

**INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN CURBING
MORAL DECADENCE AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN EGOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EDO
STATE**

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**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

MARCH, 2025

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE
AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A(Ed) DEGREE IN
RELIGION EDUCATION**

MARCH, 2025

CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned certify that this project was carried out by **Confidence Osatohanmwun EFOSA** with Matriculation Number: EDU2005570 in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Benin in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of B.A (Ed)



Religions.



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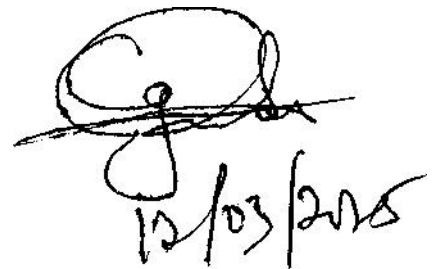


Date 

// **Prof. R.B Danner**
(Head of Department)



Date



DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Almighty God for His divine help, love and support throughout my academic journey. And also to my loving parents whose support has been of immense help in making sure I have all that is required to excel in this career path

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of Christian religious studies in curbing moral decadence among public secondary school students in Egor local Government in Edo state. Three research questions were raised.

The descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. The population of the study comprises of public secondary schools in Egor local government area in Edo state. A sample size of about 200 students was used and 30 teachers. The questionnaire was administered as an instrument to elicit information from the respondents.

Findings from the study and others reviewed that Christian religious teaching is a vital aspect of every student developmental process, as this moral principles could be integrated in their decision making process thereby encouraging students to opt for what is right and acceptable to the society. It was therefore conclude that religious education has an impact on students discipline as well as plays a very important role in curbing moral decadence in public schools. Religious education aids community building in the society promoting peaceful co - existence among members of the society thereby promoting growth and productivity in the society.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The moral state of any society is a fundamental aspect of its growth, cohesion and overall stability, with this finding, moral decadence which is characterized by the deterioration of moral/ethical values has become a major issue and cause for concern in many societies worldwide and Nigeria in Particular. But this issue particularly concern secondary school students, it is dominant among secondary school students who are at a critical stage of their lives, where whatever decisions taken can make or mar their future. Such misconduct as examination malpractice, dishonesty, disrespect for school authority, sexual immorality, substance abuse etc, have become rampant in many schools (Adebayo, 2011) and this rising problem has pose as a threat not only to educators, but also to the parents, religious leaders, policy makers etc.

The term moral decadence refers to a decline in ethical values, manifesting in actions such a dishonesty, indiscipline, disrespect for authority and general lawlessness. Christian religious studies as a school subject centred on the

teachings of the Bible and Christian doctrines is aimed at helping students cultivate and develop good moral values. In a country like Nigeria which is deeply rooted in religion, Christian religious studies has become part of the school curriculum to promote values such as respect, honesty, integrity, compass (Ibrahim & Igbinovia 2020). These values are vital for shaping students into responsible citizens who can make positive contributions to the society.

In Egor local government Area (LGA) of Edo state, the issue of moral decadence among secondary school students is a pressing issue and with its effect on the society and students in particular, it has become a need for concern to both the parents, teachers, religious leaders and so on. In Nigeria a country with deep religious root, Christian religious studies has been part of the school curriculum to promote values such as honesty, respect, compassion (Ibrahim & Igbinovia 2020) however despite the inclusion of Christian religious studies to the educational system, report of moral decay among students in this area continue to rise .Therefore, thus research work is aimed at inspecting the impact of Christian religious studies in curbing moral decadence among students in Public Secondary Schools in Egor Local Government Area (LGA) of Edo state, with a focus in understanding its effectiveness and challenges.

Statement of the problem

In recent years, the rate of moral decline among secondary school students has become really concerning there has been a surge in social vices such as drug abuse, violence, etc. Which do not only pose a threat to the students wellbeing and personal development but also the general school environment. These moral lapses have become a concern to the teachers, as students are seen engaging in such acts of indiscipline as malpractice, drug abuse, theft etc.

Despite the introduction of Christian religious studies to the schools curriculum, it has become observant that its influence on the students isn't as expected, or rather as significant as it ought to be and the question as to whether Christian religious studies is achieving its objectives becomes a concern (Uwaifo & Aghama 2021).The problem therefore suggests that the introduction of Christian religious studies to the schools curriculum may not be as productive as expected and several questions arise; to what extent is CRS effectively contributing to the moral development of the students and also to access whether students who participate in Christian religious studies demonstrate a better moral conduct compared to their peers. Therefore, this study aims at understanding the influence of CRS in curbing moral decadence among students in public secondary

school in Egor LGA of Edo state and ways in which its effectiveness can be enhanced.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide this study:

1. How does Christian religious studies influence the moral behaviour of students in their schools, to what extent?
2. What challenges are faced by teachers in the implementation of Christian religious studies in secondary schools.
3. How do peer pressure interact with the teachings from Christian religious studies in affecting students moral decisions.

Purpose of the study

The primary purpose of the study is to examine/assess the influence of Christian religious studies in curbing moral decadence among public secondary school students in Egor LGA of Edo State.

Specifically this seeks to:

1. Evaluate the relationship between Christian religious studies and students moral behaviour.
2. Investigate the challenges associated with teaching and learning Christian religious studies in secondary school/challenges faced by teachers regarding the role of CRS in moral development
3. Suggest good strategic for improving the effectiveness of CRS in curbing moral decadence.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is multifaceted, it contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the role of Christian religious studies in promoting moral development and reducing moral decadence.

Teachers: This study will be of immense benefit to secondary school teachers especially the Christian religious studies teachers .CRS teachers will benefit from this istudy by gaining a better understanding of the effectiveness of Christian religious studies in promoting moral development among students as well as the challenges faced in delivering moral instruction; this will thereby influence the curriculum design and also the teaching methods in order to foster moral discipline among public secondary school students.

Parents and Guardians: Parents and guardians also play a very crucial role in the moral development of a child, so therefore this study will also be useful to parents and guardians. It will help depict the importance of collaboration between the home and school to address moral decadence and also highlight the importance of religious education in enforcing family and societal values (Adeniran ,2019).

School Administrators: This study will provide meaning data to school administrators and the ministry of education who play important roles in the decision making and developing interventions addressing moral issues in school (Omoniyi,2021) it will provide insight on the effectiveness of Christian religious studies in promoting moral values, challenges faced and strategies to be put in place to strengthen its impact on students moral behaviour. **Students:** Most especially this study is of great benefit to the students in developing a healthy academic environment build on respect, discipline and positive behaviour aimed at helping the students become responsible individuals both in school and the society at large. **Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

The scope of this study is public secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State aimed at examining the influence of Christian religious studies on the moral behaviour of students and adequate ways of curbing

moral decadence among secondary school students. Thus research will focus on some selected secondary schools in Egor L.G.A involving the teacher, students and school administration in data collection process.

Definition of Terms

Moral Decadence: It is a doctrine in moral values and ethical standards, characterized by behaviours such as violence, dishonesty, disregard for societal norms(Igwe ,2020)

Christian Religious Studies: An educational programme that focus on the teachings of Christianity, based on the Bible designed to teach students good values, ethics and spiritual development.

Public Secondary Schools: Government owned institutions that provide education to students often at reduced costs compared to secondary schools.

Egor L.G.A: A local government area in Edo state, Nigeria which serves as the geographical focus of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews existing literature relevant to this study, it explores the influence of Christian religious studies in curbing moral decadence among public secondary school students in Egor local government Area. It further delves into understanding the influence of religious teachings on the moral value of students, and the extent to which it affects the overall development of the society.

Previous research has shown that Christian religious studies to a great deal impacts the ethical development of students, This chapter is organized and discussed under the following sub headings:

1. Concept of moral decadence
2. Concept of Christian religious studies and its role in shaping moral compass of students
3. Empirical study of religious education and morality
4. Challenges in implementing Christian religious studies
5. Benefits of implementing Christian religious studies
6. Summary of reviewed literature.

Concept of Moral Decadence

Moral decadence refers to a decline in the ethical standard and moral values within a society, as a result of ill behavior which are considered immoral and unethical such as drug abuse, dishonesty, cultism, sexual immorality. This becomes a regular occurrence in the society which may cause harm to the general public. Moral decadence can also be viewed as a disregard for social norms, encouraging attitudes that are contrary to the generally accepted ethical behaviour.

According to Eze (2017) moral decadence manifest when students prioritize personal gratification over communal wellbeing, leading to a disconnection from societal values. This could be as a result of the influence of social media space on the students or a lack of proper moral education. Previous research works emphasize the role religious education plays to withstand moral decadence. Over the years education has served as a tool to instill the right principles in students hence the inception Christian religious studies to the schools curriculum. These teachings are posited as vital to make students better members of the society.

There has been a decline in moral behaviour and this has become a major issue or rather a problem to the public, and most of these problems are traced down to the structure of the family which is the first and basic unit where

individuals get to develop values needed to become good individuals in the society. But in the case of broken homes, and the absence of proper parental supervision there is a high possibility of increase rate in crime and all manner of unacceptable behaviour which could pose as a threat to the society. But in all of this ,with the right strategies put in place and with the help of religious education people get to view and understand things from a better perspective thereby having a good impact on not just their thought process but also decision making capability.

The implications of moral decadence are deep, affecting not just individual behaviour but also the society at large. As moral standards decline ,trust within communities diminishes leading to a high level of social fragmentation which could result in a system where individuals feel less interested to adhere to ethical norms causing a further increase in social vices (Einsenberg & Miller, 1987).Curbing the issue of moral decadence requires a collective effort through education, community engagement, etc. A major cause of moral decay in the society is Economic hardship/instability reason being that when individuals go through financial hardships, they sought for quick ways to survive due to a pressure to succeed which then leads to unethical choices such as fraudulent activities. Difficult situations as this make people prioritize survival over morals

(Wikinson & Pickett 2010). In general, the issue of moral decline can be addressed through a multifaceted approach which entails promoting ethical education, community engagement as well as reinforcing positive values among individuals. Initiatives that promote empathy, social responsibility and critical thinking can help individuals navigate moral dilemmas and contribute to the growth of a more ethical society (Lapsley & Narvaez,2006).

Concept of Christian religious studies

Christian religious studies deals with the teachings of Christianity aimed at instilling good morals and values through the Christian doctrines, giving them the enablement to make the right choices and differentiate between right and wrong. According to Me Cullough and Willoughby (2009) religious education can foster moral development by promoting good values such as respect, honesty, compassion. It mostly serves as a moral guide to the adherents of Christianity but also taught in most schools to teach students to adhere to rules and regulations in order to become better members of the society. Christian religious studies presents a framework to understand moral decadence in relation to the society. It examines how Christian values address the issue of moral decline in various aspects of

life .Generally Christian teachings believe in absolute moral truth derived from the Bible where key concepts such as love, justice, compassion are central to morality.

Some of the roles of Christian religious studies in shaping the moral compass of students are:

Promotes good moral values

This is one of, if not the most important role Christian religion studies plays in shaping the moral compass of students. Through religious teachings, good morals and values are instilled in students enabling them to act right, portraying the right and accepted attitude, making them better individuals in the society. Religious education provides a good framework to enhance better living and peaceful coexistence with others even down to how students relate with each other in the classroom.

Virtues such as humility, patience, forgiveness contributes to the growth of individuals .Christian religious studies fosters the development of strong moral values that positively impact both personal and professional aspects of life, enhancing relationships in family and success in business. It has been noted by scholars that moral principles have helped to shape individuals into better persons

equipped to navigate moral dilemmas hence contributing positively to the society (Mac Grath ,2020).

One of the ways in which Christian teachings promotes good moral values is through teachings on love and compassion as central to Christianity ,also Christian teachings emphasize the importance of honesty in our dealings in the society. By instilling this values, individuals are encouraged to uphold good moral values in both private and professional life.

Value based decision making:

Value based decision making is a very important aspect of Christian teaching, emphasizing the importance of integrating moral principles in decision making process. This approach encourages individuals to align their decisions with core values gotten from Christian teachings.

Students after undergoing the necessary teaching process get to implement what has been learnt into real life situations improving their ability to make right and thoughtful decisions. The ability to differentiate between right and wrong is enhanced by evaluating the entire scenario and consequences of action. Scholars like Robert Putman and David Campbell(2010) in their books ,laid emphasis on

how religious involvement leads to a higher level of moral behaviour and reasoning .

Mentorship

Mentorship simply entails a process where a more experienced individual in a particular field provides guide or support to a less experienced individual in that exact field. These mentors are significant figures, such as religious leaders. Just as in Christian religious studies, students are taught about great figures such as Jesus, Moses, etc these great men are examples of mentors whose life they view as models and can emulate. Mentorship plays a significant role in Christian Religious Studies, as it encompasses guidance, support, and the development of individuals within a faith context. In this setting, mentorship is not just about imparting knowledge; it involves fostering spiritual growth, moral development, and a sense of community among students.

One of the primary aspects of mentorship in Christian Religious Studies is the transmission of values and beliefs. Mentors, help individuals gain good understanding of various teaching and how it can be impacted into their daily lives .This guidance is essential especially for young people who are navigating

various stages in life. By providing a framework rooted in Christian values, mentors can help students make informed decisions that align with their faith.

Additionally, mentorship encourages personal and spiritual development through interaction with mentors where individuals questions and concerns are catered for helping students deepen their understanding of their faith. This personalized attention allows for a more profound exploration of spiritual matters, encouraging students to develop their relationship with God. Mentorship fosters a sense of community within Christian Religious Studies by creating supportive relationships among people mentors can help students feel connected to one another. This sense of belonging is important to foster spiritual growth, as it encourages students to share their experiences, challenges faced and success made. Mentors can facilitate group discussions, organize activities, and encourage collaboration among students, thereby strengthening the bonds within the community.

By following the activities of mentors, students are introduced to various religious practices such as prayers, meditation and so on which are essential for a good Christian life. In general mentorship in Christian Religious Studies is an important role which constitutes of various aspects such as teaching as well as

guiding students in their spiritual journey. Through effective mentorship, students are better equipped to navigate their faith and contribute positively to their communities.

Peace building

Peace building is an important part of Christian Religious Studies, as it emphasizes the role of faith in fostering understanding and harmony within communities and between individuals. The school environment can be viewed as a convergence point for children of varying backgrounds, portraying different values, as a result of this ,there is bound to be an argument or dispute between individuals; but in line of this ,previous research has stated that children who practice religious education are more likely to seek a peaceful way to resolve conflicts.

Peace building within Christian Religious Studies is a vital area that highlights the transformative potential of faith in addressing conflict and promoting reconciliation. Drawing on the works of scholars like Lederach, Volf, and various church organizations, it becomes evident that Christian principles can significantly contribute to sustainable peace-building efforts. By engaging in these processes, Christian communities not only fulfill their theological mandates but also play a crucial role in fostering a more just and peaceful world. The process of

peace building may involve addressing the cause of conflict encouraging peace rooted in Christian values. There has been numerous works done in this aspect, one of which is the work of John Paul Lederach's Building Peace; sustainable reconciliation in divided societies (1997) which discusses the importance of faith based approaches in peace building initiatives. In Lederach's work ,he emphasised that peace building involves addressing conflicts as well as paying attention to different entities that contribute to violence in the society.

Empirical Studies on Religious Education and Morality

Empirical studies on religious education and morality seeks to unravel the connection existing between religious education and morality. According to previous works carried out by scholars, it has been established that religion makes people moral, and this also applies to Christian religious studies as a form of religious education.

In recent works, it has been established that there is a direct relationship between religion and morality. In a research work carried out by Eze(2021) in different Nigerian secondary schools, it has been proven that students who take part in religious education display a lower chance of engaging in immoral activities like dishonesty, stealing. This is however based on the assumption that in

religious education, there are laws established to guide human interaction, so therefore students tend to ponder on the consequences of the course of action. A study carried out by Lapsley and Narvaez (2004) shows that religious education enhances moral development by promoting values such as honesty, compassion, empathy, which are essential in classroom interaction in order to prevent any form of conflict or argument. Religious teachings serve as framework for understanding moral problems leading to a clearer understanding of situations and better reasoning.

Regnerus(2003) suggests that religious education encourages a reduced level of misbehaviour among youths. Due to these religious teachings, students tend to desist from every form of misbehaviour. This further establish that religious education and morality go hand in hand. Students who practice these teachings are more likely to be coordinated and morally responsible compared to those who do not. In summary, the importance of religious education is established as it forms a framework to build a better and more morally upright society.

Challenges in implementing Christian religious studies

There are various challenges faced in the implementation of Christian religious studies, some of which will be elaborated on under the following sub headings:

Different backgrounds

The issue of different backgrounds is a major problem affecting the implementation of Christian religious studies. The school environment comprises of students from different backgrounds, some of which might not be from Christian homes; who may find it difficult to adopt these new teachings and may feel alienated and uncomfortable. According to a study carried out by Bader and Desmond (2006) children from various religious backgrounds may find it uncomfortable being introduced to a religious teaching just focused on Christianity. As a result of this, there is bound to be little or no interest in the course of study.

Implementing Christian Religious Studies in diverse educational contexts is faced with various challenges, mostly as a result of the different backgrounds of students. These backgrounds can encompass cultural, socio-economic, and religious differences, all of which can impact how Christian teachings are received and understood.

One of this challenge arises from cultural diversity. Students from various cultural backgrounds may have varying interpretations of Christian teachings based on their own cultural norms and values. For instance, a student from a collectivist culture might prioritize community and family in their understanding

of Christian concepts like love and service, while a student from an individualistic culture might focus on personal salvation and individual relationship with God. This divergence can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts in discussions, making it difficult for educators to create a cohesive learning environment.

Socio-economic factors also play a crucial role in how Christian Religious Studies are implemented. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds may face certain challenges such as limited access to resources, which can hinder their ability to engage fully and understand the curriculum. Also, life experiences might affect how individuals view or perceive religion that is certain situations can shape their perceptions of faith and spirituality differently than those from more affluent backgrounds. For example, students from poor backgrounds who have experienced hardship may question the existence of a loving God / Father.

Additionally, religious plurality poses as a serious challenge, In many educational settings, students may come from various religious backgrounds, including non-Christian, this diversity can create some sort of tension when discussing Christian doctrines, as students may feel their beliefs are being challenged. Therefore Educators must navigate these situations carefully to foster an inclusive environment where all students feel respected .

Educational program/content development

A research work carried out by Wright(2010)emphasize that there is a struggle of balance between doctrinal teachings. There are differing Christian doctrines spread across various denominations, therefore developing a comprehensive curriculum that incorporates other faith is complicated, and might not meet educational needs of students.

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment of students understanding of Christian religious studies poses a serious problem, being that the level of growth or development is subjective. A study carried out by De souza(2006)shows that the traditional assessment may not determine the exact extent of a student moral growth and development. Assessment and evaluation pose significant challenges in implementing Christian Religious Studies in educational contexts. A major problem is the subjective nature of religious beliefs and experiences, which introduces complications to the creation of standardized assessments that accurately reflect students' understanding and engagement. As Jackson (2014) notes, religious education often involves personal interpretations which makes it difficult to measure students performance.

Moreover, the lack of unified assessment methods in religious education can lead to further complications like different denominations may emphasize various aspects of Christian teachings, resulting in assessments that may not be fair to all students (Lovat & Toomey, 2015). This diversity can create difference in evaluations, potentially leaving some students feeling excluded or misunderstood.

Teachers preparedness and qualifications

Teachers' preparedness and qualifications contributes significant challenges in implementing Christian Religious Studies effectively. In recent times ,most teachers of Christian religious studies lack a proper and in depth understanding of the subject. There's is a high shortage of qualified and trained teachers in Christian religious studies and this to a large extent can affect the quality of instruction. A major issue is that most teachers may not have received formal training in theology or religious education, which can affect their ability to teach complex religious concepts. According to a study by Lovat and Toomey (2015), teachers often lack the necessary teaching abilities and content knowledge to facilitate discussions about faith, ethics, and spirituality, which are central to Christian Religious Studies.

The varying backgrounds of students mean that teachers must be equipped to address a wide range of beliefs and practices. If teachers are not adequately prepared to handle these differences, it can lead to a classroom environment that feels biased. A study by Hay and Nye (2006) found that teachers' personal beliefs and experiences significantly influence their teaching methods, which can result in a lack of objectivity and inclusiveness in religious education.

Grady (2013) also noted in his work that without continuous training teachers may lack adequate knowledge to stay current with the new educational methods hindering effectiveness in classroom as a result of lack of preparation.

Benefits of Implementing Christian Religious Studies

The implementation of Christian religious studies in the educational setting is of great importance to the moral development of every student. Religious education promotes good morals and healthy interactions. Some of its benefits will be discussed under the following :

Moral development

The benefit of Christian religious studies in character development cannot be over emphasized, previous study shows that engaging in Christian teachings builds

good qualities like honesty, responsibility among students. This helps not only in personal growth but also to build individuals that would become good citizens and better members of the society who are law abiding. Moral development is an important benefit of implementing Christian Religious Studies, as it provides students with a framework for understanding ethical principles and moral reasoning. Through the study of Christian teachings, students are encouraged get familiar with such concepts as compassion, justice, forgiveness, and love, which are central to many religious doctrines.

A study by McGhee (2014) highlights that students who participate in religious education programs express a greater ability to articulate their moral reasoning and apply it to everyday situations. This engagement not only enhances their; moral development but also fosters empathy and social responsibility.

Additionally, the community aspect of Christian Religious Studies promotes a sense of belonging and shared values among students. As noted by Gill (2018), being part of a community that emphasizes moral teachings can reinforce positive behaviors and provide support for students as they navigate ethical challenges. This collective moral framework encourages students to act with integrity and develop a strong moral compass.

Conflict Management

The importance of implementing Christian religious studies in conflict management cannot be over emphasized. Conflict management equips students with the framework to manoeuvre and resolve conflicts in a productive way. One of the major principles taught in religious education is peace. Christian teachings provides an avenue for peaceful coexistence between people. A study by Benard and Slade(2009) shows that students who undergo religious education are more likely to adopt peaceful process of conflict resolution. This creates a healthier school environment as there is reduced case of bullying and intimidation. Christian values is based on teachings like forgiveness, love for one another which influences individuals approach to conflict resolution. These teachings emphasizes the importance of communication and understanding for conflict resolution, this entails a form of dialogue between both parties. These skills active listening and empathetic communication are essential in resolving disputes amicably (Sullivan, 2015). A study carried out by Enright and Human Development study group (1996) suggests that forgiveness encourages a healthier relationship and reduced conflict among individuals. When students learn about, it can lead to a better and more improved state of relationship among students in a school environment.

Community building

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Religious teachings emphasize collective responsibility and this serves as an avenue for creating strong communal bonds. Through this means, social networks are created to foster a sense of belonging among people and also encourage friendship and support to one another. Community building promotes a sense of unity, belonging and mutual support among members which is a crucial aspect of maintaining a healthy communal relationship. Through discussions on faith/morality individuals are able to develop a profound understanding of their

beliefs and that of others. A better understanding can therefore promote a sense of respect for each other which is necessary for community building. A previous study done has shown that communities with shared values tend to be more unified leading to a stronger sense of identity among members (Putman, 2000).The study of Christian values and teachings are important for maintaining peace and harmony in a society by learning the importance of forgiveness, resolution and communication which are necessary for a better society.

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Also the aspect of community service and outreach cannot be neglected.

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Outreach programs serves as a means to support those in need but also serves as an avenue to bring members of the community together hence promoting a better

union. Smith and Denton (2005) emphasize that youths who engage in faith based community service projects are more likely to engage in civic activities later in life. In general, the implementation of Christian religious studies can substantially contribute to community building by encouraging shared values and collaborative service.

Leadership training

The aspect of leadership training is an important area influenced by the study of Christian religious studies, in learning students are introduced to the exceptional leadership of great men like Jesus, Moses and other apostles. This serves as a blueprint encouraging students to develop values like compassion, humility, discipline, honesty in the journey to lead others.

In a study carried out, it was found that students who engage in religious teachings display an enhanced leadership ability. These religious teachings do not only prepare students for roles in school religious clubs or communities but also future endeavors in leadership. Through Christian teachings individuals develop a strong moral foundation and enhance their decision making abilities and learn the importance of servant leadership. Christian teaching emphasize on the need for honesty, integrity in leadership roles which is essential for an effective leadership.

Previous study shows that leaders who adhere to good moral standards are more likely to trust & loyalty among members (Brown & Trevino,2006).Christian teachings also emphasize the need for practical leadership by engaging in communal service and other activities such ,such experiences enable individuals to apply knowledge gained in real life experiences. A study carried out by Astin and Astin (2000) shows that students who engage in service learning programs show a significant growth in leadership and a great sense of responsibility. In general what this entails is that implementing Christian religious studies such encourages a form of leadership training in individuals by engaging in servant leadership which promotes practical experience.

Ethical conduct in business

Ethical conduct in business cannot be over emphasized, with religious teaching and education ,students learn the importance of developing values such as honesty, integrity, and accountability which are essential to become a successful business person. It fosters a good foundation for professional decisions, teaching stewardship which encourages students to use resources wisely.

These religious teachings encourage individuals to ponder on the implication of their actions on the society as responsible members of the

community. A study by B.J.H Van de Walt (2016) investigates the role Christian ethics play in shaping business practices. Students trained in Christian values prioritize ethical decision making.

Promotes analytical thoughts

Religious education promotes analytical thought by encouraging students to engage in theological teachings with the world around them. Students are trained to assess critical situations and perspectives promoting a deeper understanding of complex issues and articulate good arguments.

A study by R.A Smith (2017) points out how religious education promotes critical thinking among students, giving them the enablement to manoeuvre societal challenges effectively. By integrating religious faith with reason students develop critical thinking skill necessary for personal development and also to become community leaders.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

This chapter reviewed literature on the influence of Christian religious studies in addressing moral decadence among students, the role religious education plays in the ethical development of students as well as benefits and

challenges faced. Although the challenges persist, the benefits of religious education is an essential area for further research. Having the necessary religious education fosters moral development and uprightness among students preparing them to become better individuals in the society with an excellent display of leadership.

Moral decadence introduced a fall in ethical standard as a result of access to wrong information leading to a disconnection from societal values. If this persists, brings about a disorganized society thriving on lawlessness. Generally, with the right teaching through Christian religious studies students are able to differentiate between right and wrong hence, therefore make the right choice in accordance to the principles governing acceptable societal behaviour.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methods and procedures employed in carrying out the study. It is characterized under the following sub headings:

- * Research Design
 - * Population of the Study
 - * Sample and Sampling Techniques
 - * Research Instrument
 - * Validity of the Instrument
 - * Reliability of Instrument
4. Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

The descriptive survey research design is employed in this study because it allows to gather information from a sample of a population without manipulating any variable. The descriptive survey research design involves collecting data on a given population and describing the population in a specific manner; this could be carried out through survey, observation and so on. This research design enables

the research elicit information from the students as well as the teachers in curbing the issue of moral decline in order to access their views which serves as a framework for further study.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprises of public secondary schools in Egor local government Area of Edo state. Available data shows that there is an estimated amount of about 15 public secondary schools, 10,000 students and about 50 Christian Religious Studies Teachers in these public schools.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sampling technique adopted is the multi - stage sampling technique to ensure that there is no bias and every level is covered. A sample size of about 200 students was used in this study across public secondary schools in Egor local government Area of Edo state and 30 teachers in the same population. Stratified sampling technique was used in order to cover both stages of secondary school which comprises of the junior secondary and senior secondary school. The junior secondary consists of Jss1 to Jss3 while the senior secondary consists of SSI to SS3. While census sampling was used in sampling teachers from JSS1 to SS 3.

A random pick was carried out and a total of 5 public secondary school were picked and students were selected at random from the class register in other to cover all areas. And all the teachers were selected in same schools.

Research Instrument

The research instrument employed in carrying out the study is the questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed based on the research questions raised. The questionnaire is structured in two parts ,Part A and Part B.Part A is focused to elicit information from the respondent based on demographic data which includes; name, age, gender, class and so on. While Part B relates to the influence of CRS in curbing moral decadence among public secondary school students in Egor local government Area of Edo state using the Likert scale format of Stongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree.

Validity of the Instrument

The content validity of the instrument was carried out through expert review; the content was subject to careful scrutiny by both the supervisor and two other lecturers in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of

Education. The feedback from the scrutiny was taken note of and included in the finished work.

Reliability of the Instrument

In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, the inter rater method was used and the instrument is delivered once to a pilot study. A test was carried out in Egor Local Government Area and it yielded a co-efficient of 0.82 signifying a high level of reliability.

Method of Data Collection

The administration of the instrument was carried out by the researcher, questionnaire was given out to respondents individually and instructions on how to fill the questionnaire. A process lasting for about two weeks and retrieved immediately to avoid loss.

Method of Data Analysis

The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage, frequency counts and mean score.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Presentation of Results

Table 4.1: Socio-demographic Data of the Respondents

N=230

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (Years)		
10- 12 years	50	21.7
13-15 years	80	34.8
16-18 years	70	30.5
19 and above	30	13
Designate		
C.R.S Teachers	30	13
Students	200	87
Gender		
Male	90	39.1
Female	140	60.9
Level of Education (Class)		
JSS 1	22	9.6
JSS2	27	11.8
JSS 3	38	16.5
SS 1	43	18.7
SS2	35	15.2
SS3	35	15.2
Tertiary degree holder	30	13
Religion		
Christianity	177	77
Islam	52	22.6
Traditionalist	1	0.4

Source: Author's field Survey, 2025

Table 4.1 presents the socio-demographic data of the respondents, providing insights into their age, designate, gender, Level of Education (class) and religion. The analysis of this data helps to understand the characteristics of the sample population. Majority of the respondents 80 (34.8%) are between 13 and 15 years. Also, majority of the respondents 200 (87%) are student designate with C.R.S teacher 30 (13%). The gender distribution shows that majority of the respondents are female 140 (60.9%) compare to that of the male 90 (39.1%). Majority 43 (18.7%) of the respondents are in SSI class, 30 (13%) are tertiary degree holder, while most of the respondents 177 (77%) practice Christianity as their religion.

Research Question One: How does Christian religious studies influence the moral behaviour of students in their schools, to what extent?

Table 4.2: Influence of Christian religious studies on moral decadence

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	C.R.S can influence the development of students	137 (68.5%)	43 (21.5%)	15 (7.5%)	5 (5.0%)	3.0
2	C.R.S helps students differentiate between right and wrong	130 (65%)	65 (32.5%)	3 (1.5%)	2 (1.0%)	2.7
3	Teaching of Christian studies discourages activities among students	120 (60%)	55 (27.5%)	18 (9%)	7 (3.5%)	2.4
4	C.R.S teachings encourages students to show love, kindness and respect to one another	125 (62.5%)	60 (30%)	9 (4.5%)	6 (3.0%)	2.5
	Grand Mean					2.65

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 revealed the influence of Christian religious studies on moral decadence among selected public secondary schools in Egor local government. From the table, 68.5% of the respondents strongly agreed, 21.5% of same population agreed, 7.5% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed that C.R.S can influence the moral development of students with a mean score of 3.0. Also, 65% of the respondents strongly agreed, while 32.5% agreed, 1.5% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed that C.R.S help students to differentiate between right and wrong with a mean

score of 2.7. On item 3, 60% of the respondents strongly agreed, 27.5% agreed, 9% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed that teaching of C.R.S discourages immoral activities among students with a mean score of 2.4. Also 62.5% of the respondents strongly agreed, 30% agreed, 4.5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed that C.R.S teaching encourages students to show love, kindness and respect to one another with a mean score of 2.5. However, the grand mean of all 4 items was computed as 2.65 which is greater than the decision point of 2.5, this indicates that Christian religious studies pose a high level of influence towards positive moral behaviour of the students by encouraging showing of love, kindness, respect to one another, discouraging immoral activities, ability to make right decisions and enhances moral development of the students.

Research Question Two: What challenges are faced by teachers in the implementation of Christian religious studies in secondary schools.

Table 4. Challenges in teaching Christian Religious Studies

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	; Varying background is a challenge faced by teachers implementing teachings in schools	12 (40%)	11 (36.7%)	4 (13.3%)	3 (10%)	2.7
2	CRS has greater impact on students who practice Christianity	14 (46.7%)	9 (30%)	5 (16.7%)	2 (6.7%)	3.0
3	CRS alone is not enough to curb moral decadence schools.	17 (56.7%)	10 (33.3%)	2 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)	2.8
4	Peer pressure interacts with the teachings from Christian religious studies in affecting moral decision	15 (50%)	8 (26.7%)	5 (16.7%)	2 (6.7%)	3.0
5	Students show a low level of interest in religious studies	12 (40%)	10 (33.3%)	5 (16.7%)	3 (10%)	2.2
6	There are training opportunities teachers of religious studies	15 (50%)	5 (16.7%)	8 (26.7%)	2 (6.7%)	2.5
7	Insufficient resources could pose as a threat to teaching Christian religious studies	13 (43.3%)	10 (33.3%)	6 (20%)	1 (3.3%)	2.4
Grand Mean						2.6

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Table 4. shows the responses of teachers on challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of C.R.S. On item 1, 12(40%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 11(37.5%) agreed, 18(9%) disagreed and 7(3.5%) strongly disagreed that Varying religious background is a challenge faced by teachers in implementing Christian teachings in schools. Also, 14 (46.5%) strongly agreed, 9(30%) agreed, 5(16.7%) disagreed and 2(6.7%) strongly disagreed that CRS has greater impact on students who actively practice Christianity with a mean score of 3.0. Majority of the respondents 17 (56.7%) strongly agreed, 10(33.3%) agreed, 2 (6.7%) disagreed and 1 (3.3%) strongly disagreed that CRS alone is not enough to curb moral decadence in schools with means score of 2.8. Also, most of the respondents 15(50%) strongly agreed, 5 (16.7%) agreed, 8(26.7%) disagreed and 2(6.7%) strongly disagreed that inadequate training opportunities for teachers of Christian religious studies with a mean score of 2.5. Majority of the respondents 13 (43.3%) strongly agreed, 10 (33.3%) agreed, 6 (20%) disagreed and 1(3.3%) strongly disagreed that Insufficient resources could pose as a threat to teaching Christian religious studies with a mean score of 2.4. However, majority of the respondents faced challenges in implementing C.R.S with a grand mean of 2.6 such as having most student with low interest on the subject, varying religious background, peer pressure interaction which affects the decision making of the student, inadequate

training opportunities, insufficient resources and shortage of staffing which affects efficient implementation of C.R.S in curbing moral decadence.

Research Question Three: How do peer pressure interact with the teachings from Christian religious studies in affecting students' moral decisions.

Table 4.4 a. Disciplines in schools

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	S	D	M e a n
1	Christian values promote discipline and reduced cases of bullying among students in schools.	170 (85%)	25 (12.5%)	3 (1.5%)	2	2	3.0
2	Students who engage in C.R.S classes are less likely to engage in acts of malpractice.	85 (42.5%)	70 (35%)	30 (15%)	15	2.5	
3	Christian values promote good sense of respect for school authorities and teachers.	165 (82.5%)	23 (11.5%)	10 (5%)	2	2	3.0
4	Regular CRS teaching positively impacts students' behaviour.	195 (97.5%)	3 (1.5%)	1 (0.5%)	1	1	3.0
Grand Mean							2.87

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.4a revealed the responses of how peer pressure interact with the teachings from C.R.S in affecting students moral decisions. On item 1, 170(85%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 25(12.5%) agreed, 3(1.5%) disagreed and 2(1%) strongly disagreed that Christian values promote discipline and reduces cases of bullying among students in schools. Also, 85 (42.5%) strongly agreed, 70(35%) agreed, 30(15%) disagreed and 15(7.5%) strongly disagreed that students who engage in C.R.s classes are likely to engage in acts of malpractice. Majority of the respondents 165 (82.5%) strongly agreed, 23(11.5%) agreed, 10 (5%) disagreed and 2(1%) strongly disagreed that Christian values promote good sense of respect for school authorities and teachers with means score of 3.0. Also most of the respondents 195(97.5%) strongly agreed that regular C.R.S teaching positively impacts students behaviour with a mean score of 3.0. However, the grand mean is 2.87 which indicates that students react positively in making right moral decisions due to implementation of self-discipline despite presence of peer pressure interactions.

Table 4.4b: Community Building

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	Christian religious studies help students develop good leadership based on Christian teachings.	100	75	18	7
		2 ⁵	(50%)	(37.5%)	(9%)
2	Christian values to become responsible members of the society	95.	75	22	8
		2.5	(47.5%)	(37.5%)	
		(11%)	(4.0%)		
3	Christian values promote peaceful co-existence among students	105	82	7	6
		2.7	(52.5%)	(41%)	(3.5%)
		(3.0%)			
4	Religious teachings help students to practice healthy method of conflict resolution	120	77	2	1
		2.6	(60%)	(38.5%)	(1.0%)
		(0.5%)			
5	Christian values encourage good morals in order to become responsible members of the society.	115	78	4	3
		2.5	(57.5%)	(39%)	(2.0%)
		(1.5%)			
	Grand mean				2.56

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.4b revealed the responses of community building on how peer pressure interact with the teachings from C.R.S in affecting students moral decisions. On

item 1, 100(50%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 75(37.5%) agreed, 18(9%) disagreed and 7(3.5%) strongly disagreed that Christian religious studies help students develop good leadership based on Christian teachings. Also, 95 (47.5%) strongly agreed, 75(37.5%) agreed, 22(11%) disagreed and 8(4%) strongly disagreed that Christian values prepare students to become responsible members of the society. Majority of the respondents 105 (52.5%) strongly agreed, 82(41%) agreed, 7 (3.5%) disagreed and 6(3%) strongly disagreed that Christian values promote peaceful co-existence among students with means score of 2.7. Also, most of the respondents 120(60%) strongly agreed, 77 (38.5%) agreed, 2(1%) disagreed and 1(0.5%) strongly disagreed that religious teachings help students to practice healthy method of conflict resolution with a mean score of 2.6. Majority of the respondents 115 (57.5%) strongly agreed, 78 (39%) agreed, 4 (2%) disagreed and 3(1.5%) strongly disagreed that Christian values encourage good morals in order to become responsible members of the society with a mean score of 2.5. However, the grand mean of 2.56 indicates that C.R.S helps the student interact with the society positively which enable them to address peer pressure.

Discussion of Findings

The study focused on assessing the influence of Christian religious studies in curbing moral decadence among public secondary school students in Egor LGA of Edo State. From analysis obtained in the field from students and teachers in public secondary schools, the following results are presented;

Findings on table 4.2 revealed the influence of C.R.S on moral decadence among public secondary school students in Egor LGA of Edo State with a grand mean of 2.65. From the field survey, it showed that C.R.S influences moral behaviour positively with a mean score of 3.0, discourages immoral activities, instill good moral values and enhances moral development of the students which benefits the society at large. In line with this study, Eze (2021) found out that student who take part 'in religious education display a lower chance of engaging in immoral activities. In a similar study carried out by Lapsley and Narvaez (2004) shows that religious education enhances moral development by promoting values. Furthermore, in a similar study carried out by Andy-Philip and Zhiya, (2017) states that the Influence of Christian Religious education in modifying behaviour is evident from how students become responsible and accountable, help each other, and adopt conflict resolution approaches.

Findings on Table 4.3 shows the challenges faced in teaching Christian religious study. I was found from the survey that majority of the respondents faced challenges in implementing C.R.S with a grand mean of 2.6 such as having most student with low interest on the subject, varying religious background, peer pressure interaction which affects the decision making of the student, inadequate training opportunities, insufficient resources and shortage of staffing which affects efficient implementation of C.R.S to the students in curbing moral decadence. The findings of this study is in line with the findings of Bader and Desmond (2006) stating that children from various religious background may find it uncomfortable being introduced to a religious teaching just focused on Christianity which may result to lost of interest of the course of study.

Findings on Table 4.4a shows that C.RS helps to inculcate discipline in secondary school students which help to reduce the level of moral decadence in the society. This; finding is in support with a research work carried out by Buore, Ouma and Mwita, 2023 which found out that C.R.S education is found to be effective in student discipline and indeed as a possible solution to the moral decadence in Nigeria.

Findings from table 4.4b revealed that C.R.S helps build strong community bond, enhance leadership ability, encouraging peace in the society, inculcating good moral value and behavioural standards in the student which promote good lifestyle practices in the society at large. It also encourages friendship and support to one another. This is in line with the study carried out by Me Cullough and Willoughby (2009) religious education can foster moral development by promoting good values such as respect, honesty and compassion.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Based on the analysis, the following findings were made:

1. The study found out that C.R.S plays a crucial role by influencing students positively towards curbing moral decadence in public secondary school through effectively inculcating appropriate ethical and moral values, modifying and enhancing standard moral behaviours, discouraging immoral activities and enable them possess good insights towards making right decisions that aid their growth and development in the society at large.
2. The findings indicate that varying religious background, low level of interest in the course of study, not actively participating Christianity, peer pressure influence, inadequate training opportunities of teachers and insufficient resources in teaching C.R.S are the major challenges faced by the teachers when implementing C.R.S in curbing moral decadence in public secondary school.
3. The study reveals that Christian religious studies play a significant role in inculcating discipline among students which help reduce the negative

impact of peer pressure influence in moral behaviour. It also revealed that C.R.S aid to enhance building of good community bonds among students and the society thereby enhancing peace and promoting good leadership lifestyle which is crucial in the growth and development of the society.

Conclusion

The study therefore concludes that enhancing quality and effectiveness of Christian religious studies can help address issues undermining societal well-being by inculcating strong moral values from a young age. Also, convergence of this study's findings with recent literature highlights the strategic importance of the influence of C.R.S in curbing moral decadence by enhancing active participation in Christianity, modification of good moral behaviours, educating on adherence to rules and regulations with self-discipline which will help to reduce the negative impact on peer pressure influence and also enhancing the implementation of moral development of the student. It also helps to build a strong insight in making right decision and judgment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is therefore recommended that

1. The government should finance the education of Christian religious teachers and should provide more job opportunities with reasonable salary.
2. The government should establish curriculum and policy that enhances the training of teachers, provision of resources and materials needed to promote Christian Religious Studies.
- 3; C.R.S should be made compulsory in the educational system.
- 4, Also, within the school system, right values like hard-work, honesty, patriotism and national consciousness should be instilled among the student which will make them better members of the society and responsible future leaders 5i Parent should teach their children good morals and have more supervisory responsibilities over their children.

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APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

Dear Respondent,

The aim of this questionnaire is to determine influence of Christian religious studies in curbing moral decadence among public secondary school students. I appeal for your co-operation in responding to the items.

All information given will be treated with confidentiality.

Efosa Confidence

Researcher

SECTION A

Demographic Data of Respondents

Instruction :Please tick (I/) the appropriate option.

Gender : Male (), Female ()

Age : 10-12 (), 13-15 (), 15 and above ()

Class : Js s1(), Jss 2 (), Jss 3 (), Ssl(), Ss 2 (), Ss 3 ()

Religion : Christianity (), Islam (), Traditional ()

Name of school

SECTION B

Instruction: To each statement, indicate your choice by ticking () the preferred response.

Influence of crs on moral decadence

1.Christian religious studies can influence the moral development of students ()
Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly disagree.

2. The knowledge of Christian values helps students differentiate between whats right and wrong () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

3. Teaching of Christian religious studies discourages immoral activities among students () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

4. Overtime it has been recorded that Christian teachings encourages students to show love, kindness and respect to one another () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

Community Building

5. Christian religious studies helps students develop good leadership based on Christian teachings () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

6. Christian values prepares students to become responsible members of the society () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

7. Christian values promotes peaceful co existence among students () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

8. Religious teachings helps students to practice healthy method of conflict resolution () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

9. Christian values encourages good morals in order to become responsible members of the society () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

Discipline in schools

10. Christian values promotes discipline and reduced cases of bullying among students in school environment () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

11. Students who engage in crs classes are less likely to engage in acts of malpractice () Strongly Agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly Disagree.

12. Christian values promotes good sense of respect for school authorities and teachers

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree.

13. Regular C R S teachings positively impacts students behaviour

Strongly

Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree.

Challenges in teaching Christian religious studies

14. Varying religious background is a challenge faced by teachers in implementing Christian teachings in schools Strongly Agree Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree.

15. Christian studies has greater impact on students who actively practice Christianity a

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree.

16. Christian religious studies alone is not enough to curb moral decadence in schools

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree.

17. Peer pressure interacts with the teachings from Christian religious studies in affecting moral decision Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree.

18. Students show a low level of interest in Christian religious studies Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree.

19. There are inadequate training opportunities for teachers of Christian religious studies

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree.

20. Insufficient resources could pose as a threat to teaching Christian religious studies

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree.