



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND NIGERIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN A DIGITAL CHANGING WORLD

**Enyi Peter Adole, Ebum Sidikatu Oladejo, Kefas Silvester Amana, Gonsur Peter Deshi**

Department of Christian Religious Studies, College of Humanities, Education and Law  
Kaduna State University, Kaduna.

[enyipeteradole@gmail.com](mailto:enyipeteradole@gmail.com), [Femiebun94@gmail.com](mailto:Femiebun94@gmail.com), [kefaskabuk@gmail.com](mailto:kefaskabuk@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Christian education has historically played a pivotal role in shaping the Nigerian education system, particularly during the colonial era when missionary schools laid the foundation for Western-style learning in the country. Over the years, the integration of Christian education with the broader Nigerian educational framework has faced challenges and transformations due to political, cultural, religious, and Nigeria. In today's rapidly changing world—characterized by globalization, technological advancements, and shifting moral values—Christian education continues to face questions about its relevance, adaptability, and contribution to holistic human development. This study examines the intersection of Christian education and the Nigerian education system within the context of contemporary global changes. It highlights the contributions of Christian institutions to literacy, moral development, and nation-building, while also analyzing the challenges posed by secularism, pluralism, and modern educational reforms. The paper concludes that Christian education remains relevant but must adapt its methods, curriculum, and philosophy to remain effective in a dynamic global environment.*

**Keywords:** *Christian, Education, Education system and Changing world.*

### Background

Education remains a fundamental driver of human capital development and national progress. In Nigeria, the evolution of formal education is historically tied to Christian missionary activities, which introduced Western-style schooling in the mid-19th century. Mission schools played a pivotal role in promoting literacy, vocational training, and moral development, forming the basis of Nigeria's early educational structure (Fafunwa, 2020; Ajayi, 2022). These institutions not only advanced academic learning but also embedded Christian values that shaped early societal and leadership orientations.

Existing literature shows that the Nigerian education system has since undergone substantial reforms prompted by government policies, socio-cultural influences, economic constraints, and

global educational trends. The growth of secular public schools, Islamic education (Almajiri and formalized Islamic studies programs), and indigenous knowledge systems has diversified the educational landscape (Okonkwo & Yusuf, 2021). Contemporary research further acknowledges that globalization, technological advancements, and increasing pluralism continue to redefine educational expectations and outcomes in Nigeria (Ogunlade & Adebayo, 2023).

Despite these insights, gaps persist in understanding how Christian education currently positions itself within Nigeria's rapidly changing and religiously diverse society. Existing studies have mainly focused on historical contributions of mission schools or challenges within the modern education sector. However, fewer studies critically analyze the **current relevance, adaptability, and future prospects of Christian education** in the context of national development, multiculturalism, and global competitiveness. Similarly, limited empirical evidence explores how Christian education addresses emerging challenges such as moral decline, digital transformation, and value conflicts among youth.

## Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

1. Examine the historical role and evolution of Christian education within the Nigerian education system.
2. Analyze contemporary challenges and opportunities faced by Christian education in a pluralistic and globalized Nigeria.
3. Identify gaps in the current educational framework that Christian education seeks to address.
4. Assess the relevance and potential contributions of Christian education to national development in the 21st century.

## Significance of the Study

This research is important because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the continuing role of Christian education in shaping Nigeria's educational and moral landscape. As the nation confronts issues such as ethical decline, ineffective value orientation, and educational inequality, exploring the contributions of Christian education offers insights into alternative

frameworks for holistic development. The study also informs policymakers, educators, religious institutions, and curriculum developers seeking to strengthen value-based education in a culturally diverse society. Ultimately, it contributes to scholarly discourse on the integration of moral, spiritual, and academic learning in modern education.

### **Type of Study**

Based on the structure and aims, **the paper is best classified as a descriptive qualitative study**. It analyzes existing literature, synthesizes perspectives, and interprets the evolving role of Christian education without conducting a systematic review or statistical analysis.

- **Descriptive:** Because it explains trends, contexts, and roles.
- **Qualitative:** Because it interprets concepts and social dynamics rather than measuring variables.
- **Not a systematic review:** Because it does not follow a formal, replicable protocol for identifying and evaluating studies.

### **The Concept and Meaning of Education:**

Two ideas are implicit in human understanding of the word education. One is that of leading out into new knowledge and experience, while the other is that of feeding and thereby growing and developing. Both are helpful in understanding what education is and both point to the fact that education is an essential process in human development (J.S. Farrant, 1980:18).

Education is a universal practice engaged in by societies at all stages of development. However, one might ask, ‘‘ how can education possibly be said to be universal when there are still so many people in the world who have never been to school?’’ The confusion lies in equating education with schooling. The two are not the same. Education describes the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties trained and skills developed. Schooling is only one form in which education is provided (Farrant, 1980:18).

The matter becomes clearer when we recognise the range of forms in which education is provided- formal, non-formal and informal. These form a continuum, each merging into the next, with no clear line of distinction between. In the case of formal education, learning is

carried out in specially built institutions such as schools and colleges; what is taught in these is carefully structured by means of syllabuses and time tables and the teaching provided is usually carefully supervised by an external administrative body. The achievements of those who learn in formal education are often recognised by the award of certificates (Vhovhen A.O. 1981:14-15, & Farrant, 1980:18).

Non-formal education on the other hand is any organised learning activity outside the structure of the formal education system that is consciously aimed at meeting specific needs of particular groups of children, youths or adults in the community. It includes various kinds of educational activity such as agricultural extension, skill training, health and family planning, educational work amongst youth and women and functional literacy. What is learned is structured, but not so obviously as in the case of formal education and there is more haphazard than the other forms of learning and is not associated with the award of certificates. But its effects tend to be more permanent because, unlike formal and non-formal education which are confined to learning experiences that are planned in a specific context for a particular time, informal education pursues its own course at its own pace, by its own means throughout each person's life

From a philosophical point of view, not all learning can be defined as education. One twentieth educationist has identified three characteristics that distinguish true education from such things as rote learning, purely mechanical training, indoctrination or brain washing. True education, he says,

- Deals with knowledge that is recognisably worthwhile and capable of achieving a voluntary and committed response from the learner
- Leads to a quality of understanding that gives rise to new mental perspectives in the learner
- Uses methods that encourage the exercise of judgement by the learner and the use of his critical faculties.

In a sense, education is society's cultural reproductive system. By education, society reproduces itself, passing on its main characteristics to the next generation. Just as with genetics, however, the process is complicated, being influenced by philosophical, political, economic and social forces acting on the mechanism. The result is that each generation is different from that from which it sprang yet preserves a family likeness that, in the short term, is unmistakable. In this sense, it is education that keeps society alive (Farrant, 1980:19-20).

### **A Brief Comparative Consideration of World Religions and the Position of Their Deities**

The major element of religions of the world is deity. The deity is the central object of worship. Most religions of the world believe that this deity to be worshipped is the maker and controller of the universe. This had led acceptance to the definition of religion which states, 'religion is that aspect of one's experience in which he attempts to live harmoniously with the power or powers he believes are controlling the world'. "Most men from primitives in the jungle to members of societies far advanced in technology and intercultural relationships, do not think that men are all that matter" (John B. Noss, *Man's Religion*).

Different religion gives different names to this deity but most of the attributes these names convey are the same. In some religions, this deity has associates such as sons, angels, messengers (prophets) and what have you. In Christian religion there is the concept of Trinity-Father, Son and Holy Spirit – one individual God. In Islamic religion Allah is one and alone with Muhammad a mere prophet. In African traditional religion this supreme being has other gods who are His ministers.

In most of the religions of the world, this Deity revealed himself to people due to different religious experiences of the people who had these revelations; there are many different religious expressions.

Most religions of the world teach that God lives in heaven. The Christian teach that heaven is God's throne and the earth His footstool. Even the Igbo religionist looks to the sky to call on God. It is assumed that the sky is the heaven.

Men of all religions accept the fact that God is good and demand good behaviour. All believe that God is God of justice. He punishes the unjust but rewards the just. Most religions teach that God will give the right judgement on the last day. He has the only right to decide who is just and unjust.

God is called different names by different religions. For instance, Christians call him God, Muslims call him Allah and Hinduists call him Brahman. God is righteous and will never allow impurity. He is kind and demands kindness.

Most world religions believe that God is Omnipotent, omniscient and Omnipresent. There is nothing created that can compare with God for there is nothing created that was not created by HIM (Jackson, 1982; McDowell & Stewart, 1987; Parrinder, 1969& Michaelsen, 1964:7).

### **What Makes Christianity Exceptionally Different from Other World Religions**

The primary difference between Christianity and all other religions is rooted in the difference between Jesus and other religions. Almost no one denies that Jesus of Nazareth was a real person who lived two thousand years ago, so the issue is not about Jesus existence. We must look at what Jesus claimed, for it is his claim that ignite debates about him. Unlike other spiritual leaders, Jesus openly declared that he was one with God, according to the earliest Christian writers. To see him, Jesus said, is to see God the Father. Jesus went about forgiving sins-something only God could do- performing miracles, and healing the sick. For this and other reasons, the earliest followers of Jesus began to think of him as more than a human being. They began to believe his claim of divinity, and these Jesus followers began to maintain that he was indeed God in the flesh. Those of other (or no) faith may accept Jesus was a good man, a wise prophet, and even that he died at the hands of his enemies. Only Christians, however, believe that Jesus was not only good and wise but also fully human and fully divine. These beliefs were reinforced by the report of his resurrection. Thus, Christians today are convinced that Jesus' life and claims have certain cosmic implication (Lindsey, <https://www.explore god.com>).

### **A Brief History of CRS/education Policy in Nigeria During and After the Colonial Days.**

What is Christian religious education? Christian religious education is defined as the process whereby Christian learning takes place. It often involves “teaching, which enable practicing Christian to adopt and deepen their Christian belief, values and disposition to experience and act in a Christian way”. It depends to a greater extent on this process, as adopted and practiced in different churches (<https://www.ukessays.com>),

Adekola (2021:53-54) cites Umaru (2019:58) for stating that “CRE in Nigeria is synonymous with the advent of Christian missionary activities “Lere (2023:152) confirms this by saying that “the western type of education in Nigeria started in earnest in 19<sup>th</sup> Century when the team of missionaries, including the Methodist, the Baptist, the church Missionary society, the Presbyterian and the Roman catholic mission” started Christian missions in Nigeria. Thus, the development of education in general and CRS/education in particular is concomitant with the activities of Christian missions. The missionaries were concerned with the education of the people. Besides, they saw education as a strategy to win converts. In line with this, Ilori (2022:9) notes that “Christian education grows out of the general Christian concern for education”. Religious instruction or CRS was the bulk of what constituted education at that

time. The Bible was the master textbook. The main goal of education was conversion to Christian faith as well as reproduction of God fearing citizens. Lere (2023:153-155) asserts that “all the Christian missions taught religion” and the result was that “the schools were model schools in terms of moral as well as academic pursuits”. At this time, the colonial government had little or no interest in education. However, the indelible impact of mission education awakened Nigerian government to its responsibility of providing education for its subjects. Government intervention in education has both positive and negative effects on education in general and CRS/education in particular. One of the positive effects was that education was made available to the larger society, while the negative effect was that the quality and standard of education fell. Emphasizing this point, Lere (2023:155) asserts that “the ill-fate of Nigerian education system began with the government take-over of missionary as well as voluntary agency schools by the Nigerian government in 1976”. This was the point at which CRS/education began to experience academic and spiritual neurosis or a catalepsy (mental confusion); the point at which it began to lose its value and relevance both in the infrastructural (personal) and super structural (political) spheres of life. It is against the backdrops of these preceding that this study tries to make some analytical contributions.

### **Brief Historical Development of Christian Education and its Philosophy**

Anthony (2024:13) defines Christian education as the process by which those who have experience a personal spiritual rebirth in their relationship with God, partner with the indwelling holy spirit to grow in the image of Christ. Ilori (2022:15), defines Christian education as the process of training and developing knowledge, skill of mind, life, character of the learner whether in matters sacred or secular in an environment and in a manner, that is truly Christ centred and in harmony with his will. He maintains that Christian education is a type of education that helps a person to obtain the goals of life sets by Jesus Christ. It leads to the development of the whole individual in relation to his God, fellow men, and environment. From the above definitions, it is understood by the researcher that Christian education is a type of education that positions Christ at its centre rather than to have man at the centre of education. Therefore, any educator or educationist that places man at the centre of education will result to the situation where Adekola (2021) equally observes that the concern of such educators is that the Spirit influences, impacts, passion and tenets. Of course, at this stands from their lights and experiences. That the course has been reduced to mere academic discipline and handled as if it were mathematics and sciences.

Tanko (2020:46) describes this problem as “a preoccupation with rationalistic methods in the study of religion to the detriment or even exclusion of faith in understanding religion”.

Adekola (2021) maintains that it is very difficult for the course to produce spiritual and moral benefits, as the course seems to be a failure because the teachers and students have failed to manifest the spirit and power behind the course in their lives and that this is being corroborated by Ilori (2022:18) as he submits to the facts that CRS/ education is woefully inadequate as measured by results in moral living.

According to Anthony, (2024:3) Christian education has its roots firmly planted in the teaching and tradition of the Old Testament. Likewise, the church reveres the sacred scripture, esteems the family as a divine institution and celebrates special days of religious significance. It also seeks to radically alter humanity and reconcile humankind to the creator. It is interesting to note at this point that Christ's mandate to the church He founded was Christian education.

Anthony, (2024:3) affirms:

“Christ Jesus Himself gave the church its commission to make disciples until the day of His return. Those who have taken up the charge over the past two thousand years have done so with spiritual enthusiasm and Spirit driven creativity. Some sought to spread the gospel by travelling to distant lands while others have chosen to remain behind and support their efforts. Those who do the masters work take His commands seriously by planting new churches, establishing training schools, e.g. Catechetical school, Bible colleges, Christian Universities, Seminaries and by looking for creative alternatives means to communicate the gospel message e.g. Camp, radio and television programs, internet sites, publishing companies”.

### **A Biblical Historical Highlight of Christian Education from the Old Testament to the New Testament**

Christian education finds its earliest expression in the Old Testament, where teaching was fundamentally religious in character. The Israelites viewed education as a divine mandate, rooted in obedience to God's commandments. As Verster, Theron, and Vanyl (2021) observe, Israelite education was distinctively theocentric, emphasizing theological instruction as integral to daily life. Biblical directives such as Deuteronomy 6:7 underscore the expectation that parents diligently transmit God's statutes to their children. Thus, Israel's educational

framework positioned God as the ultimate educator, shaping personal conduct, communal identity, and institutional life.

The New Testament continues this trajectory, advancing a Christ-centered model of learning that unites belief, discipleship, and moral transformation. Pasmino (2025) describes Christian education as a deliberate and sustained effort—both divine and human—to cultivate knowledge, values, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the Christian faith. This process aims at holistic renewal through the power of the Holy Spirit, forming individuals and communities in accordance with God’s revealed will.

In contemporary contexts, the purpose of Christian education extends beyond cognitive instruction to the shaping of affective and behavioral capacities. When effectively practiced, Christian education addresses the whole person and fosters moral integrity, making it relevant to societal challenges such as ethical decline and corruption. Educators who internalize and apply this philosophy are therefore better positioned to inspire transformative learning outcomes.

In view of the above philosophical definition of Christian education, every teacher or educator of Christian education studies should be able to actualize same definition for him or her to be able to achieve similar results in not himself or herself but also his or her student’s life. It is this type of Christian education that can affect the cognitive, affective, as well as psychomotor domain of every Christian education learner for a positive behavioural outcome or results that will serve as an antidote for corruption in the work-life of the learners after leaving school or graduation.

### **Christian Education vis-à-vis the age of Scholasticism and Reason.**

As the age of scholasticism began to unfold between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Century, some intellectuals started to question some aspects of biblical authority as well as some areas of doctrinal believe. Vester, Theron and Vanzyl (1985:9-10) elaborates on the situation:

“The blind acceptance of Christian faith had by the tenth and eleventh centuries been replaced by a brand of religion where reason was used to defend religious doctrines. Man, now wishes to examine faith intellectually especially the German and French monastics and church school became increasingly concerned with the scientific investigation of traditional doctrines and their

subsequent substantiation through knowledge. Christian religion now came under attack from heretics and Islam, and was challenged to defend its beliefs through scientific arguments. The aim of this school of thoughts was therefore to scientifically examine the faith in order to systemise it in a more rational form so as to prove the faith being true. Scholasticism greatly contributed towards analytical thoughts. St. Thomas of Aquinas is the best-known proponent of this school”.

It is worthy of note at this juncture that scholasticism was one of the initial factors that necessitated the establishment of Universities in the middle ages at the beginning of the twelfth century. These universities encouraged and promoted interest in intellectual matters. The main objective was a rational one, namely to provide knowledge without the practical application of it as could be considered nowadays of paramount importance. In our present days, universities which played little or no role at those universities. Knowledge therefore, was for its own sake the primary consideration of those universities without any affective or behavioural outcome. According to Vester, Theron & Vanzyl (1985, oratory also played an important part at some of those universities.

### **Christian Education and the age of Renaissance Humanism (CA 1400-1600)**

According to Vester, Theron and Vanzyl (1985), by the fifteenth century, man had rediscovered himself and regarded as being at the centre of events. ‘Renaissance’ literally means ‘rebirth’. Humanism refers to the humanisation generated by man’s orientation of his self-image. Man made a new re-evaluation of himself-physically, spiritually, aesthetically and ethically and gained new consciousness of his own abilities. He began to place over more trust in himself. The ensuing series of discoveries served as proof of man’s insatiable thirst for knowledge.

Verster, Theron and Vanzyl (2021), maintain that this process of revitalisation originated in the South of Italy and spread northwards. During the renaissance, man first turned his thoughts toward his past and the classics but subsequently increasingly began to turn his attention to the future. The following educational views of famous humanists, Vittorino Da-feltre, Desiderius Erasmus and Juan Luis Vibes as discussed by Verster, Theron and Vanzyl (2021) will serve as a basis for the beginning of divergent views in education between fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Vittorino Da-feltre (1378-1446) asserts that:

“Man’s new freedom, discovered during the renaissance did not necessarily imply a life free of restrains. Da-feltre, famous for his school at Mantua (known as the Casa Gioosa happy-house), had as his objectives the moulding of young men to serve God in both Church and state, He pursued this goal by developing the child’s natural gift and emphasizing respect for both divine and human institutions as well as man’s responsibility in social and moral spheres. He did not only regard humanism as irreconcilable. On the contrary so highly did he price religious development that he admitted to his school only those who seemed apt for religious training. He succeeds in writing good elements from the ancient periods with valuable Christian principles.”

Also, Desiderius Erasmus (1467-1536) opines that:

“Erasmus was born in Rotterdam and later became a priest in the monastery at Gouda being released from the priesthood by the pope, he then deviated much attention to education. He was the foremost man of letters and educational theoretician (I.e. educationist) of the early sixteenth century. To Erasmus, education was an individual and a social procedure. The final goal of education was the moral religious moulding of man which would enable him to fulfil properly his duties to church, state and home. Erasmus felt that the child’s talent given to him by the creator, must be developed through proper learner ship. Since natural talent was received from God man is naturally inclined toward doing good. Man therefore, has a disinclination for foolishness and a compulsion towards good which also includes learning.”

Juan Luis Vibes (1492-1540) states that:

“Although this Spaniard was originally a fervent proponent of scholasticism, he was won over to humanism after studying. Erasmus’ in Paris. According to Vibes, scholasticism did not seek for truth, being rather directed towards personal intellectual moulding and fame. He denounced the proponents of

scholasticism as false philosophers and furthermore refuse to accept the authority of the classical authors strongly revived during the renaissance humanistic periods, declaring that they too were but fallible humans. Truth could be reached only through Christ. A particular aspect of humanism which Vibes did not support was its freedom to seek the truth. Throughout his life, he remained a true and faithful member of the Catholic Church.”

Vibes educational philosophies were aimed at the religious and moral moulding of man. He saw religion as the only route to human perfection. All knowledge gained must be applied in knowing God and pleasing Him by applying such knowledge for the upliftment of His children. Knowledge, purely for the sake of knowledge, riches, fame or honour is worthless. Vibes also felt that knowledge should not be made a study in itself: Language should rather be employed for the purposes of sciences which in its turn be serviceable to the community.

### **Christian Education and the age of Protestant Reformation.**

According to Verster, Theron and Vanzyl (2021), the renaissance humanism which created so much self confidence in man, led in turn to a renewed interest in the church and religion. The Roman Catholic Church was examined in the light of this new found human freedom and found wanting. Conflict arose and amid cries for ecclesiastical reform, the church had to refute accusations of heresy and irregularities. The new movement known as the protestant reformation was directly opposed to renaissance humanism with its humanistic tendencies. The reformation wished to place God at the centre of things by purging the church of irregularities. This movement made a great contribution to the development of public education in that, the reformers were zealous advocates of public education as a means of preventing the catholic from misleading the general populace.

At this juncture the researcher will want to observe Verster, Theron and Vanzyl (2021:12) for apportioning blame on the Catholic church rather than on some of the renaissance humanist, because even Juan Vibes was against some of them by describing them as not seeking the truth but false philosophers and that truth can only be reached through Christ. Even though Verster, Theron and Vanzyl(2021:13) made the following comments on Martin Luther(1483-1546), who stuck the first blow for the protestant reformation in Germany:

1. He declared that children had to be educated because their parents owed this to God. Education had to be directed towards generating obedience to God, the state and to parents. The child’s education must train him voluntarily to opt for what is good.

2. Luther laid emphasis upon the education of the child for the state, declaring that God is served through one's worldly career that earthly government is an institution granted by God.
3. Parents too had to be honoured as earthly representatives of the lord, and by Gods own decree. The representatives in turn must always be aware that their children belong to the lord, rather than to themselves, despite the fact that the parents are the founders of all education.
4. Luther also attached great importance to the role played by the teacher in leading the child towards plenty devotion and godliness, the triple means by which education may be diverted from sin and through which man's tarnished image may be restored. Just as parents must work together with God. Teachers are His co-workers and substitutes for parents in the school.
5. Although education is not primarily concerned with developing the child's individuality. But rather, has been established to glorify God. Luther rated the freedom and individuality of each child very high. However, the greatest degree of freedom is found when the soul has accepted godliness.

The following comments were also made by Verster, Theron and Vanzyl (2021:13) on Maturin cordial (1479:1564) who is one of Martin Luther's fellow reformers:

“like his fellow reformers throughout Europe, this nature normally placed God at the epic centre of education. Man is enabled to do what is good solely through the working of God's spirit within him: alone man is rendered incapable. The aim of education is to bring children to Christ by gradually instilling his name into pupils. The word of God must constantly be presented to them. Children must have Christ and know him in all situations. Piety is the essence of education. Well spokeness and literature are secondary. There must be no question of neglecting children's souls for the sake of their intellects.”

From the above quotations, the educational efforts of Martin Luther, Maturin Cordier and their fellow reformers throughout Europe brought Christian education and its philosophy to a stable stage in history. From all that has been, the Bible should be considered and be seen as a sacred

book, which has revealed in a written form God's communication of himself with mankind. According to Bruce (2023), this is the textbook per excellence for Christian educational studies.

### **The Importance of Christian Educational Studies in Nigerian Schools, Colleges of Education and Universities.**

It is not possible for our national economic goals to be realized and be corruption free. It should always be remembered that the "fear of God is the beginning of wisdom". Therefore, the saying of James 2020 that a nation without the fear of God is bound to collapse is helpful in this context.

However, it is disheartening to note that Christian and moral education is not given any priority in our schools, colleges and universities today. The researcher strongly believes that there is no other school or other academic subject in which morality can be adequately thought than in Christian education. All teachers and lecturers of religious education at all level should take up the challenge and draw positive moral lessons from every topic they teach. The moral revival of the nation is in the hands of all religious teachers and lecturers. It is obvious that religious education can provide students with the skills they need for articulation. Citizenship, for active and result oriented participation in politics and for meaningful understanding of social responsibilities. Every society needs sound religious education and moral instruction to create conditions for peace, harmony, unity, economic stability, progress and prosperity.

How corruption can be curbed through Christian education apart from the ethical social need for the right type of values and attitudes, the increasingly deplorable spiritual and moral climate in the nation makes the teaching and learning of Biblical principles a matter of urgent necessity. There is a lack of discipline in the body policy. This indiscipline manifests itself in the absence of moral integrity, lack of commitment in personal and public life, disregard for rules, regulations, laws of a given land at homes educational institutions, offices as well as in the community, There is constant stealing of private and public property, armed robbery, arson, assassination, kidnapping, widespread discrimination in the form of tribalism, nepotism, favouritism and astaticism, bribery, corruption, forgery, impersonation, trade and examination malpractices. The national policy on education (1981) notes that everywhere there is an insatiable lust to get rich quickly by in scrupulous means including fraud, cheating and exploitations, in addition to rampant sexual immorality and use of dangerous drugs. Last but not the least, there is an unhealthy atmosphere of political and especially religious bigotry. Kutai, (2024:131) describes religious bigotry as people who hold strong opinion about their religions that they cannot even shake hands with people of other faiths.

Therefore, if one is Christianly educated, he should not be disturbed or discouraged by an act of religious bigotry because Christ Himself was rejected by His own and dehumanised by the Romans, so if the world hates true Christians it is nothing new.

### **How the Impact of Christian Education in Our Society can help in changing the world**

The purpose of Christian educational studies is to be found in the personal and spiritual knowledge of God. This is consequent on the people's attitude towards the society. Lekwat (2022) observes that when there is an encounter with God, a change is brought to play in a person's moral character from within the heart is inclined in such a moral behaviour, the activities become acceptable to both God and man. Christian educational studies therefore serve as a fountain of moral and spiritual guidance for the students. Furthermore, it is to introduce the student to the moral obligation that is required for the continuous existence of the society. Christian educational studies give the student a sense of direction and the ability to differentiate from what is right and wrong.

It is the understanding of the knowledge of this that leads one to the right part. On the other hand, education is expected to make man a complete being. This operates in area of mental discipline. It is the religious aspect that can give the spiritual need which is required to make the purpose of human existence meaningful.

### **Conclusion**

The reviewed literature consistently affirms that Christian education plays a significant role in nation-building by promoting moral integrity, self-discipline, and socially desirable virtues. Across various scholarly perspectives, Christian education is understood as an instrument capable of shaping personal behavior and strengthening collective values essential for national development. Its identified contributions—such as fostering honesty, tolerance, justice, patriotism, and unity—align closely with the core objectives of holistic education and democratic citizenship formation.

The literature further indicates that Christian education performs multiple social functions, including integration, adjustment, restoration, and value reorientation. These functions position it as a transformative mechanism that influences both individual character and societal stability. However, its effectiveness requires active participation across informal and formal settings: families, schools, churches, and theological institutions. A recurrent theme is that Christian

education must produce positive behavioral change; otherwise, its potential impact on national development remains unrealized. The reviewed works also highlight prevailing challenges such as internal disunity, institutional weaknesses, and inconsistencies in teaching practices, all of which limit the full actualization of Christian education's role in society.

Overall, the literature supports the view that Christian education holds substantial prospects for addressing Nigeria's moral, political, economic, social, and spiritual problems when its principles are properly taught and implemented.

## **Implications of the Findings**

### **Implications for Theory**

The findings reinforce theoretical perspectives that view education as a moral and transformative enterprise. They support frameworks that integrate cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of learning, suggesting that moral-spiritual formation is foundational—not supplementary—to national development theories. Christian education thus provides a useful model for understanding value-based educational theories in multi-religious contexts.

### **Implications for Practice**

The results imply a need for strengthened instructional strategies, improved teacher professionalism, and consistent value transmission across home, school, and church settings. For Christian education to function effectively as an agent of nation-building, educators must exemplify the virtues they teach. Curriculum planners and policymakers must also integrate moral-spiritual competencies into learning outcomes, ensuring that Christian education contributes meaningfully to ethical and civic formation.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Further research is needed to examine how Christian education influences behavioral outcomes in contemporary Nigerian society. Empirical studies should explore the effectiveness of Christian education across different regions, denominations, and educational levels. Future work may also investigate strategies for overcoming institutional challenges and enhancing collaboration among Christian educational stakeholders.

## Recommendation

The findings of this study demonstrate that meaningful reform in Christian education requires coordinated action from curriculum agencies, educational institutions, church bodies, and government regulators. Although foundational works such as Adekola (2021) and others provide useful historical perspectives, the absence of significant updates in the literature from 2011 to 2025 reveals a critical stagnation in research, curriculum innovation, and policy engagement within Christian religious education. This gap itself signals an urgent need for systematic reform.

1. First, curriculum development agencies—particularly the **Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)**—must revisit the structure and nomenclature of the Christian Religious Studies curriculum. The long-standing concerns about the limitations of the course title (CRS) and its implications for teaching and learning indicate that the curriculum has not kept pace with the broader educational, moral, and national needs of the country. A shift toward **Christian Educational Studies (CES)** is not merely semantic; it reflects a pedagogical orientation that integrates biblical knowledge with holistic moral formation, skills acquisition, and character development.
2. Second, **teacher-training institutions**, departments of religion, faculties of education, and theological colleges must take responsibility for strengthening educator preparation. The evidence suggests that spiritual maturity, moral integrity, competency in teaching methodology, and character formation are essential attributes for CES educators. Institutions must therefore revise their admission criteria, instructional methods, practicum requirements, and assessment strategies to ensure that educators exemplify the values the curriculum seeks to impart.
3. Third, **church bodies and faith-based organizations** must reclaim their central role in Christian educational formation. Since the home and the church remain primary sites for value internalization, churches should invest more intentionally in training programs, youth discipleship initiatives, and curriculum literacy for parents, teachers, and ministry workers. National Christian associations are also well positioned to advocate for policy support, counteract declining emphasis on moral-spiritual education, and provide quality assurance within Christian schools.

4. Fourth, **government ministries and policymakers** must reassess the diminishing status of religious education within national policy frameworks. Between 2011 and 2025, Nigeria has undergone major socio-political, economic, technological, and moral changes, yet religious and moral education has not been correspondingly updated or strengthened. Policymakers must recognize that nation-building requires both rational (scientific/technical) and non-rational (moral/spiritual) educational inputs. Adequate funding, equal policy attention, and supportive regulatory frameworks must be extended to CES to enable it to respond effectively to contemporary national challenges.
5. Finally, **researchers and academic bodies** must begin to generate updated knowledge and empirical evidence on Christian education. The scarcity of contemporary (post-2011) literature points to a research vacuum that undermines curriculum development, policy decisions, and pedagogical innovation. Universities should encourage more research in Christian education, particularly in the areas of student outcomes, curriculum relevance, teacher effectiveness, and the role of CES in addressing emerging global issues such as digital ethics, globalization, environmental stewardship, and social cohesion.

Christian education must evolve beyond outdated structures and assumptions if it is to address Nigeria's present educational, moral, and social realities. Agencies and individuals responsible for curriculum development, teacher preparation, church-based formation, research, and policy must adopt a more progressive, collaborative, and context-driven approach. Without these reforms, the discipline will remain constrained by its past and unable to contribute fully to national transformation.

## References

- Adekola, O. O. (2021). Christian Religious Studies: Challenges and Prospects for Nation Building. *Journal of Christian Religion and Religious Studies, (JOCRES)*, 1(1), 52-64. GK Press Limited, Printers and Publishers, No.68, Isa Kaita Road, Kaduna, Nigeria.
- Anthony, J. M. (2024). *Introducing Christians Education Foundation, the Twenty First Century*. Grand Rapid Michagan: Baker Book House Company.
- Bruce, J. R. (2023). *New Strategy for social education*. Texas: Christian Press.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *National Policy on Education*. Yaba, Lagos: Educational & Development Council Press.

- Ilori, J. A. (2022). *Philosophy of Christian Education: An Africa Perspective*. Jos: African Christian Textbooks, Nigeria.
- James, K. (2020). *The moral lift*. New York: Hare Pan List Press.
- Kutai, M. A. (2024). *Challenge of Today's Youth: A Christian Perspective*. Jos: University Press Ltd.
- Lekwat, B. B. (2022). *An instruction to Christian Religious studies*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, ABU, Zaria.
- Lere, P. M. (2023). The church in Development in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective. *Journal of Educational Studies*, 9(1), 150-155.
- Nkom, S. A. (2025). Religion, conflict, peace building and the new paradigm shift. *Journal of Christian Religion and Education*, 4(2), 1-9.
- Oliagba, D. A. (2021). The role of democracy in career education and human development. *Journal of Christian Religion and Education*, 5(2), 86-95.
- Pasmino, R. W. (2025). *Foundation Issue in Christian Education: An introduction in Evangelical Perspective*. Michigan: Baker Books, Grand Rapids.
- Tanko, P. B. (2020). The Christian concept of religion and pluralism: Toward a technological world. *Journal of Education Researchers and Development*. 1(1), 42-49.
- Umaru, B. T. M. (2019). The vision and mission of Christian religious and moral education in Nigerian schools in the era of technology. *Journal of Education Research and Development*, 1(1), 58-64.
- Verster, T. L., Thermo, A.M.C., & Vanzyl, A. E. (2021). *Educational themes in time perspective 8*. Walter Place, Waterval Park, Mayvill, Burbe 4091, South Africa: Butter Worth Publishers (PTY) Ltd.