

Scope of the study

The scope of the study covers the impact of Christian religious studies in the moral development of the Nigerian child. The study will be limited to Ohaukwu local government

Limitations of Study

Financial constraint- Insufficient fund tends to impede the efficiency of the researcher in sourcing for the relevant materials, literature or information and in the process of data collection (internet, questionnaire and interview).

Time constraint- The researcher will simultaneously engage in this study with other academic work. This consequently will cut down on the time devoted for the research work.

Definition of Terms

Christian Religious Studies (CRS): alternately known as the study of religion, is the multi-disciplinary academic field devoted to research into religious beliefs, behaviors, and institutions

Morals: a lesson that can be derived from a story or experience.

Morality: principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behaviour.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design adopted in this research work is the survey research design which involves the usage of self-designed questionnaire in the collection of data. Under the survey research design, primary data of this study will be collected from selected primary schools in Ohaukwu local government of Lagos state in order to determine the impact of CRS in the moral development of the Nigerian child. The design was chosen because it enables the researcher to

collect data without manipulation of any variables of interest in the study. The design also provides opportunity for equal chance of participation in the study for respondents.

Population of Study

The population of study is the census of all items or a subject that possess the characteristics or that have the knowledge of the phenomenon that is being studied (Asiaka, 1991). It also means the aggregate people from which the sample is to be drawn.

Population is sometimes referred to as the universe. The population of this research study will be Seventy-five (75) selected staffs of selected primary schools in Ohaukwu Local government of Ebonyi state

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The researcher made use of stratified sampling technique because all the members have the same probability of occurrence. The researcher narrowed down the samples to staffs of selected primary schools in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi state in order to access the impact of CRS in the moral development of the Nigerian child.

In this study, the researcher used the [TARO YAMANE FORMULA] to determine the sample size.

Yamane (1967:886) provides a simplified formula to calculate sample sizes.

ASSUMPTION:

95% confidence level

P = .5

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = 75 / (1 + 75(0.05)^2)$$

$$n = 75 / (1 + 75(0.0025))$$

$$n = 75 / (1 + 0.5)$$

$$n = 50$$

Method of Data Collection

Basically, the source of data collection used in this study is primary and secondary. The primary source involves the use of questionnaire. The secondary source is by means of research into journals, published work in the library as well as newspaper articles.

The researcher adopted questionnaire in collecting relevant information for the study. The questions asked in the questionnaire were accompanied by multiple choice answers from which the respondents were asked to pick one.

The main reason for using this method of collecting data is to enable the researcher believe that this method will provide the necessary information as well as the ease with which the method will facilitate data collection. This will ensure balance and comprehensive information reliable enough for conclusion to be drawn.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

Validity here refers to the degree of measurement to which an adopted research instrument or method represents in a reasonable and logical manner the reality of the study (Prince Udoyen: 2019).

Nworgu (1991) contended that after the items in a questionnaire have been written, it is mandatory to subject the questionnaire to validation process.

He maintained that in this way the items can be reviewed in terms of their clarity, the appropriateness of the language and expressions, the suitability of each item with references to the research question. It is expected to answer the adequacy of the quantity of items in the questionnaire.

In respect of this he says; after the items have been written, the next crucial step is to subject the questionnaire to a validation process. This is an extremely important exercise that cannot be skipped in the development of an instrument.

The questionnaires were being validated by the investigator's project supervisor and some of his colleagues. Each of them was given a copy of questionnaire for critical review and were finally ratified and approved by the investigator's project supervisor.

Although, the responses of the respondents may be bias, the questionnaire would still be able to capture the needed information based on the respondents' opinion. To allow for the elements of bias that may be contained in the responses, 1% level of significance would be allowed in the data testing. This will take care of error, bias etc. that may be in the data collected.

Reliability is referred to as the degree to which the instrument consistently measures what it intends to measure (Ojo, 2003). His responds to this research study indicated that the questionnaire was well structured to achieve the purpose of the research thereby meeting the test of reliability. The reliability of the research instrument would be tested through test-re-test reliability. In this method the same measuring instruments is used to take separate measurement on the same research population or sample at different times. The higher the correlation between the two measurements, the higher the reliability of the measuring instruments.

Method of Data Analysis

The data analysis method will deal with how the necessary data collected, through primary source will be properly processed and presented for meaningful analysis. The method that will be adopted to analyze data collected will be less of manual and more of computer aided method. The computer aided package known as statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) will be

employed to analyze data in the form of frequency tables in knowing the impact of CRS in the moral development of the Nigerian child.

Chi-Square: this statistical test is used to determine whether there is any significant difference between the observed and expected theoretical frequency obtained from a distribution. It is also used to test the dependence of two attributes such as impact of CRS in the moral development of the Nigerian child

It is represented by:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$$

Where O= observed frequency

E= expected frequency

I = the number of items where I= 1,2,3,

...n

The hypothesis will be tested using the chi-square (X^2)

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter is about the analysis and presentation of data collected from the field through questionnaire. The analysis of the data with particular question immediately followed by the presentation of findings.

As mentioned in chapter three, 75 questionnaires were administered and 50 were retrieved and necessary analysis was carried out on them and presented as follows:

Questionnaire Distributed

Questionnaire Number	Percentage served (%)	Questionnaire retrieved	Percentage retrieved (%)
50	100	50	100

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Data Presentation and Analysis

This is the presentation of the quantitative data collected from the respondents through the questionnaire drawn-tabulation and percent (%) age will be used to analyze the data accordingly as follows:

Data Analysis

Respondents analysis by Age

Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
21 -30	27	54
31 – 40	11	22
41 – 50	8	16
Above 50	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Field survey (2022)

The table above shows that 27 (54%) of the entire respondents are between the age 21-30 years, 11 (22%) fall between the age 31-40 years, 8 (16%) also fall between the age of 41-50 and 4 (8%) also fall between the age of above 50.

Respondents Analysis by Sex.

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	24	48
Female	26	52
Total	50	100

Source: Field survey (2022)

The table above denotes that 24 representing (48%) of the total respondents are male while 26 representing (52%) are female. This has shown that more female responded to the questionnaire than male.

“Respondents analysis by Marital Status”

Status	Frequency	Percent (%)
Single	23	46
Married	22	44
Divorced/Separated	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Field survey (2022)

The above table indicates that 23 (46%) represents single, 22 (44%) represents married and 5 (10%) represents divorce/ separated. Single has more responses to the questionnaire than the married and others.

Respondents analysis by Education

Qualification	Frequency	Percent (%)
SSCE/WAEC	8	16
PHD	10	20
FIRST DEGREE/ HND	17	34
OND	15	30
Total	50	100

Source: Field survey (2022)

The above table indicates that 8 (16%) represents SSCE/WAEC, 10 (20%) represents PHD, 17 (34%) represents First Degree/HND while 15 (30%) represents OND. First Degree HND has more access to the information required in the questionnaire than others.

Respondents analysis by Length of Service

Years	Frequency	Percent (%)
Less than one year	11	22
1-3 years	20	40
3-6 years	12	24
Above 6 years	7	14

Total	50	100
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Source: Field survey (2022)

The above table indicate that 11 (22%) represents respondents with less than one-year length of service, 20 (40%) represents respondents with 1-3 years' length of service, 12 (24%) respondents with 3-6 years length of service, while 7 (14%) represents respondents with above 6 years length of service. The majority of the respondents are within 1-3years length of service at secondary school has more access to the questionnaire than the others.

Respondents analysis by Position Held

Position	Frequency	Percent (%)
Headmasters	8	16
Teachers	21	42
Headmistresses	14	28
Non-teaching staffs	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Field survey (2022)

The above table indicates that 8 (16%) represents headmasters, 21 (42%) represents headmistresses, 14 (28%) represents teachers while 7 (14%) represents non-teaching staffs. Teachers have more access to the questionnaire than the others.

Question 1

What is the relationship between Christian religious studies (CRS) and the level of morality among pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State?

Option	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly agreed	11	22
Agreed	35	70
Strongly disagreed	1	2
Disagreed	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey (2022)

The above table indicate that 11 (22%) represents respondents who strongly agreed that it help develop the skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking and deciding how to act when making moral decisions. make a positive difference to the world by putting their beliefs and values into action, 1 (2%) represents respondents who strongly disagreed that it helps develop the skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking and deciding how to act when making moral decisions. make a positive difference to the world by putting their beliefs and values into action, 3 (6%) represents respondents who disagreed that it helps develop the skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking and deciding how to act when making moral decisions. make a positive difference to the world by putting their beliefs and values into action

Question 2

what is the effect of Christian religious studies on the behavioural pattern of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Lagos State?

Option	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly agreed	18	36
Agreed	25	50

Strongly disagreed	2	4
Disagreed	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey (2019)

The above table indicate that 18 (36%) represents respondents who strongly agreed that CRS enhanced psychological adjustment and social competence among primary school-age children in Ohaukwu local government 25 (50%) represents respondents who agreed that CRS enhanced psychological adjustment and social competence among primary school-age children in Ohaukwu local government, 2 (4%) represents respondents who strongly disagreed that CRS enhanced psychological adjustment and social competence among primary school-age children in Ohaukwu local government, 5 (10%) represents respondents who disagreed that CRS enhanced psychological adjustment and social competence among primary school-age children in Ohaukwu local government.

Question 3

What are factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies?

Option	Respondent	Percentage
Strongly agreed	8	16
Agreed	33	66
Strongly disagreed	2	4
Disagreed	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey (2022)

The above table indicate that 8 (16%) represents respondents who strongly agreed that lack of competent CRS teachers, poor allowance, parental authority and inadequate instructional materials were among the factors affecting effective implementation of CRS in school, 2 (4%) represents respondents who strongly disagreed that lack of competent CRS teachers, poor allowance, parental authority and inadequate instructional materials were among the factors affecting effective implementation of CRS in school, 7 (14%) represents respondents who disagreed that lack of competent CRS teachers, poor allowance, parental authority and inadequate instructional materials were among the factors affecting effective implementation of CRS in school.

Hypothesis testing 1

S/N	O	E	o-e	(o-e) ²	$\frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$
1	11	12.5	-1.5	2.3	0.2
2	35	12.5	22.5	506.3	40.5
3	1	12.5	-11.5	132.3	10.6
4	3	12.5	-9.5	90.3	7.2
Total	50				58.5

Degree of freedom = n-1, 4-1 = 3

Level of significant = 0.5

Calculated value = 58.5

Table value = 7.815

Decision rule: we reject the null hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than the table value and accept the null hypothesis if the table is greater than the calculated value.

$$58.5 > 7.815$$

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis because the calculated value is greater than the table value.

Hypothesis testing 2

S/N	O	E	o-e	(o-e) ²	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
1	18	12.5	5.5	30.3	2.4
2	25	12.5	12.5	156.3	12.5
3	2	12.5	-10.5	110.3	55.2
4	5	12.5	-7.5	56.3	4.5
Total	50				74.6

$$\text{Degree of freedom} = n-1, 4-1 = 3$$

$$\text{Level of significant} = 0.5$$

$$\text{Calculated value} = 74.6$$

$$\text{Table value} = 7.815$$

Decision rule: we reject the null hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than the table value and accept the null hypothesis if the table is greater than the calculated value.

$$74.6 > 7.815$$

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis because the calculated value is greater than the table value.

Hypothesis testing 3

S/N	O	E	o-e	(o-e) ²	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
1	8	12.5	-4.5	20.3	1.6
2	33	12.5	20.5	420.3	33.6
3	2	12.5	-10.5	110.3	8.8
4	7	12.5	-5.5	30.3	2.4
Total	50				46.4

Degree of freedom = n-1, 4-1 = 3

Level of significant = 0.5

Calculated value = 46.4

Table value = 7.815

Decision rule: we reject the null hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than the table value and accept the null hypothesis if the table is greater than the calculated value.

$46.4 > 7.815$

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis because the calculated value is greater than the table value.

Discussion of Findings

Hypotheses testing 1

The above table indicate that 11 (22%) represents respondents who strongly agreed that there is no significant relationship between Christian religious studies and the morals development of

pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State, 35 (70%) represents respondents who agreed that there is no significant relationship between Christian religious studies and the morals development of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State, 1 (2%) represents respondents who strongly disagreed that there is no significant relationship between Christian religious studies and the morals development of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State, 3 (6%) represents respondents who disagreed that there is no significant relationship between Christian religious studies and the morals development of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State.

$$58.5 > 7.815$$

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis because the calculated value is greater than the table value.

Hypotheses testing 2

The above table indicate that 18 (36%) represents respondents who strongly agreed that there is no mean difference in gender responses of the respondents that Christian religious studies influences the morality level in most of the Nigerian societies, 25 (50%) represents respondents who agreed there is no mean difference in gender responses of the respondents that Christian religious studies influences the morality level in most of the Nigerian societies, 2 (4%) represents respondents who strongly disagreed that there is no mean difference in gender responses of the respondents that Christian religious studies influences the morality level in most of the Nigerian societies 5 (10%) represents respondents who disagreed that there is no mean difference in gender responses of the respondents that Christian religious studies influences the morality level in most of the Nigerian societies.

$$74.6 > 7.815$$

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis because the calculated value is greater than the table value.

Hypotheses testing 3

The above table indicate that 8 (16%) represents respondents who strongly agreed that there are no factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies, 33 (66%) represents respondents who agreed that there are no factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies, 2 (4%) represents respondents who strongly disagreed that there are no factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies, 7 (14%) represents respondents who disagreed there are no factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies.

$$46.4 > 7.815$$

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis because the calculated value is greater than the table value

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

Summary

This study was on the impact of CRS in the moral development of the Nigerian Child. A case study of Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi state. Three objectives were raised which included: To examine the relationship between Christian religious studies (CRS) and the level of morality among pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi state, to determine the effect of Christian religious studies on the behavioural pattern of pupils in Ohaukwu local government of Ebonyi State and to investigate on factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies. The total population for the study is 75 staffs of selected primary schools in Ohaukwu local government area of Ebonyi state. The researcher used questionnaires as the instrument for the data collection. Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for this study. The data collected were presented in tables and analyzed using simple percentages and frequencies

Recommendations

There is need for the school managers to not only organize, but encourage CRS teachers to attend workshops and seminars because the job of molding human behavior is dynamic; hence regular attendance to seminars will equip them, with new approaches and methods for effective implementation of CRS curriculum among pupils.

2. There is need for administrators to support the teaching of CRS in terms of provision of instructional materials and allocation of adequate time to the teaching of the subject.

3. Both governments, society and school management should emphasize the teaching of the CRS. In other words, greater emphasis on the importance of the subject is required. The subject could be made compulsory at all levels of our education like the use of English bearing in mind the role the subject is designed to achieve in the learner.

4. Teachers of CRS as a matter of importance should be equipped through training and retraining so that they will be properly grounded in the pedagogical and theological aims of the subject. Effective teaching is dependent upon teachers' skills and knowledge; and these variable must be sorted out to enable the teaching of the subject achieve its set goals in the learners' lives.

Conclusion

This study revealed that Christian Religious Knowledge is one of the oldest school subjects in Nigeria. The subject aims at inculcating in the learners some cherished values in the society. Among other things, the conventional teaching method adopted by primary school teachers has hindered the acquisition and demonstration of expected values by the learners. Values clarification, collaborative and involvement in informal school clubs can help learners to develop and manifest values like honesty, respect, trust, obedience and forgiveness.

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