THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES ON THE BEHAVIOR OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ABAKALIKI EDUCATIONAL ZONE OF EBONYI STATE

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Abstract

This research discusses the impact of Christian religious studies on the morals of secondary school students in Abakaliki Educational Zone of Ebonyi State. It discussed the societal value that Nigeria is a country that is plagued with misplaced value. Questionnaire was employed in the collection of data from selected secondary schools and the response was impressive. Correlation coefficient was employed in testing the hypothesis to know the degree of the relationship between Christian religious studies and moral values in secondary school in Abakaliki Educational Zone of Ebonyi State. The findings revealed 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. We concluded that religious education has no significant improvement of the level of secondary school students in Abakaliki Educational Zone of Ebonyi State. The result revealed that moral values everybody should become genuinely interested in seeing a higher standard of moral behavior in private and public affairs. Finally, every individual in this country should become interested in ensuring a high standard of moral behaviour in both private and public life for them to portrait a good image of the country.

Key words: Christian Religious Studies, Secondary School Students, Impact, Behavior

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The high level of moral decadence and insurgencies in Nigerian nation is an indication that there is poor religious teaching in secondary school system. Christian religious studies (CRS) as one of the religious subjects taught in secondary school in Nigerian takes a central position in ensuring

moral and spiritual wellbeing of individuals in the society. The key roles of CRS in equipping the individuals and ensuring high level of morality is made clear in the objectives of CRS at the senior secondary level which include; to provide more opportunities for Nigerian youths to learn more about god and thereby develop their faith in god; to enable the youths to accept Christ as their savior; to help the youths develop Christian attitude and moral values (such as humility, respect, love, and justice, etc.); to instill in the youth the spirit of tolerance, reconciliation peaceful co-existence and non-violence as well as to develop and foster in the youth the spirit of respect for all people and human life (Universal Basic Education Curriculum (UBA), (2013).

Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is one of the major subjects missionaries bequeathed to Nigerian education system on the establishment of schools by the 19th century missionaries. The aim was to train people who will be of immense help to the colonial trinity goals (God/Christianity, government/colonization and Gold/commerce). In other to achieve the above, the major curriculum contents of their educational system were Bible Studies, Arithmetic and English language for communication. To implement fully the contents, adequate attention was given to the understanding of the place of God in man's life (Nsongo, 2001). During the missionary era, bible studies otherwise known as CRS were the core subject. Subsequently, after independence, government took over schools; there was a clarion call for review of curriculum in 1983. The call was as a result of criticisms leveled against colonial education, which some scholars viewed as being too arts oriented and as such lacked relevance to Nigeria upliftment, political emancipation and infrastructural development (Ocho, 2005). Ocho further explained that the situation led to the modification of the curriculum with greater emphasis on sciences and technological subjects.

The major aims of inclusion of CRS in the education curriculum is to raise generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, appreciate dignity of labour and those moral values specified in the broad national aims as good citizens. While at the secondary school level the subject is meant to prepare learners for useful living through inculcation of Christian attitudes and values, and to prepare learners for higher education (Akubue, 1992:16-17).

Without effective religious studies Nigerian nation will likely to end up in conflict, religious crisis, insurgencies and social unrest among other things. This is because religious control human actions in both social, political, economical and otherwise (Eluu, 2009). The teaching of CRS dates back to the 19th century with the pioneers of Nigerian education (Banjo, 2003). During the missionary administration because of the moral values it teaches the people. Following the government takeover of schools, Nigerian, secondary school curriculum was reviewed and more emphasis was placed on the studies of science and technological subjects. This shift affected the study and interest of students in CRS in school system leading to poor enrollment in CRS. Gbenda (2004) stresses that student's enrollment and interest in CRS could as well be as of result of inadequate provision of teaching aids, fewer professional teachers and lack of incentives

among other things. Njoku (2009) equally adduced that poor enrollment of student in CRS could be attributed to teacher's instructional delivery system and teachers' personality. CRS is taught in all the senior secondary schools in Nigerian as an elective subject. The elective nature of the subject in senior secondary schools in Nigeria equally reduced the number of students that register for the subject in West African examination council (WAEC) and national examination council (NECO) as well as other internal examination. CRS is a subject that bases its teaching on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ (Ugwu, 2001) as a teaching subject, it is not only geared towards converting people to Christianity, but is necessary for value formation, orientation and reorientation of value system as well as spiritual upliftment of the student. Ali and Akubue in Njoku (2009) observed that, CRS is a subject which aims at developing and fostering in the lives of the students Christian attitudes and values such as respect to life, obedience to constitutional authority, responsible self, selfless series to God and humanity. To them, CRS is seen as an academic discipline that is designed to provide the leaner with moral and spiritual transformation. This shows that CRS is the study of Christian lifestyles such as love, caring, patience, faith, forgiveness and hope in God as well as good relationship among men. Obanya in Njoku (2004) maintained that CRS like every other subjects has five features. These features are; a set of rational theoretical formulation, inherent capacity for growth, applicable solution to human problems, organized Body of the knowledge and a degree of uniformity with other area of academic activities. In the context of this study, CRS is defined as a social science subject that teaches students good moral behaviour, fearing of God, knowledge and skills that will make them to contribute their quota in socio-economic and moral development in senior secondary schools. The inclusion of sound religions and moral values in the life of students invariably could help in the development of spiritual and moral sound being of the students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is designed to achieve many goals in the lives of students ranging from teaching the students about God to the teaching of moral values which is geared towards shaping human behavior. These values are embedded in the stories and events recorded in the bible (drawn from the life of Christian and other mystical beings). Notwithstanding the lofty aims of CRS, studies by Ali and Akubue (1988) showed that learners' moral attitude have not improved greatly especially at this era. Meanwhile, an appraisal of CRS curriculum contents revealed that the subject has the potentials required to build one's moral character.

Right from inception of education in Nigeria, CRS has been one of the core subjects in secondary schools. However, there have been questions on the efficacy of CRS programme in instilling discipline and moulding character of the learner. Judging from the state of the moral behaviour of students, it seems that the subject is not achieving its major goals, which is developing in learners the ability to attain intellectual and moral perfection, discipline them both mentally and morally so as to face their daily and future challenges as good citizens (Akubue, 1992).

The above observations seem to suggest that CRS is taught in schools without much impact on the lives of the people, that is, without achieving its sets objectives in students' lives. The study therefore sought to examine the impact of Christian religious studies (CRS) on the behavior of secondary school students in Nigeria.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to know the impact of Christian religious studies (CRS) on the behavior of secondary school students. Specifically, the study sought to;

- i. examine the relationship between Christian Religious Studies and behavior of secondary school students.
- ii. examine the challenges to effective teaching of CRS in secondary schools.
- iii. suggest ways of curbing the challenges affecting the teaching of CRS in secondary school students.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the relationship between Christian Religious Studies and behavior of secondary school students?
- ii. What are the challenges to effective teaching of CRS in secondary schools?
- iii. What are the ways of curbing the challenges affecting the teaching of CRS in secondary school students?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Ho: There is no relationship between Christian Religious Studies and behavior of secondary school students.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study would be beneficial to students, teachers, religious instructors, curriculum planners, educational administrators, researchers and textbook authors.

To students, the study would help to improve their understanding of CRS and thus adjust properly in the society through active participation in the classroom leaning which stimulate their interest and change the negative perceptions they already have in learning CRS and this invariably help them to develop the affective domain of knowledge in secondary schools.

Religious instructors and bodies are not left out as they would understand the best way to educate children in the principles and practice of Christianity which invariably will promote peace and harmony as well as co-existence in the Nigerian society.

This study will also be of immense benefit to other researchers who intend to know more on this study and can also be used by non-researchers to build more on their research work. This study contributes to knowledge and could serve as a guide for other study.

1.7 Scope/Limitations of the Study

This study is on impact of Christian religious studies on the behavior of secondary school

students.

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.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Christian: Relating to or professing Christianity or its teachings.

Religious Studies: Religious studies, alternately known as the study of religion, is an academic field devoted to research into religious beliefs, behaviors, and institutions. It describes, compares, interprets, and explains religion, emphasizing systematic, historically based, and

cross-cultural perspectives.

Behaviour: The way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others.

Secondary School: A secondary school is both an organization that provides secondary

education and the building where this takes place.

Student: A student is primarily a person enrolled in a school or other educational institution who attends classes in a course to attain the appropriate level of mastery of a subject under the guidance of an instructor and who devotes time outside class to do whatever activities the instructor assigns that are necessary either for class preparation or to submit evidence of progress

towards that mastery.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

https://ebscoeijer.org/

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the description and discussion on the various techniques and procedures used in the study to collect and analyze the data as it is deemed appropriate

3.2 Research Design

For this study, the survey research design was adopted. The choice of the design was informed by the objectives of the study as outlined in chapter one. This research design provides a quickly efficient and accurate means of assessing information about a population of interest. It intends to study the impact of Christian Religious Studies on the behavior of secondary school students. The study will be conducted in Abuja metropolis.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population for this study were staff of selected secondary schools in Abuja metropolis. The population figure for the study was about 134 respondents. The reason for choosing Abuja metropolis is because of its proximity to the researcher.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The researcher used Taro Yamane's formula to determine the sample size from the population.

Taro Yamane's formula is given as;

https://ebscoeijer.org/

 $_{n} = 134 = \underline{100}$

1.335

The sample size therefore is 100 respondents.

3.5 Research Instrument and Instrumentation

Data for this study was collected from primary and secondary sources. The primary source of data collected was mainly the use of a structured questionnaire which was designed to elicit information on the impact of Christian Religious Studies on the behavior of secondary school students. The secondary source of data collections were textbooks, journals and scholarly materials.

3.6 Validity of Instrument

The instrument of this study was subjected to face validation. Face validation tests the appropriateness of the questionnaire items. This is because face validation is often used to indicate whether an instrument on the face of it appears to measures what it contains. Face validations therefore aims at determining the extent to which the questionnaire is relevant to the objectives of the study.

In subjecting the instrument for face validation, copies of the initial draft of the questionnaire will be validated by supervisor. The supervisor is expected to critically examine the items of the instrument with specific objectives of the study and make useful suggestions to improve the quality of the instrument. Based on his recommendations the instrument will be adjusted and readjusted before being administered for the study.

3.7 Reliability of Instrument

The coefficient of 0.81 was considered a reliability coefficient because according to Etuk (1990), a test-retest coefficient of 0.5 will be enough to justify the use of a research instrument.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

This study is based on the two possible sources of data which are the primary and secondary source.

- **a. Primary Source of Data:** The primary data for this study consist of raw data generated from responses to questionnaires and interview by the respondents.
- b. **Secondary Source of Data:** The secondary data includes information obtained through the review of literature that is journals, monographs, textbooks and other periodicals.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected will be analyzed using frequency table, percentage and mean score analysis while the nonparametric statistical test (Chi- square) was used to test the formulated hypothesis using SPSS (statistical package for social sciences). Haven gathered the data through the administration of questionnaire, the collected data will be coded, tabulated and analyzed using SPSS statistical software according to the research question and hypothesis. In order to effectively analyze the data collected for easy management and accuracy, the chi square method will be used for test of independence. Chi square is given as

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

e

Where $X^2 = \text{chi square}$

o = observed frequency

e = expected frequency

Level of confidence / degree of freedom

When employing the chi – square test, a certain level of confidence or margin of error has to be assumed. More also, the degree of freedom in the table has to be determined in simple variable, row and column distribution, degree of freedom is: df = (r-1)(c-1)

Where; df = degree of freedom

r = number of rows

c = number of columns.

In determining the critical chi _ square value, the value of confidence is assumed to be at 95% or 0.95. a margin of 5% or 0.05 is allowed for judgment error.

c = number of columns.

In determining the critical chi _ square value, the value of confidence is assumed to be at 95% or 0.95. a margin of 5% or 0.05 is allowed for judgment error.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of the result obtained from questionnaires. The data gathered were presented according to the order in which they were arranged in the research questions and simple percentage were used to analyze the demographic information of the respondents while the chi square test was adopted to test the research hypothesis.

4.2 Analysis of Demographic Data of Respondents

Table 1: Gender of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	65	65.0	65.0
	Female	35	35.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, February, 2019.

Table 1 above shows the gender distribution of the respondents used for this study. Out of the total number of 100 respondents, 65respondents which represent 65.0percent of the population are male. 35 which represent 35.0 percent of the population are female.

Table 2: Age range of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-30years	15	15.0	15.0
	31-40years	10	10.0	25.0
	41-50years	25	25.0	50.0
	51-60years	20	20.0	70.0
	above 60 years	30	30.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Table 2 above shows the age grade of the respondents used for this study. Out of the total number of 100 respondents, 15 respondents which represent 15.0percent of the population are between 20-30years. 10respondents which represent 10.0percent of the population are between 31-40years. 25respondents which represent 25.0percent of the population are between 41-50years. 20respondents which represent 20.0percent of the population are between 51-60years. 30respondents which represent 30.0percent of the population are above 60years.

Table 3: Educational Background of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FSLC	20	20.0	20.0
	WASSCE/GCE/NECO	25	25.0	45.0
	OND/HND/BSC	35	35.0	80.0
	MSC/PGD/PHD	15	15.0	95.0
	OTHERS	5	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, February, 2019.

Table 3 above shows the educational background of the respondents used for this study. Out of the total number of 100 respondents, 20 respondents which represent 20.0percent of the population are FSLC holders. 25 which represent 25.0percent of the population are SSCE/GCE/WASSCE holders. 35 which represent 35.0percent of the population are OND/HND/BSC holders. 15 which represent 15.0percent of the population are MSC/PGD/PHD holders. 5 which represent 5.0percent of the population had other type of educational qualifications.

Table 4: Years in Education sector

	_			Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent
Valid	0-2years	30	30.0	30.0
	3-5years	15	15.0	45.0
	6-8years	20	20.0	65.0
	9-11 years	15	15.0	80.0
	12-14years	10	10.0	90.0
	above 14 years	10	10.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, February, 2019.

Table 4 above shows the years of experience in the education sector of respondents used for this study. 30 which represent 30.0percent of the population have 0-2years experience in the education sector. 15 which represent 15.0percent of the population have 3-5years experience in the education sector. 20 which represent 20.0percent of the population have 6-8years experience in the education sector. 15 which represent 15.0percent of the population have 9-11years of experience in the education sector. 10 which represent 10.0percent of the population have 12-14years of experience in the education sector. 10 which represent 10.0percent of the population have more than 14years of experience in the education sector.

Table 5: Category of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Principals	25	25.0	25.0
	Teachers	45	45.0	70.0
	Vice Principals	30	30.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Table 5 shows the category of respondents used for the study. 25 respondents representing 25.0perrcent of the population under study are principals. 45 respondents representing 45.0perrcent of the population under study are teachers. 30 respondents representing 30.0perrcent of the population under study are vice principals.

4.3 Analysis of Psychographic Data

Table 6: Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is a relevant subject in secondary schools

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	30	30.0	30.0
	Agree	42	42.0	72.0
	Undecided	10	10.0	82.0
	Disagree	10	10.0	92.0
	Strongly disagree	8	8.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, February, 2019.

Table 6 shows the responses of respondents if Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is a relevant subject in secondary schools. 30 respondents representing 30.0percent strongly agreed that Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is a relevant subject in secondary schools. 42 respondents representing 42.0percent agreed that Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is a relevant subject in secondary schools. 10 respondents representing 10.0 percent were undecided. 10 respondents representing 10.0percent disagreed that Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is a relevant subject in secondary schools. 8 respondents representing 8.0percent strongly disagreed that Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is a relevant subject in secondary schools.

Table 7: CRS help to shape the behaviour of secondary school students

	-	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	10	10.0	10.0
	Agree	15	15.0	25.0

Undecided	5	5.0	30.0
Disagree	40	40.0	70.0
Strongly disagree	30	30.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	

Table 7 show the responses of respondents if CRS help to shape the behaviour of secondary school students. 10 of the respondents representing 10.0percent strongly agree that CRS help to shape the behaviour of secondary school students. 15 of the respondents representing 15.0percent agree that CRS help to shape the behaviour of secondary school students. 5 of them representing 5.0percent were undecided. 40 of the respondents representing 40.0percent disagree that CRS help to shape the behaviour of secondary school students. 30 of the respondents representing 30.0percent strongly disagree that CRS help to shape the behaviour of secondary school students.

Table 8: There is a relationship between CRS and the behaviour of secondary school students

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	60	60.0	60.0
	Agree	25	25.0	85.0
	Undecided	10	10.0	95.0
	Disagree	5	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, February, 2019.

Table 8 show the responses of respondents if there is a relationship between CRS and the behaviour of secondary school students. 60 of the respondents representing 60.0percent strongly agree that there is a relationship between CRS and the behaviour of secondary school students. 25 of the respondents representing 25.0percent agree that there is a relationship between CRS and the behaviour of secondary school students. 10 of them representing 10.0percent were undecided. 5 of the respondents representing 5.0percent disagree that there is a relationship between CRS and the behaviour of secondary school students.

Table 9: CRS should be made compulsory to all secondary school students

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	25	25.0	25.0
	Agree	32	32.0	57.0
	Undecided	13	13.0	70.0
	Disagree	15	15.0	85.0
	Strongly disagree	15	15.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Table 9 shows the responses of respondents if CRS should be made compulsory to all secondary school students. 25 of the respondents representing 25.0percent strongly agree that CRS should be made compulsory to all secondary school students. 32 of the respondents representing 32.0percent agree that CRS should be made compulsory to all secondary school students. 13 of the respondents representing 13.0percent were undecided. 15 of the respondents representing 15.0percent disagree that CRS should be made compulsory to all secondary school students. 15 of the respondents representing 15.0percent strongly disagree that CRS should be made compulsory to all secondary school students.

Table 10: CRS has significant impact on the behaviour of secondary school students

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	65	65.0	65.0
	Agree	30	30.0	95.0
	Disagree	3	3.0	98.0
	Strongly disagree	2	2.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, February, 2019.

Table 10 shows the responses of respondents if CRS has significant impact on the behaviour of secondary school students. 65 of the respondents representing 65.0percent strongly agree that CRS has significant impact on the behaviour of secondary school students. 30 of the respondents

representing 30.0percent agree that CRS has significant impact on the behaviour of secondary school students. 3 respondents representing 3.0percent were undecided. 3 of the respondents representing 3.0percent disagree that CRS has significant impact on the behaviour of secondary school students. 2 of the respondents representing 2.0percent strongly disagree that CRS has significant impact on the behaviour of secondary school students.

4.4 Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis I

Ho: There is no relationship between Christian Religious Studies and behavior of secondary school students.

H_i: There is a relationship between Christian Religious Studies and behavior of secondary school students.

Level of significance: 0.05

Decision rule: reject the null hypothesis H_0 if the p value is less than the level of significance. Accept the null hypothesis if otherwise.

Table 11 Test Statistics

	There is a relationship between Christian Religious Studies and behavior of secondary school students
Chi-Square	105.520 ^a
Df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 25.0.

Conclusions based on decision rule:

Since the p-value= 0.000 is less than the level of significance (0.05), we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that There is a relationship between Christian Religious Studies and behavior of secondary school students.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

It is important to ascertain that the objective of this study was to ascertain the impact of Christian religious studies on the morals of secondary school students in Nigeria

In the preceding chapter, the relevant data collected for this study were presented, critically analyzed and appropriate interpretation given. In this chapter, certain recommendations made which in the opinion of the researcher will be of benefits in addressing the challenges of Christian religious studies on the morals secondary school students in Nigeria

5.2 Summary

This study was on the impact of Christian religious studies on the morals of secondary school students in Nigeria. Six objectives were raised which included: To examine the relationship between Christian religious studies (CRS) and the level of morality among students, to determine the effect of Christian religious studies on the behavioural pattern of students, to investigate on factors affecting the effective implementation and teaching of CRS in most schools in most of the Nigerian societies, to determine the roles of the federal government in the teaching of CRS, to investigate on the effect of belief on the acceptance of Christian religious studies in most of families in Nigeria, to proffer solution to the above stated problems. In line with these objectives, two research hypotheses were formulated and two null hypotheses were posited. The total population for the study is 133 staff of selected secondary schools in Abuja metropolis. The researcher used questionnaires as the instrument for the data collection. Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for this study. A total of 100 respondents made up of Principals, Vice principals and Teachers were used for the study. The data collected were presented in tables and analyzed using simple percentages and frequencies

5.3 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 secondary 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.

5.4 Recommendation

In line with the implication of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made by the researcher:

- i. As the use of role-play method of CRS teaching has been found to be effective in promoting achievement and interest of students in CRS and since research evidence has shown that it is rarely used by the teachers in classes, students should be expose to the use of role-play in learning of CRS in schools.
- ii. Government agencies and professional bodies whose responsibility is to design and revise curriculum for secondary schools should incorporate and emphasize the use of role-play method in teaching of CRS in secondary schools.
- iii. Teachers of CRS should endevour to note that gender does not account for students' interest rather the method used by teachers in teaching a particular subject. Therefore, they should often change their method of teaching in order to promote students' interest in CRS and achievement in secondary schools in Nigeria.

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