



## Importance of Using Artificial Intelligence for Teaching and Learning of Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian Schools

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### ABSTRACT

The study assessed the importance of using artificial intelligence for teaching and learning Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools. Survey research design was adopted in this study. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample. Two public tertiary institutions in Zaria, Nigeria were randomly selected for the study namely; Federal University of Education and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. 260 undergraduate students were selected for the study randomly. A self-constructed questionnaire was used to gather data for the study. The questionnaire was titled "Perception of Undergraduate Students on Artificial Intelligence Usage for Teaching and Learning of CRS in Tertiary Institutions Questionnaire" (PUSALUTLQ). The instruments were validated using Face validity method. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Test-retest method. The data collected from the subjects on two occasions of administering the instruments were correlated using Pearson product moment correlation statistics and the reliability coefficients were found to be 0.76 to 0.78 r-values. Pearson product moment correlation statistics ( $r$ ) were used to analyze the three hypotheses. The result obtained led to the conclusion that Artificial Intelligence can be used for implementation of teaching and learning of CRS in tertiary Institutions. Artificial Intelligence can be used to carry out researches in Christian Religious Education in tertiary Institutions. Artificial Intelligence can aid in the provision of community services by Christian Religious Education lecturers to the host communities where the tertiary institutions are located. Based on this finding, the paper recommended that Nigerian tertiary institutions should adopt AI-enabled platforms and applications for teaching Christian Religious Studies. This includes the use of intelligent tutoring systems, automated lesson planners, and AI-based assessment tools to improve efficiency and learner engagement. Training and re-training programs should be organized for CRS lecturers and researchers to develop their digital competencies, with a focus on AI literacy, instructional design using AI tools, and ethical considerations in AI use.

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### INTRODUCTION

Christian religious education has become one of the most important subjects taught in Nigerian schools. Compared to other topics, it

has a special place in the educational curriculum. Christian missionaries founded the first school in Badagry in 1842, marking the beginning of the teaching of Christian religious knowledge in

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Nigerian primary schools in the first half of the nineteenth century. Early in the 19th century, this educational approach made its way to the North, where CRK was taught in classrooms. Christian religious education has held a significant place in Nigerian school curricula ever since. Onovughe made the assertion in Sunday & Mordi (2017).

Adeyinka, Okeke and Orebanjo (1991) identified the objectives of CRK as: to provide opportunity for the students to learn more about God and further grow in faith in God; to enable students accept Christ as their Saviour; to enable students accept the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their daily activities; To enable students accept Christ as the founder and sustainer of the Christian church; to help students understand the basic teachings of Christ and to apply these to their daily lives and work; to develop and foster in the lives of the students values such as humility, respect, love, kindness, justice, fair-paly, spirit of forgiveness, obedience, devotion to duty, orderly behaviour and selfless service to God and humanity; to prepare the youth for higher education and for service within the community.

All Nigerian educational institutions provide Christian Religious Education as a topic in fundamental, intermediate, and upper secondary schools. Additionally, higher universities provide Christian Religious Education as an academic program. as well as B. Ed., Master's degree, and PhD programs in higher education institutions in Nigeria. Several strategies can be applied successfully. These comprise both modern and traditional techniques. Stories, lectures, debates, question-and-answer sessions, study trips, panel discussions, debates, forum discussions, individualized dramatization, discovery, imitation, pantomim, and role-playing are some of the techniques used.

A teacher must support his approach to teaching Religious Education with teaching aids in order for instruction to be successful. Students retain 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they hear and see, 70% of what they say, and 90% of what they see, hear, say, and do, according to Joshua (1995). The Old Chinese proverb "What I hear I forget; what I say I remember; what I do I know

and understand" is supported by this knowledge. This implies that the best way to learn, comprehend, and retain information is to see and do things. This is what using visual materials to learn is all about. When teaching CRK in postsecondary institutions, visual aids are crucial.

Tertiary education is the education final stage of education that handles the production of manpower for the social, economic and technological development of a country. Tertiary education is an organized education that deals with intensive teaching, research and provision of community services (Akin-Ibidiran, Ogunode & Ibidiran John 2022; Ogunode & Adihikon, 2023). National policy on Education 2013) sees tertiary education as the education given after Post Basic Education in institutions such as Universities and Inter-University Centres such as the Nigeria

French Language Village, Nigeria Arabic Language Village, National Institute of Nigerian Languages, institutions such as Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), and Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, and other specialized institutions such as Colleges of Agriculture, Schools of Health and Technology and the National Teachers' Institutes (NTI). Tertiary institutions are micro section of the larger society. Tertiary institutions is an organized fraction of the whole society curved out for teaching programme, research and provision of community service. Tertiary institution can also be seen as a subset of the general society that is made of collection of different people, different culture, different life style and different value (Ogunode & Odo 2023).

Tertiary education cardinal goals include training, research and provision of community services. Teaching and learning of CRK in tertiary institutions can be narrowed down to these three critical programmes of tertiary institutions. Ogunode, Onaolapo, Onaolapo, Adeosun & Ayoko (2023) and Ogunode (2023) viewed teaching programme as te first rated programme of tertiary institutions. It is use to determine the quality of tertiary institutions. Training programme involve implementation of curriculum in the tertiary institutions.

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Ogunode, Jegede, Adah, Audu, and Ajape, (2021) and Paul (2015) submitted that the conduct of research is one of the basic functions of tertiary institutions. Research is mostly conducted in higher institutions to solve extant problems pertinent to the society. Ogunode & Ade (2023) asserts that Research is regarded as the second most important part of the academic programme in tertiary institutions. They are carried out to advance the social, economic and technological development of their immediate community and society at large; research is conducted by both staff and students in the university system.

Ogunode, Aude, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, (2022) and Ogunode, Ohibime, & Jedege (2023) and Ogunode, Olaoye, & Yakubu (2023) defined community service programme as the third cardinal programme of the tertiary institutions. Community service programme is an organized and planned service programme of higher institutions for the benefit and betterment of their host community. Community service programme of higher institutions are community inclined services initiated by the institutions to develop the communities. Community service of higher institution are services provided by institutions to benefits the community people. Community service of tertiary institutions involve all organized services provide by the institutions to the host communities with the aim of improving their communities positively.

The implementation of these three programmes of tertiary institutions are carried out by both human and materials resources (Ogunode & Emmanuel 2023). One of the materials resources is the Artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence according to Ogunode & Ukozor (2023) is the ability of a machine to carry out tasks usually carry out by human intelligent. Artificial intelligence is a branch of science that deals of programming machines with a *simulation of human intelligence to performance similar tasks normally carry out by human beings*. Artificial intelligence (AI) is *the intelligence of machines or software to carry out human related tasks*. Artificial intelligence (AI) is *the packaging of machines or simulation or approximation of machines with*

*human intelligence to function and carry out task like human beings*. Alagbe (2023) viewed Artificial Intelligence (AI) as the ability of a computer or machine to mimic the capabilities of the human mind – learning from examples and experience, recognising objects, understanding and responding to language, making decisions, solving problems – and combining these and other capabilities to perform functions a human might perform, such as greeting a hotel guest or driving a car.

Artificial intelligence in recent times have been deployed into the tertiary institutions for implementation of teaching, research and community service programme. In Nigeria, Artificial intelligence deployment for implementation of teaching and learning have not be maximally done due to many problems. It is important to know the impact of Artificial intelligence in the implementation of teaching and learning of Christian Religious Education in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria. Based on tis, tis paper is aimed to assess the importance of using artificial intelligence for teaching and learning Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

The objective of the study is to assess the importance of using artificial intelligence for teaching and learning Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools. The specific objectives are;

1. To examine the extent to which Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be utilized for enhancing the teaching and learning of Christian Religious Studies (CRS) in Nigerian schools.
2. To assess the role of Artificial Intelligence in facilitating academic research in the field of Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.
3. To investigate how Christian Religious Studies educators in Nigerian schools can leverage Artificial Intelligence to provide community-based services and moral engagement.

Based on the above, the following were developed as hypotheses for the study;

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the

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enhancement of teaching and learning of Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the conduct of academic research in Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the provision of community services by Christian Religious Studies educators in Nigerian schools.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Conceptualizing Artificial Intelligence in Education

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the ability of machines and systems to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as reasoning, learning, problem-solving, and decision-making (Russell & Norvig, 2020). In education, AI has been adopted to enhance personalized learning, automate assessment, support instructional planning, and enable data-driven decision-making (Luckin et al., 2016). These capabilities offer significant opportunities for transforming pedagogical practices and improving learning outcomes in various subjects, including humanities and religious education.

### Application of AI in Teaching and Learning

AI-powered tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, chatbots, and learning analytics systems have reshaped instructional delivery and learner engagement (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). These tools can tailor educational content to meet individual student needs, offer real-time feedback, and facilitate autonomous learning. In the Nigerian context, AI has been gradually introduced in subjects such as STEM, with promising results in student achievement and teacher productivity (Okonkwo & Okezie, 2022). However, its application in Christian Religious Studies (CRS) remains relatively underexplored, despite the increasing digitalization of faith-based instruction.

### AI and Religious Education: Global and Local Perspectives

Internationally, AI is being explored in theological education through platforms that offer scriptural interpretation, virtual pastoral care, and automated sermon generation (Zhou & Yu, 2021). In Christian education, AI can assist learners in contextual Bible study, theological reasoning, and moral reflection by recommending resources, providing scriptural concordance, and simulating ethical dilemmas (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2020). In Nigeria, religious instruction plays a central role in value transmission, and integrating AI could revitalize the teaching of CRS by fostering interactive, context-sensitive, and student-centered learning experiences (Adeleke & Ajayi, 2023).

### AI in Educational Research and Community Engagement

AI also supports academic research through automated literature search tools, qualitative data analysis software, and predictive analytics (Luckin et al., 2016). CRS scholars and educators can leverage these tools for theological inquiry, spiritual development programs, and social ethics research. Moreover, AI facilitates community engagement through virtual outreach, online ministry platforms, and AI-driven counseling apps, enabling CRS teachers to extend their impact beyond the classroom (Harrison & Hogan, 2021). These innovations align with the community-oriented mission of religious education in Nigeria.

### Challenges in Adopting AI in CRS Education

Despite its benefits, several barriers hinder the integration of AI into CRS instruction in Nigerian schools. These include inadequate ICT infrastructure, lack of teacher training in AI tools, ethical concerns about AI's role in interpreting sacred texts, and resistance from educators unfamiliar with digital pedagogy (Nwachukwu & Sunday, 2022). Furthermore, rural-urban digital disparities limit the equitable implementation of AI in public and faith-based institutions. Addressing these challenges requires targeted investments in teacher professional development, curriculum

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innovation, and institutional policy frameworks that support AI-enhanced religious education.

**METHODOLOGY**

Survey research design was adopted in this study. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample. Two out of the three public tertiary institutions in Zaria, Nigeria were randomly selected for the study. 260 undergraduate students were selected for the study randomly. A self-constructed questionnaire was used to gather data for the study. The questionnaire was titled "Perception of Undergraduate Students on Artificial Intelligence Usage for Teaching and Learning of CRS in Tertiary Institutions Questionnaire" (PUSALUTLQ). The instruments were validated

using Face validity method. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Test-retest method. The data collected from the subjects on two occasions of administering the instruments were correlated using Pearson product moment correlation statistics and the reliability coefficients were found to be 0.76 to 0.78 r-values. Pearson product moment correlation statistics (r) were used to analyze the three hypotheses.

**RESULTS**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the enhancement of teaching and learning of Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

**Table 1:** Test of Relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the enhancement of teaching and learning of Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

Variables	Mean	SD	r <sup>2</sup>	Sig@0.05	Decision
Artificial Intelligence	2.63	1.04	.678	.0081	Significant Rejected
Usage for Teaching of CRS	2.81	.71			

Table 1 finds out if there is a significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the enhancement of teaching and learning of Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools. A significant of value of .0081 (less than 0.05 alpha level of significance) was obtained. At 0.05 alpha level of significance, the decision rule states that when calculated is greater than the tabulated, we reject HO and accept H1, and when calculated is less than the tabulated value, we reject H1 and accept HO. Therefore, we reject HO and accept H1 which states that there is a significant relationship between the use of Artificial

Intelligence and the enhancement of teaching and learning of Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools. It can be infer from the finding that there is a positive relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the enhancement of teaching and learning of Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the conduct of academic research in Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

**Table 2:** Test of Relationship between Relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the conduct of academic research in Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

Variables	Mean	SD	r <sup>2</sup>	Sig@0.05	Decision
Artificial Intelligence	2.60	1.02	.656	.0073	Significant Rejected
Usage for researches	2.73	.70			

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Table 2 finds out if there is a significant relationship between relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the conduct of academic research in Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools. A significant of value of .0073 (less than 0.05 alpha level of significance) was obtained. At 0.05 alpha level of significance, the decision rule states that when calculated is greater than the tabulated, we reject HO and accept H1, and when calculated is less than the tabulated value, we reject H1 and accept HO. Therefore, we reject HO and accept H1 which states that there is a significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the conduct of academic

research in Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools. It can be concluded from the finding that there is a positive relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the conduct of academic research in Christian Religious Studies in Nigerian schools.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the provision of community services by Christian Religious Studies educators in Nigerian schools.

**Table 3:** Test of Relationship between Relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the provision of community services by Christian Religious Studies educators in Nigerian schools.

Variables	Mean	SD	r <sup>2</sup>	Sig@0.05	Decision
Artificial Intelligence	2.65	1.08	.679	.0089	Significantly Rejected
Usage for provision of community	2.89	.75			

Sources: Fieldwork 2025

Table 3 was designed to finds out if there is a significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the provision of community services by Christian Religious Studies educators in Nigerian schools. A significant of value of .0089 (less than 0.05 alpha level of significance) was obtained. At 0.05 alpha level of significance, the decision rule states that when calculated is greater than the tabulated, we reject HO and accept H1, and when calculated is less than the tabulated value, we reject H1 and accept HO.

Therefore, we reject HO and accept H1 which states that there is a significant relationship between the use of Artificial Intelligence and the provision of community services by Christian Religious Studies educators in Nigerian schools. It can be concluded from the finding that Artificial Intelligence can aid in the provision of community services by CRS lecturers to the host communities of tertiary Institutions in Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result collected revealed that Artificial Intelligence can be used for implementation of teaching and learning of CRS in tertiary Institutions. This result collaborates the findings of Singh & Singh (2021); Smith, (2021); Smith (2022) and Ogunode & Ukozor (2023). They discovered that deployment of Artificial Intelligence in tertiary institutions can help curriculum implementation in the following ways: lecture planning and preparation, preparation of instructional resources for lecture implementation, lecture presentation, assessment of students, marking of script, assigning of assignments, preparation of students, monitoring students' progress and select appropriate teaching method results. Xiaolin Xia & Li Xiaojun (2022); Westagilelabs (2022); Smith (2022) and Ogunode (2023) maintained that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can assist lecturers and teachers to assign of assignments. He asserted that students can be given online assignment and to submit online after the completion of the projects or assignments.

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The result also disclose that Artificial Intelligence can be used to carry out researches in the implementation of CRS in tertiary Institutions. AI can help in creating personalized learning experiences for students by analyzing their learning styles and abilities. This will allow educators to customize their teaching methods, curricula and materials to meet the individual needs of each student. AI can be used to carry out research by bot lecturers and students. AI-based App can select theories for a particular topic. AI-based statistical tools can be used to collect data, analyze, interpreted and compute data. This can lead to improved engagement, motivation, and ultimately, better learning outcomes (Oztok & Zingaro, 2019; Igbokwe, 2023).

Result also establish that Artificial Intelligence can aids in the implementation of community services by CRS lecturers in host communities of the tertiary Institutions. AI-based tools can aid research development that can help in dissemination of useful health information to host communities (Ogunode 2023; Igbokwe2023).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study clearly establish that Artificial Intelligence (AI) plays a significant and transformative role in enhancing the teaching, research, and community service delivery of Christian Religious Studies (CRS) in Nigerian schools, particularly within tertiary institutions. The results from the hypothesis testing revealed statistically significant relationships between the use of AI and the enhancement of instructional delivery, academic research, and community-oriented activities by CRS educators.

Specifically, the study concludes that AI tools can enhance teaching and learning processes in CRS through personalized instruction, automated content generation, and efficient assessment techniques. The integration of AI supports educators in lecture planning, student monitoring, and instructional material development, which ultimately improves learning outcomes. Similarly, AI applications offer substantial benefits in the area of academic research by simplifying data analysis, literature

searches, and theory selection. These tools promote greater research engagement among both lecturers and students. Moreover, CRS lecturers can utilize AI to extend their impact beyond the classroom by delivering virtual moral education, health campaigns, and faith-based outreach programs to host communities.

These conclusions align with previous research conducted by Singh & Singh (2021), Xiaolin Xia & Li Xiaojun (2022), and Ogunode & Ukozor (2023), which emphasize the efficacy of AI in curriculum delivery, data processing, and educational outreach. However, for these benefits to be fully realized, systematic efforts must be made to address existing infrastructural, pedagogical, and policy-related barriers.

This work therefore recommends that Nigerian tertiary institutions should adopt AI-enabled platforms and applications for teaching Christian Religious Studies. This includes the use of intelligent tutoring systems, automated lesson planners, and AI-based assessment tools to improve efficiency and learner engagement. Training and re-training programs should be organized for CRS lecturers and researchers to develop their digital competencies, with a focus on AI literacy, instructional design using AI tools, and ethical considerations in AI use. Government and institutional stakeholders must invest in robust digital infrastructure to support AI deployment. This includes stable internet access, AI-compatible devices, and access to cloud-based learning management systems. Institutions should encourage the use of AI-based research tools such as statistical analysis software, reference managers, and academic bots that assist in data gathering, interpretation, and visualization for CRS scholars.

CRS educators should explore AI-driven communication tools to design and deliver virtual community services such as online counseling, digital faith seminars, and educational outreach programs that align with Christian ethical values. Educational authorities and curriculum developers should formulate policies that guide the responsible use of AI in religious education, ensuring it aligns with spiritual objectives while safeguarding academic integrity and data privacy.

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