

Preparedness of Christian Religious Studies Teachers: Disclosures from Teachers and Students in Missions Senior High Schools in the Western Region of Ghana

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ABSTRACT

The study purported to examine the preparedness of CRS teachers in teaching CRS in the Western Region of Ghana. The descriptive cross-sectional survey research design of the quantitative approach was used for the study. The population was 1,445 and made up of all 45 CRS teachers and 1,400 students from mission senior high schools in the Western Region. The sample size was 365 comprising 45 CRS teachers and 320 CRS students. Using the census method, all 45 teachers of CRS were involved in the study. The proportionate random sampling technique was used to select 320 students. Separate questionnaires were used to collect data from CRS teachers and students and the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient for both was determined to be .76 and .79 respectively. CRS teachers in the Western Region were found to have a high level of pedagogical practices needed for the teaching of the subject to avoid indoctrination. Likewise, they had high knowledge of the content for teaching CRS. CRS teachers were found to have high knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS. There was a weak positive non-significant relationship ($r = .151, p = .358$) between CRS teachers' pedagogical practices and their knowledge of rationale for teaching CRS. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the Regional Education Directorate in partnership with GES should design programmes for teachers to keep on upgrading to ensure that they are abreast with emerging pedagogies for teaching. Institutions (Universities, colleges, etc) mandated to train teachers should emphasis the rationale for teaching CRS in the methods of teaching CRS courses since the rationale (reasons and philosophy of education) gives direction in teaching.

Keywords: Teacher Preparedness, CRS, Pedagogical knowledge, Content Knowledge, Rationale

I. INTRODUCTION

The rationale for education is to make the learner an autonomous critical thinker. Getting an entire human being who has the potential to solve his or her immediate pressing problems without the intervention of others is ideal for most philosophers. Stakeholders in education turn to ask why this present generation which has sophisticated and advanced technology is refusing to impact positively through their thinking. The learners seem not to contribute to any meaningful national development as in the days of old. Momanu (2012) asserted that the problem of both educational policy and society at large is affected by indoctrination. She observed that teachers frequently saw students' brains as banks into which they made deposits. Most of the time, students don't have much time to consider what their teachers are telling them; instead, they just consume it wholeheartedly. The best way to teach Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is to have competent teachers who are prepared to implement the curriculum without any ulterior motive. Teachers should be prepared in interpersonal relations, should have technological skills, be glued to the content and the methods, being conscious of the philosophy of CRS. In this discourse, teacher preparedness entails the pedagogical knowledge of the teachers, their knowledge of CRS content, and its rationale.

Taylor (2017) brought to light that educational methods including teaching, brainstorming, storytelling, discussion, and directed research are the most preferred ways of teaching rather than imposing unrefined dogmas on the learners of CRS. Religious Education frequently needs to take place under the supervision of trained teachers. However, learners

can also edify themselves. Tylor continues to postulate that teachers must be prepared to be open-minded in their efforts to help students form positive attitudes and think about generally accepted values; make sound moral decisions and choices; make moral judgments that will prepare them for responsible social life; to display positive attitudes toward other people and respect for their right to hold beliefs that are different from their own; and to be able to make a reasonable and informed judgment about religious and moral issues. Tylor expects the teachers of CRS to show all the above traits in their classroom practices without brainwashing or indoctrinating. Indoctrination is noted to string up from (a) content designated for teaching, (b) the method adopted in teaching, (c) the intent of a tutor, and (d) the subject's moral objectives (Anti & Anum, 2002; Taylor, 2017). Mensah and Ampem (2023) found that teachers in the Central Region of Ghana have moderate knowledge about indoctrination and some of its practices but could not find out how prepared the teachers are to teach the subject. Castagno and Brayboy (2008) postulated that an elevated CRS instructor can accomplish the subject's goals. Highly qualified teachers who effectively fit and are efficient in all aspects of teaching are needed in performing the duties that are associated with the teaching of CRS. Here, it will be necessary to say that a prepared CRS teacher in content knowledge and methods of teaching CRS achieves the intention of the subject.

The teaching of CRS is not to convert learners to Christianity, look down on any other religion, and make learners a burden unto their parents. This can only be achieved if the rationale for teaching CRS (helping students to comprehend the position the Bible plays in people's life as a foundation of instruction, direction, and advice on the different issues the ecosphere faces today) through the efficient use of the stipulated pedagogies and selecting the appropriate content to be taught. Appiah and Mfum-Appiah (2019) believe a more knowledgeable and skilled person who engages in the action of instructing to assist a less skilled and experienced person in learning is preferred. This suggests that teachers must possess greater expertise than students in terms of pedagogy, material, and technology use.

Content knowledge is familiarity concerning a curriculum that is to be learned or conveyed, such as high school history, graduate-level astrophysics, and Religious Education (Khoza, 2015). Instructors who lack content knowledge in their subject areas may not appreciate the crux of the topics in the syllabus, and face the problem of selecting facts that will develop the civic competencies of the learners (Bordoh, Eshun, Kofie, Bassaw & Kwarteng, 2015). Appiah and Mfum-Appiah (2019) contend that most modern educators believe that competent teachers are those who can provide suitable material, methods, and technology for a given class setting. They further posited that content comes from various interactions between the content, while pedagogical knowledge includes comprehending and conveying the depiction of concepts using pedagogical techniques that suits learners' learning needs. Afari-Yankson (2021) found that CRS teachers had a strong understanding of content when it comes to teaching CRS.

Rationale refers to the motives and reason as well as the purpose behind an action or program or event. Every single activity has got a reason behind its operations. Education as a social phenomenon since its inception with human civilisation has some remarkable motives to accomplish. Christianity is the largest and the leading religion among the mainline religions in the country, and among the various religious books accessible, the Bible is commonly utilised. Mensah and Owusu (2022) highlighted that the purpose of CRS as a curriculum in senior high school is to assist students to comprehend the function that the Bible performs in people's lives as a source of direction, guidance, and advice on a variety of issues and problems that the world experience today. Afari-Yankson (2021) postulated that CRS was mounted to assist students to comprehend the significance of the Bible in people's lives

There are limited studies on the relationship between teachers' knowledge of rationale and pedagogical practices as well as their content knowledge and knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS. Studies from Khoza (2015) and Betts and Liow (2006) conducted outside Ghana in sciences and mathematics but not Religious Education found that teachers' knowledge of the rationale for teaching correlates with their pedagogical practices in teaching. Again, researchers (Mpungose, 2016; Khoza, 2015; Kehdinga, 2014) have hypothesized that there is an association between knowledge of content and knowledge of the rationale for teaching any curriculum. They saw that the critical levels of reflection on the rationale have a strong influence on teaching the subject content. Miheso-O'Connor Khakasa and Berger (2016) outlined that the rationale for teaching science disciplines such as Mathematics and Physical Science influences what teachers need to know (content knowledge) before teaching and learning processes begin.

Teacher preparedness plays an integral role in seeing to it that the CRS learners are proficient to use the bible to solve the problems in their surroundings. However, due to some problems (having unqualified teachers, students' poor attitudes towards the subject, a weak ground of the content, challenges in selecting TLRs, indoctrination, derogatory perceptions about the subject, low academic performance of students, etc) identified, lots of attention lots of research have been initiated and conducted. The attention of stakeholders and universities that prepare student-teachers has not been drawn to the fact that teacher readiness in teaching the CRS matter. Owusu and Mensah (2013) have stipulated that, as a result of unemployment, Headteachers are forced to appoint instructors without a degree in religious education to teach the subject, and also because of the scarcity of RME, CRS, IRS, and ATRS professional teachers. Most of these teachers are found in missionary schools in the country.

Onuvugah and Mordi (2017) stated emphatically that every Christian or mission denomination that has established a school usually employs the guidelines of the bible and attaches its doctrines to impart religious knowledge to the learners. Thorough investigations and studies (Afari-Yankson 2021, Mensah, 2018; Owusu, 2015; Owusu & Mensah, 2022) revealed that almost all the mission senior high schools have Reverend Ministers who teach CRS because of the supposition that any individual possessing sound Biblical acquaintance could be invited to teach the subject once the fellow has a basis of biblical interpretation. Yet, these teachers are not trained in the methods of teaching CRS. They end up saying and doing things (praying in lessons, speaking against other faiths, not allowing critical thinking, avoiding questions, etc.) beyond the purview of religious instruction. Acquah (2018) and Amuah (2012) also found that in most schools, CRS is seen to be a simple subject therefore, someone without the requisite skills, such as a degree in Religious Education could be employed to teach the subject. CRS teachers who are mostly employed to teach Religious Education have certificates in other fields like social studies, mathematics, government, and history. They have been teaching CRS yet they have not read methods of teaching Religious Education (CRS) as suggested by the scholars (Asare-Danso & Mensah, 2021; Amuah, 2012; Mensah, 2018; Owusu & Mensah, 2022). Afari-Yankson (2021) saw that the CRS teachers in the Aowin district located in the Western north region of Ghana were unfamiliar with some of the Old Testament's contents which is a major part of the curriculum as well as the goals of teaching Christian Religious Studies.

Meanwhile, several studies (Amuah, 2012; Anti & Anum, 2002; Christiansen, 2019; Mason & Wareham, 2018; Momanu, 2018; Taylor, 2017) have indicated that indoctrination and out-of-field teachers exist in schools but they did not go to the teachers to find out from them, how prepared they are to teach the subject in terms of their content, pedagogies usage and the knowledge of the inherent logic. It is against this premise that this study was carried out to find the preparedness of CRS teachers in teaching CRS in the Western Region of Ghana.

The research questions and hypotheses below directed the study.

1. What is mission school CRS teachers' level of pedagogical practices in the teaching of CRS?
2. What is the content knowledge of mission school CRS teachers in the teaching of CRS?
3. What are mission school CRS teachers' knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS?

1.1 Hypothesis

H₀. There is no relationship between mission school CRS teachers' level of pedagogical practices and their knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study best matched the positivist paradigm. According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), the positivist approach specifies a research worldview that is based on research methodologies as the scientific method of inquiry. In this study, data was collected from both teachers and students of CRS in the Western region to determine CRS teachers' preparedness to teach. The data was collected from both teachers and students simultaneously and with a period of one month. Due to this, the descriptive cross-sectional survey research design of the quantitative approach was used for the study. This design allows for the collection of data across a large sample size within a specific time period. In a cross-sectional survey, data are gathered at a single moment in time (Creswell, 2014; Babbie, 2021).

2.1 Population and Participants

The population was all CRS teachers and students from the various mission schools in the Western Region. There are 45 teachers and 1,400 students of CRS in the 22 mission Senior High schools in the region. Therefore, the study's population was 1445, comprising 45 mission school CRS teachers and 1400 students of CRS students. The sample size for the study was 365 and it comprised 320 CRS students and 45 CRS teachers. The study employed the census method to involve all 45 CRS teachers in the study. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020) highlighted that a census is an examination of each unit, everybody, or all of that in a community. The proportionate random sampling procedure through the lottery method was used to select the students from each of the mission senior high schools.

Table 1*Demographic Data of Respondents*

Variable	Respondents	Sub Scale	No.	%
Gender	Teachers	Male	27	60
		Female	18	40
	Students	Male	162	51
		Female	158	49

Source: Field Data (2022)

2.2 Instruments for Data Collection

Questionnaires for both CRS teachers and students were used to gather data. McLeod (2018) said a questionnaire can be completed at the respondent's convenience and there is high confidentiality. The questionnaires for teachers had 29 items and nine on students' and were presented under four (4) and two (2) sections respectively. Section A which had three items for teachers and two for students focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B had nine (9) items on the questionnaire for teachers and that for students and they concerned CRS teachers' pedagogical knowledge in teaching. Section C had 11 items that focused on teachers' content knowledge in the teaching of CRS. Section D solicited data on six (6) items on CRS teachers' knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS.

2.3 Validity and Reliability

Questionnaires for both CRS teachers and students were subjected to critical scrutiny with the research objectives as a yardstick to ensure both content and face validity. Through this, items that were not well formulated were amended and refined. To ensure the internal consistency of both instruments, a pilot test was conducted in 7 mission schools in the Central Region. There were 15 CRS teachers and 86 CRS students in these schools. Exploratory factor analysis was employed to do away with items that were not loading enough. Also, all issues of vagueness were made clear to ensure that the instruments were fit to collect the data. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the questionnaires for CRS teachers and students were determined to be .76 and .79 respectively, which were considered reliable (Creswell, 2014).

2.4 Statistical Treatment of Data

Data to answer research questions and test the hypothesis were collected from CRS teachers and students in the Western region. Data from respondents were coded, processed, and analysed with the help of the Statistical Package for Service Solutions software. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) were used to analyse data to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested through inferential statistics (Pearson product correlation) and the results were used to determine whether to accept or reject the null hypotheses.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

The study was mindful of ethical issues that are very critical. In other to avoid breaching some of the ethical issues careful measures were instituted. Informed consent was sought from school authorities and teachers in the schools. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity while the purpose of the study and the data collection were explained to them. Participants were fully briefed on what was expected of them, how well the data is now to be utilised, and the possible repercussions (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018).

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data analysis are presented, interpreted, and discussed in the section of the write-up. In the discussion, reference is made to the literature to make meaning of the findings. The outcomes and discussion are presented based on research questions and hypotheses that steered the study's course.

3.1 What is mission school CRS teachers' level of pedagogical practices in the teaching of CRS?

This research question sought to examine mission school CRS teachers' level of pedagogical practices in the teaching of CRS. CRS teachers were asked to express their opinions on each item on a scale of 1 = uncertain; 2= Strongly Disagree; 3 =Disagree; 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree. The mean scores interval was interpreted as 1.00- 1.9= Low, 2.0- 3.5= Moderate, and 3.6-5.0= High.

Table 2*CRS Teachers' level of Pedagogical Practices in the Teaching of CRS*

Statement	U		SD/D		A/SA		M	SD
	No	%	No	%	No	%		
I have command of various teaching methods, knowing when and how to apply each method	0	0	4	9	41	91	4.46	.68
I am selective of the methods that respect the eventual freedom of the child to refuse to participate in religious practices	9	20	12	27	24	53	3.25	1.27
I know the different forms and purposes of formative and summative assessments and know how different frames of reference impact students' thinking.	0	0	7	16	38	84	4.03	.63
I can motivate students who show low interest in CRS	0	0	0	0	45	100	4.33	.48
I have the competencies to provide an alternative explanation for example when students are confused	0	0	4	2	41	91	4.59	.54
My pedagogical knowledge makes me maximise the quantity of instructional time, handling classroom events and maintaining clear direction in lessons	0	0	6	13	39	87	4.31	.69
I am conversant with the process of using a variety of teaching/learning aids during lesson delivery	0	0	9	20	36	80	3.92	.66
I understand the techniques of using the local environment as a teaching resource to make my lesson more enjoyable	0	0	8	18	37	82	4.03	.54
I understand the procedures for phasing teaching from known to unknown in the lessons	3	7	8	18	34	76	4.00	1.03
Average							4.10	.72

Source: Field Data, (2022)

Table 2 shows the results of CRS teachers' responses on their pedagogical practices in teaching CRS. A majority (n= 41, 97%) agreed that they have command of various teaching methods, knowing when and how to apply each method (M= 4.46, SD=.68). Again, (53%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they are selective of the methods that respect the eventual freedom of the child to refuse to participate in religious practices (M= 3.25, SD=1.27). Majority (n=38, 84%) agreed that they understand many types and purposes of evaluations, and knowledge of how different frames of reference influence how kids think (M= 4.03, SD=.63). All (n= 45, 100%) teachers agreed that they motivate students who show low interest in CRS (M=4.33, SD=.48). Also, majority (n=41, 91%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they have the competencies to provide an alternative explanation for example when students are confused (M= 4.59, SD=.54). Again, 39 (87%) agreed that their pedagogical knowledge make them maximise the number of instructional sessions, handling classroom events and maintaining clear direction in lessons (M=4.31, SD=.69). Majority (80%) agreed that they are conversant with the process in using a variety of teaching/learning aids during lesson delivery (M= 3.92, SD=.66). Out of 39 teachers, 37 representing (82%) agreed that they understand the techniques of using the local environment as teaching resources makes my lesson more enjoyable (M=4.03, SD=.54).

An overall mean score of 4.10, indicated that CRS teachers in the Western region have a high level of pedagogical practices needed for teaching. This finding is supported by studies (Appiah & Mfum-Appiah, 2019; Asare-Danso, 2017) that found that teachers demonstrated good pedagogical and content knowledge that aids the teaching and learning of CRS. Momanu (2012) also found that teachers had moderate knowledge of pedagogy and were able to maintain the skill of knowing and practicing the prescribed action such as not attaching punishments or issuing threats that motivate learners to be critical and autonomous thinkers.

To find out if the teachers demonstrate such skills in the teaching process, the students were also given a set of items on the same issue of the teachers' pedagogical practices results for students' responses are recorded in Table 3. Students were to communicate their ideas with each item on a scale; 1 = Uncertain; 2 = Strongly Disagree; 3 = Disagree; 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree. The mean scores interval was interpreted as 1.00- 1.9= Low, 2.0- 3.5 = Moderate, and 3.6-5.0= High.

Table 3
Students' responses to CRS Teachers' Pedagogical Practices

Statement	U		SD/D		A/SA		M	SD
	No	%	No	%	No	%		
My CRS teacher has command of various teaching methods, knowing when and how to apply each method	46	14	52	17	222	69	3.67	1.41
My CRS teacher is selective of the methods that respect the eventual freedom of the child to refuse to participate in religious practices	82	26	88	27	150	47	3.06	1.54
My CRS instructor understands the many forms and goals of formative or summative evaluations, as well as how different frames of reference influence students' thinking.	42	13	38	12	240	75	3.81	1.34
My CRS teacher can motivate students who show low interest in CRS,	19	6	25	8	276	86	4.30	1.09
My CRS teacher has the competencies to provide an alternative explanation for example when students are confused	14	4	34	11	262	85	4.28	1.05
My CRS teacher maximises the quantity of instructional time, handling classroom events and maintaining clear direction in lessons.	26	8	45	15	249	77	3.90	1.17
My CRS teacher is conversant with the process of using a variety of teaching/learning aids during lesson delivery	28	9	58	19	234	73	3.84	1.21
My CRS teacher understands the techniques of using the local environment as a teaching resource makes my lesson more enjoyable	21	7	33	10	266	83	4.17	1.16
My CRS teacher demonstrates an understanding of the procedures for phasing teaching from known to unknown in the lessons	39	12	50	16	131	72	3.79	1.30
Average							3.87	1.22

Source: Field Data, (2022)

A majority (n=222) of the students agreed that their teachers are knowledgeable about the numerous teaching strategies and comprehend when to practice them (M= 3.67, SD= 1.41). Most (53%) disagreed that their CRS teachers are selective of the methods that respect the eventual freedom of the child to refuse to participate in religious practices” (M= 3.06, SD= 1.54) which is contrary to what the teachers said. Likewise, a majority (n=, 240, 75%) agreed that their teachers know of different forms and purposes of assessments, and knowledge of how different frames of reference impact students’ thinking (M= 3.81, SD= 1.34). Also, 276 students agreed their teachers can help them show interest in CRS (M= 4.30, SD= 1.09) while a majority (n=261) representing (85%) agreed that CRS teachers have the competencies to provide an alternative explanation for example when students are confused (M= 4.28, SD=1.05). Majority 249 (77%) of them agreed that their CRS teachers maximise the quantity of instructional time, handling classroom events and maintaining clear direction in lessons (M= 3.90, SD=1.17).

An average of all the means of 3.87 showed that the students agreed that their CRS teachers have a high level of pedagogical practices in teaching CRS. The responses of the students are similar to that of the teachers. So, put together, responses from both teachers and students indicate that CRS teachers do practice the appropriate pedagogies in teaching CRS. The findings of Appiah and Mfum-Appiah (2019) and Asare-Danso (2017) are re-echoed but their findings were not from the views of students. Tadesse, Manathunga, and Gillies (2020) focused on the views of students on the pedagogical practices of their teachers and found that the teachers lacked the appropriate pedagogical practices that can aid students learning. Their finding contradicts the finding of the present study, although from a different context.

3.2 What is the content knowledge of mission school CRS teachers in the teaching of CRS?

This question sought to find out the content knowledge of mission school CRS teachers. Through close-ended items on the questionnaire, the teachers were to select their most preferred views to specify their thoughts on each item on a scale of 1= Uncertain; 2, = Strongly Disagree; 3=Disagree; 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree. The mean scores interval was interpreted as 1.00- 1.9= Low knowledge, 2.0- 3.5 = Moderate knowledge, and 3.6-5.0 = High knowledge.

Table 4*CRS Teachers' Content Knowledge in Teaching CRS*

Statement	U		SD/D		A/SA		M	SD
	No	%	No	%	No	%		
CRS focuses on carefully selected major themes in the bible	0	0	4	9	41	91	4.5	.56
The subject matter of CRS borders on the life stories of prominent characters of the Bible	0	0	4	9	41	91	4.5	.64
CRS contains purely religious issues related to Christianity	7	16	10	22	28	62	3.6	1.3
The content of CRS has some aspects of social issues that reflect on our daily life	0	0	0	0	45	100	4.7	.46
The content of CRS exposes students to biblical principles and values to help them in making a sound value judgment	0	0	5	11	40	89	4.6	.59
The content of CRS should be related to the life experiences of pupils	0	0	9	20	36	80	4.3	.72
The content of CRS has two main sections; Old Testament and New Testament	0	0	4	2	41	91	4.7	.53
The content of CRS is structured in two sections for years one, two, and three	5	11	5	11	35	77	4.3	1.1
The content for year one has headings like Leadership roles Parental responsibility, Disobedience, and consequences	0	0	9	20	36	80	4.3	.77
The content for year one has headings like; Individual responsibilities, concern for one's nation, and faith in God.	0	0	23	51	22	49	3.4	1.0
Average							3.83	.79

Source: Field Data, (2022)

Table 4 presents CRS teachers' responses to their content knowledge. A majority ($n=41$) strongly agreed that CRS focuses on carefully selected major themes in the bible ($M=4.51$, $SD=.56$) and that the subject content of CRS borders on the life stories of prominent characters of the bible ($M=4.51$, $SD=.64$). Again, a majority (62%) of the teachers agreed that CRS contains purely religious issues related to Christianity ($M=3.59$, $SD=1.27$). Again, all ($n=45$, 100%) teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that the content of CRS has some aspects of social issues that reflect on our daily life ($M=4.69$, $SD=.46$). In addition, a majority (89%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the content of CRS introduces pupils to biblical concepts and values to assist them in making intelligent value decisions ($M=4.59$, $SD=.59$). A majority ($n=36$, 80%) agreed that CRS material should be relevant to students' real-life experiences ($M=4.26$, $SD=.72$). Additionally, 41 (91%) teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that the content of CRS has two main sections; Old Testament and New Testament" ($M=4.66$, $SD=.53$). Here again, 35 (77%) agreed that the content of CRS is structured in two sections for year one, two and three ($M=4.26$, $SD=1.14$).

It was revealed that an overall mean score of 3.83 ($SD=.79$) was obtained which showed that the teachers have a high content knowledge for teaching CRS. This may be a result of the training and the religion the teachers are affiliated with. This finding contradicts that of Afari-Yankson (2021), Mensah and Owusu (2022), and Asare-Danso (2012) who found that CRS teachers have moderate content knowledge in teaching CRS.

3.3 What is the level of mission school CRS teachers' knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS?

This research question sought to discover CRS teachers' knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS in the Western Region. Through close-ended items, the teachers indicated their thoughts on each issue on a scale of 1 = Uncertain; 2 = Strongly Disagree; 3 = Disagree; 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree. The mean scores interval was interpreted as 1.00- 1.9 = Low, 2.0 - 3.5 = Moderate, and 3.6-5.0 = High.

Table 5*CRS Teachers' Knowledge of the Rationale for Teaching CRS*

Statement	U		SD/D		A/SA		M	SD
	No	%	No	%	No	%		
CRS subject is to help students understand the role bible plays in the lives of people as a source of guidance	0	0	7	18	38	84	4.26	.68
Religious books, particularly the Bible which is used for teaching CRS are widely used all over the World.	5	11	12	27	28	62	3.85	1.14
CRS helps students to understand the role the Bible plays in the lives of people as a directional foundation and council on various problems facing the world nowadays	0	0	7	12	38	84	4.31	.69
The CRS, which is founded on the Christian Scripture, includes a framework for addressing the teaching of social and personal values that are crucial for students' social transformation.	0	0	6	13	39	87	4.31	.61
The scriptural ideals are the only ideas that apply to students' lives that should be presented in CRS' teachings.	3	7	28	62	14	31	3.08	.77
The understanding, appropriation, and actualization of biblical virtues in the lives of students is the motive of teaching CRS	3	7	20	44	22	49	3.59	.94
Average							3.90	.81

Source: Field Data (2022)

Table 5 presents the results of CRS teachers' responses on their acquaintance with the rationale for teaching. Majority (n=38, 84%) agreed that the subject is to help students understand the role bible plays in the lives of people as a source of guidance (M= 4.26, SD=.68) and it backs students in understanding the role the Bible plays in people's lives as a source for directing and counselling on numerous issues confronting the world today (M= 4.31, SD= .69). Again 28(62%) of the teachers agreed that religious books, especially the scripture, is used extensively worldwide to teach CRS (M= 3.85, SD=1.14). A majority (n=39, 87%) agreed that CRS, which is founded on the Holy Bible, includes a framework for addressing the teaching of professional and individual values that are crucial for students' social transformation (M= 4.31, SD= .61). Again, majority, 28(62) disagreed that the only values presented throughout CRS should be the scriptural values that are appropriate for students' life (M= 3. 08, SD=.77). Finally, majority 22(49%) agreed that the goal of teaching CRS is for students to comprehend, accustom themselves to, and live out scriptural ideals (M= 3.59, SD=.94).

An average mean of 3.90(SD=.81) was obtained communicating that the teachers have a high level of knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS. This could be a result of in-service training and training teachers have partaken in as well as their experience gathered from the number of years they have been teaching. Afari-Yankson, (2021) and Curriculum Research and Development Division (2010) indicate that teachers have and should have an understanding of the rationale of teaching CRS. Similarly, Mensah and Owusu (2022) also found that CRS teachers in the Greater Accra Region have high knowledge of the rationale and aims for teaching and learning the subject.

H₀ There is no relationship between CRS teachers' pedagogical practices and their knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS.

This hypothesis intended to find out the relationship between mission school CRS teachers' pedagogical practices and their knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS. To make this a success, Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficient was used since the variables to be tested (teachers' pedagogical practices and their knowledge of the rationale for teaching) were measured on a continuous scale (interval).

Table 6 presents the results of the Pearson correlation analysis between mission school CRS teachers' pedagogical practices and their knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS. The results indicate a weak positive non-significant relationship between the two variables (teachers' pedagogical practices and knowledge of rationale (r= .151, sig value of .358). The null hypothesis was consequently rejected. This signals that teachers' pedagogical practices relate to their knowledge of the rationale for teaching CRS to a little extent. The relationship, notwithstanding its degree and direction, is insignificant.

Table 6

Relationship between mission school CRS Teachers' Pedagogical practices and Knowledge of the Rationale for Teaching CRS

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Sig.
Pedagogical practices	1.00	
Knowledge of CRS rationale	.151**	.358

Khoza (2015) and Betts and Liow (2006) who conducted their studies outside of Ghana and Religious Education found that teachers' knowledge of the rationale for teaching has moderate relations with the pedagogies used in teaching. They found that the only way teachers understand all the learning pedagogies is when they reflect on the rationale of the subject and improve their teaching practices. The locations of the previous research differ from that of the current study and differ in terms of findings. The choice of teaching methods should be strictly allied to educational rationale. This shows that the rationale behind the teaching of CRS relates to the pedagogical knowledge of the teachers.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings from the interpretation of the results of the data analysis and its discussion, it can be concluded that mission senior high school CRS students in the Western region are guided to make autonomous decisions and think critically. This implies that they are not being indoctrinated during the teaching of CRS. This is because teachers of CRS employ the appropriate pedagogical practices and strategies when teaching CRS. This also implies that CRS teachers can motivate learners, design assessment tasks that encourage learners to learn, manage classroom practices, and not set questions in favour of other religions and against others. Again, it is concluded that CRS students are taught the prescribed topics as stipulated in the syllabus for teaching CRS. This is because CRS teachers have high content knowledge. This implies that they teach the subject to reflect the subject's logic and philosophy without making the CRS students behave like robots and deviate from the biblical principles which serve as guidance as well as the values that control people's lives in society. It is finally concluded that for teachers to be able to adopt the best pedagogical practices to teach, they need to know the rationale for teaching the subject.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn, it is recommended that the Regional Education Directorate in partnership with GES should design programmes for CRS teachers in the region to keep upgrading themselves to ensure that they are abreast with emerging pedagogies for teaching CRS. Again, CRS teachers should keep on reading to expand their knowledge of issues that revolve around the content of the CRS. This is based on the fact that the teachers overwhelmingly agreed that the content has some aspects of social issues that reflect on our daily lives, and the content of CRS introduces learners to these social issues. Also, institutions (Universities, colleges, etc.) mandated to train CRS teachers should emphasis the rationale for teaching CRS in the methods of teaching CRS courses since the rationale (reasons and philosophy of education) gives direction in teaching.

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