

Constructivist Teaching and Learning Theory Approach: A Panacea to Student's Declining Interest in Christian Religious Education (CRE) in Nigeria

Leonard Chidi Ilechukwu and Jacob Usulor

Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria,
jacob.usulor@gmail.com +2348036324313

Abstract: For there to be a proper inculcation and moulding of interest in the minds and hearts of students, especially, those that got their interests declined due to some factors, their cognitive patterns need to be sharpened by adequate and proper tutelage procedures. These proper procedures have to do with the teaching and learning approaches which facilitate learning during classroom content delivery. Therefore, this study descriptively investigated into how constructivist teaching and learning approach can help reduce or curb the problem of student's declining interest in Christian Religious Education (CRE) in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research questions were posed to guide the study. Using a descriptive survey design, the study made use of the population of 85 CRE teachers in all the 30 government owned secondary schools in the area of study. The 50 teachers from 15 government owned schools were selected out of 85 CRS teachers using purposive sampling technique. Well structured questionnaire titled "constructivist teaching approach questionnaire" was used to collect data from the respondents. Weighted mean was used to analyze data. Some of the findings of the study based on the data analyzed and discussed revealed that teachers do not often allow students to work in groups source, The CRE teachers do not often present students with a "focus" question and allow an open discussion on the topic, teachers do not often use KWL(H) chart (what we know, what we want to know, what we have learned, how we know it) technique in assessing the progress of the student throughout the course of study, Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers should encourage and accept student autonomy and initiative, CRE teachers should use raw data and primary sources, along with manipulative and interactive and physical materials, when framing tasks, CRE teachers should use cognitive terminology such as "classify", "analyze", "predict" and "create", CRE teachers should allow student responses to drive lessons, shift instructional strategies and alter content. The study finally, recommends that there should be a paradigm shift from the obsolete methods of content delivery of Christian Religious Education instructions in secondary schools Nigeria by the teachers of CRE to a more interesting innovative approach like the constructivist teaching and learning approach.

Key words: Constructivism, teaching and learning, interest, Christian Religious Education, moulding, approach

INTRODUCTION

Educators have argued for the importance of the classroom context in developing student's creative abilities and potentials. However, the emphasis is on the basic learning approaches which can aid or enhance student's interest in a particular phenomenon. Speaking from the research antecedents on the performance of students in Christian Religious Education (CRE) in secondary schools in Nigeria, evidences abound that the interests of students in the subject have drastically declined. Many factors have been considered, so far, by the findings of different researches ranging from

teachers and teaching factors, students factors, social/environmental factors, parental factors and so on. Specifically, in the classroom, teaching methods and approaches is one of the interest-arousing factors which compel students to mould interest for a particular subject.

Evidently, there are many tools, approaches, purposes, methods, instruments and processes in assessing teaching and learning. In school, it is useful for educators to note the various learning and teaching approaches which facilitate learning. One of those theories or approaches is the 'constructivist learning approach'. Constructivism learning approach is a teaching

method or philosophy which enhances student's logical and conceptual growth. The underlying concept within the constructivism teaching approach is the role which experiences or connections with the adjoining atmosphere-play in student education. Central to this constructivist based approaches as opined by Madu and Ezeamagu (2013) is the premise that a learner construct meaning from new information and events as a result of an interaction between the individual's alternative conception and his or her current observation. Pupil's prior ideas or knowledge, therefore is a source of alternative conceptions possessed by them before a formal instruction takes. Constructivist based practices require teachers to place pupil in more central position in the whole instructional programme Madu and Ezeamagu, (2013) and this implies that pupil's ideas should form a basis for discussion and investigation in the classroom. The constructivist teachers should behave in an interactive manner, mediating the environment for pupils and also seek the pupil's point of view in order to understand pupil's present conceptions for use in subsequent lesson (Madu and Ezeamagu, 2013). In constructivist, constructing an understanding requires that the learners have the opportunities to articulate their ideas to test those ideas through experimentation and conversation and to consider connections between the phenomena that they are examining and other applications of the concept (Madu and Ezeamagu, 2013). This implies that learners should be given opportunity to discuss and clarify their experiences in order to encourage self-organization and reflective abstraction. This reflective abstraction according to Madu and Ezeamagu (2013) is the driving force of learning.

Christian Religious Studies (CRS) according to Njoku and Njoku (2015) is one of the major subjects missionaries bequeathed to Nigerian education system on the establishment of schools by the 19th century missionaries. The aim of this was to help and raise religious and faithful people who will help the colonial missionaries in their educational and religious activities. And during this period, Christian Religious Education (CRE) was the main subject of study. Subsequently, after independence, government took over schools, there was a clarion call for review of curriculum in 1983 (Njoku and Njoku, 2015). The call was as a result of criticisms leveled against colonial education which some scholars viewed as being too arts oriented and as such lacked relevance to Nigeria upliftment, political emancipation and infrastructural development (Njoku and Njoku, 2015). This caused the nature of the subject to start dwindling in its original value while people's interest equally began to wane simultaneously. The subject was no longer given

preeminence as was in the missionary's time. Arinze, Njoku and Njoku (2015) observed that the teaching of the subject witnessed slackening of control by principals/head teachers, difficulty of training and assigning teachers, placing the subject in the school timetable, teacher's lack of commitment and other defects such as student's dishonesty, examination malpractices and disrespect to mention but a few. In support of the above assertion, Ndarwa, Njoku and Njoku (2015) maintained that pupils now a days are groomed to be intellectual giants in science and technology with little or no interest in the moral growth, this he referred to as spiritually dwarfism. The major aims of inclusion of CRS in the education curriculum as opined by Njoku and Njoku (2015) is to raise generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, appreciate dignity of labour and those moral values specified in the broad national aims as good citizens. While at the secondary school level the subject is meant to prepare learners for useful living through inculcation of Christian attitudes and values and to prepare learners for higher education.

Christian religious knowledge is an aspect of religion that is peculiar to the followers of Christ. Christian religion is being practiced in Nigeria till today because it is a builder of attitude and morality (Lawal, 2010). Religion cannot be separated from education that is the reason why religious education is included in the national curriculum of education right from the primary to the university education. Despite the importance of Christian religious knowledge to the individual and nation in imparting moral values and behavioural change, it is worthy to note that the performance of students in the subject is diminishing and poor (Lawal, 2010). Speaking further, poor performance occurs yearly and more students are running away from the subject. This alarming rate of poor performance in Christian religious knowledge according to Lawal has generated growing concern from various quarters, the parents, teachers, schools and the government. One is also worried because of the relative importance of the subject to education excellence and moral development, if care is not taken, the country will be eroded of its moral values and cultures, if trends continue like that.

In a more lapidary look, the nexus between CRE and constructivism can be ascertained, if teachers allow students to manipulate with Christian religious ideas and find out the most practical ways of applying it to their daily contexts of life. This will aid in resuscitating and moulding interests in the students towards the subject. It is against this background that this study aims

at describing how constructivism as a teaching and learning approach can help curb the problem of students declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria.

Statement of problem: Right from inception of education in Nigeria, CRS has been one of the core subjects in both primary and junior secondary schools (Njoku and Njoku, 2015). However, speaking further, Nduka *et al.* asserts that there have been questions on the efficacy of CRS programme in instilling discipline and moulding character of the learner. Judging from the state of the moral behaviour of school pupils, it seems that the subject is not achieving its major goals which is developing in learners the ability to attain intellectual and moral perfection, discipline them both mentally and morally, so as to face their daily and future challenges as good citizens (Njoku and Njoku, 2015). Studies reveal that the teaching methodologies implored over the years had not been yielding positive anticipated results.

The poor academic performance in Christian religious knowledge is of interest to the researchers, thus, the rise in need to find the most practical ways and drastic means of reducing or curbing the menace. Problem of student's interest diminishing could be as a result of the teaching methods used by the teachers of Christian religious education. Many teaching approaches abound ranging from discussion method, drama method, interactive method, teachers centeredness approach, group-learning approach and so on. Therefore, this research aims at describing how constructivist learning theory approach as one of the methods of teaching can help in solving the problem of student's declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Secondary Schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Literature review: The concept of constructivism has to be given a broader highlight to aid fuller understanding of the study.

Concept and meaning of constructivism: Constructivism as a teaching and learning approach is another trend which shows the relationship between how teachers teach and how learners learn. One foundational premise of constructivism is that children actively construct their knowledge, rather than simply absorbing ideas spoken to them by teachers (Lunenburg, 2011). Constructivism as a learning theory and a method of teaching, simply speaking is to make learning meaningful. The core constructivist perspectives are as follows: learning is a self-directed process knowledge is constructed rather than directly received, instructor as facilitator, learning as

a socio-cultural process (Tobin and Tippins, 1993 as cited in IB research paper, 2012). Constructivism as opined by Uric and Rudge (2002) can be understood as a theory of learning: students construct knowledge in the process of learning through interaction with phenomenon as they develop shared-meaning of a phenomenon via interactions within a social context (i.e., culture). Addressing further, it is generally agreed that students learn by making sense of phenomenon as they experience it, evaluate its evidentiary merits and attempt to make sense of it within a socially acceptable context in light of prior knowledge. Most constructivists agree learning occurs when individuals assimilate new information into existing mental models of the world or construct as a result of discrepant insights new models that can accommodate both old and new insights gained from experience.

In constructivist learning approach as asserted by Lunenburg (2011), it is assumed that learners have to construct their own knowledge individually and collectively which simplifies that each learner has a repertoire of conceptions and skills with which she or he must construct knowledge to solve problems presented by the environment. The role of the teacher and other learners is to provide the setting, pose the challenges and offer the support that will encourage cognitive construction (Lunenburg, 2011). Since, students lack the experience of experts in the field, teachers bear a great responsibility for guiding student activity, modeling behavior and providing examples that will transform student group discussions into meaningful communication about subject matter (Lunenburg, 2011).

In a classroom with a diversity of sociocultural traits, the teachers need to be able to understand student's initial perceived identities, help students to understand their own traits, explicitly explain the expectations of a learning environment and scaffold identity formation (Renninger, 2009 as cited in IB research paper, 2012). Continuous interaction helps students gradually form new identities and the development goes through a step-wise trajectory (Renninger, 2009 as cited in IB research paper, 2012). Frequent assessment of student's affective and motivational states through teacher student conversation and reflective questionnaires can be practical strategies. Brooks and Brooks and Lunenburg (2011) provided a detailed description of constructivist classroom practice and its theoretical underpinnings in their book in search for understanding: the case for constructivist classrooms. They provided five principles of constructivist pedagogy which includes as thus:

Posing problems of emerging relevance to students:

Relevance does not have to be pre-existing for the student. Not all students come to the classroom interested in learning. Relevance can emerge through teacher mediation.

Structuring learning around primary concepts:

When designing curriculum, constructivist teachers organize information around conceptual clusters of problems, questions and discrepant situations because students are most engaged when problems and ideas are presented holistically rather than in separate, isolated parts. Much of traditional education breaks wholes into parts and then focuses separately on each part. But many students are unable to build concepts and skills from parts to wholes.

Seeking and valuing student's points of view:

Student's points of view are avenues into their reasoning. Awareness of student's points of view help teachers challenge students, making school experiences both contextual and meaningful. Teachers who operate without awareness of their student's points of view often doom students to dull, irrelevant experiences and even failure.

Adapting curriculum to address student's suppositions:

Teacher mediation is a key factor in adapting curriculum to address student's suppositions. The teacher can abstract student learning or help build their own bridges from present understandings to new, more complex understandings. If suppositions are not explicitly addressed, most students will find lessons devoid of meaning, regardless of how charismatic the teacher or attractive the materials used. While it is the teacher who structures the opportunity, it is the student's own reflective abstractions that create the new understanding.

Assessing student learning in the context of teaching:

Multiple-choice, norm-referenced tests are structured to determine whether students know information related to a particular body of knowledge. The overarching question posed by such activities is: "what do you know?" Authentic assessment focuses on analytical thinking and performance whereas norm-referenced, standardized tests focus on low-level rote skills.

One of the primary goals of using constructivist teaching is that students learn how to learn by giving them the training to take initiative for their own learning experiences. According to Gray (1997) as demonstrated in wikipedia page, the characteristics of a constructivist classroom are as follows:

- The learners are actively involved
- The environment is democratic
- The activities are interactive and student-centered
- the teacher facilitates a process of learning in which students are encouraged to be responsible and autonomous

Furthermore, in the constructivist classroom like CRE classes, students should work primarily in groups to enhance interactive and dynamic learning and knowledge. There should be a great focus and emphasis on social and communication skills as well as collaboration and exchange of ideas (Anonymous, 2004). This is contrary to the traditional classroom in which students work primarily alone, learning is achieved through repetition and the subjects are strictly adhered to and are guided by a textbook. Some activities encouraged in constructivist classrooms as given by Anonymous (2004) are:

Experimentation: Students individually perform an experiment and then come together as a class to discuss the results.

Research projects: Students research a topic and can present their findings to the class.

Field trips: This allows students to put the concepts and ideas discussed in class in a real-world context. Field trips would often be followed by class discussions.

Films: These provide visual context and thus, bring another sense into the learning experience.

Class discussions: This technique is used in all of the methods described above. It is one of the most important distinctions of constructivist teaching methods (Taber, 2012).

Constructivist approaches can also be used in online learning: For example, tools such as discussion forums, wikis and blogs can enable learners to actively construct knowledge.

Conclusively, the key to a successful constructivist classroom is an interactive relationship between the learner, the task and the teacher who will largely act as a facilitator of learning without depriving the students of experiencing learning and discovering knowledge on their own. Using the constructivist learning theory in the classroom requires the teacher to avoid direct guidance of the students. Instead, she/he sets a learning atmosphere

with minimal supervision and maximum opportunity for the students themselves to visualize, articulate, express, explain, interpret and apply new knowledge.

Purpose of the study: The study aimed at determining how constructivist learning approach can help solve the problem of students declining interest in Christian Religious Knowledge in Secondary Schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Nigeria. Specifically, the study has the following objectives.

- To x-ray the causing-teaching factors for student's declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria
- To determine how constructivist teaching approach could enhance student's interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria

Research questions: The present study investigated descriptively into how constructivist learning approach can help solve the problem of students declining interest in Christian religious knowledge in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Nigeria. Therefore, the following research questions were posed to guide the study. They include:

- What could be the causing-teaching factors for student's declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria?
- How would the constructivist teaching approach enhance student's interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design aimed at describing and investigating descriptively how constructivist teaching and learning approach can aid or help curb the problem of student's declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Secondary Schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Population of the study: The population of the study comprises of all the 85 certified CRE teachers from all the 30 government secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State (Post Primary Schools Management Board (PPSMB). The choice of the teachers is because they are the ones that are directly involved in teaching the students with many teaching methods and as such, poses more convenience in gathering information and to acquaint into them the tenets of the findings of the

research. The selection of only teachers from government owned schools is to ensure that the schools possess almost similar learning environment.

Sample and sampling technique: The 50 CRS teachers from 15 schools were selected out of the 85 teachers in the area using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique which is also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling according to Ashley (2016) is a non-probability sample that is selected using knowledge of the study and the population to choose participants. It is not a random sampling that looks at the whole population. It is also based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. This type of sampling is very useful in this study because the researchers are studying the specific characteristics, features and functions of CRE teachers. Sampling for proportionality as is done in other sampling techniques is not the main concern but to reach the targeted sample quickly.

Instrument for data collection: The instrument for data collection was a well structured questionnaire titled "Constructivist Teaching Approach Questionnaire". It was face validated by experts in educational measurement and Christian Religious Education from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in terms of clarity of items, appropriateness of language and expression to the respondents and relevance to the purpose of the research. Their contributions were incorporated into the final draft of the items used.

Method of data collection: The questionnaire was distributed manually to all the CRS teachers in the sampled schools with the permission of the principal of the sampled schools. The administration and retrieval of the questionnaires was done by the researchers and this ensured accurate return of the 50 questionnaires given out.

Method of data analysis: Mean was descriptively used to analyze the data obtained to enable answer the research questions. SA (Strongly Agree) = 4 points, A (Agree) = 3 points, D (Disagree) = 2 points, SD (Strongly Disagree) = 1 point. Criterion mean of 2.50 was raised by adding the assigned values of responses and dividing it with the total number of the responses options which is the summation of $4+3+2+1 = 10/4 = 2.5$. Therefore, any score below 2.5 was rejected while 2.5 and above was accepted.

Table 1: Mean score of respondents on causing-teaching factor for student’s declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria (N = 50)

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1. Teachers often allow students to work in groups source	5	7	17	20	1.90	Rejected
2. The CRE teachers often present students with a “focus” question and allow an open discussion on the topic	6	6	16	22	2.40	Rejected
3. Teachers often use KWL(H) chart (what we know, what we want to know, what we have learned, how we know it) technique in assessing the progress of the student throughout the course of study	12	17	2	19	2.44	Rejected
4. Students of Christian Religious Education (CRE) use mind mapping to list and categorize the concepts and ideas relating to a topic	2	5	32	11	1.96	Rejected
5. Teachers use a checklist and observation (hands-on activities) to assess student success with a particular material	4	4	40	2	2.28	Rejected
6. Teachers of CRE use pre-testing to determine what knowledge students bring to a new topic which will be helpful in directing the course of study	18	12	14	6	2.84	Accepted
7. Teachers obey strict adherence to fixed curriculum without any innovative change	24	12	10	4	3.12	Accepted
8. Learning of CRE in classroom is interactional towards building on what students already know	11	5	17	17	2.2	Rejected
9. Teaching and learning of CRE is basically, teacher-centered as the instructor gives and students receive	30	12	5	3	3.38	Accepted
10. Teachers of CRE assumes directive and authoritative role while giving out instructions	26	15	2	7	3.20	Accepted
Grand mean					2.6	

Table 2: Mean score of respondents on how constructivist teaching approach could enhance student’s interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria No = 50

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1. Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers should encourage and accept student autonomy and initiative	30	12	2	6	3.32	Accepted
2. CRE teachers should use raw data and primary sources, along with manipulative and interactive and physical materials	45	5	0	0	3.9	Accepted
3. When framing tasks, CRE teachers should use cognitive terminology such as “classify”, “analyze”, “predict” and “create”	33	14	2	1	3.58	Accepted
4. CRE teachers should allow student responses to drive lessons, shift instructional strategies and alter content	20	8	16	6	2.84	Accepted
5. CRE teachers should inquire about student’s understandings of concepts before sharing their own understandings of those concepts	35	10	5	5	3.7	Accepted
6. CRE teachers should encourage students to engage in dialogue, both with the teacher and with one another	46	4	0	0	3.92	Accepted
7. CRE teachers should encourage student’s inquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions and encouraging students to ask questions of each other	29	11	9	1	3.44	Accepted
8. CRE teachers should seek elaboration of student’s initial response	40	8	2	0	3.76	Accepted
9. CRE teachers should engage students in experiences that might engender contradictions to their initial hypotheses and then encourage discussion	49	0	0	1	3.94	Accepted
10. CRE teachers should allow wait time after posing questions	44	5	0	1	3.84	Accepted
11. CRE teachers should nurture student’s natural curiosity through frequent use of the learning cycle model	31	15	0	4	3.46	Accepted
Grand mean					3.61	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Items 1-10 in Table 1 on the causing-teaching factor for student’s declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria achieved a grand mean of 2.6 which indicates high level of acceptance of the items in Table 1 as some of the challenges to student’s declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria.

Following the responses of the respondents, items 1-11 in Table 2 on how constructivist teaching approach could enhance student’s interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria all achieved the acceptance criterion benchmark of 2.5. This is evident by the grand mean of 3.61 which indicates that there is high acceptance of all the items as ways in which constructivist teaching and learning approach could enhance student’s interest and help reduce or solve the problems of their

declining interest in Christian Religious Education (CRE) in Nigeria. Result of the data analysis in Table 1 shows that the respondents are in consonance with the items which specify the causing-teaching factors that pave way for student’s declining interest in Christian Religious Education in Nigeria. This indicates to a very high extent that teachers of CRE do not apply the rightful teaching and learning method while delivering CRE content in the classrooms. This is crystal in the responses which indicate that teachers do not often allow students to work in groups source, the CRE teachers do not often present students with a “focus” question and allow an open discussion on the topic, teachers do not often use KWL(H) chart (what we know, what we want to know, what we have learned, how we know it) technique in assessing the progress of the student throughout the course of study, students of Christian Religious

Education (CRE) do not use mind mapping to list and categorize the concepts and ideas relating to a topic, teachers do not use a checklist and observation (hands-on activities) to assess student success with a particular material, teachers of CRE do not use pre-testing

to determine what knowledge students bring to a new topic which will be helpful in directing the course of study, teachers obey strict adherence to fixed curriculum without any innovative change, learning of CRE in classroom is not interactional towards building on what students already know, teaching and learning of CRE is basically teacher-centered as the instructor gives and students receive, teachers of CRE assumes directive and authoritative role while giving out instructions. All these factors seriously militate student's interest in the subject, thus, paving way for a decline in interest. It is in this approach that opined that the decline of student's interest in CRE could be attributed to the teaching methods used for learning which seems narrow and obsolete in approach.

The result of Table 2 analysis also indicates to a very reasonable amount that constructivist teaching and learning approach could fundamentally help in reducing if not at all, curbing the problems of student's declining interest in Christian Religious Education (CRE) in Nigeria. This is indeed evident in the responses given by the respondents which vividly pointed out that Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers should encourage and accept student autonomy and initiative, CRE teachers should use raw data and primary sources, along with manipulative and interactive and physical materials, when framing tasks, CRE teachers should use cognitive terminology such as "classify", "analyze", "predict" and "create" CRE teachers should allow student responses to drive lessons, shift instructional strategies and alter content, CRE teachers should inquire about student's understandings of concepts before sharing their own understandings of those concepts, CRE teachers should encourage students to engage in dialogue both with the teacher and with one another, CRE teachers should encourage student's inquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions and encouraging students to ask questions of each other, CRE teachers should seek elaboration of student's initial response, CRE teachers should engage students in experiences that might engender contradictions to their initial hypothesis and then encourage discussion, CRE teachers should allow wait time after posing questions, CRE teachers should nurture student's natural curiosity through frequent use of the learning cycle model. Constructivist teaching and learning approach as an innovative teaching approach

if utilized very properly in CRE content delivery in classroom could go a long way in moulding the interests of students towards the subject. It was in this view that opines that innovative and modern methods build students interest, allow full participation and increases knowledge. According to John and Ogwu *et al.* a good classroom teacher should employ these appropriate teaching methods while delivering instructions in classrooms.

CONCLUSION

The antecedents of decades of student's declining interest in Christian Religious Education (CRE) in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Nigeria have been broadly given a limelight by the findings of this study. This is as a result of the obsolete teaching methods and approaches used by the subject-teachers for decades till now. These had limited the interest of students as there is no interest building and innovation stimulus attached to those primordial approaches. This has implications for teachers, since, the exposure of this result will assist in mentoring CRE teachers towards the importance of using innovative teaching methods like constructivist teaching and learning approach which are the prerequisite for students developing interests in a particular subject, specifically, in CRE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made. There should be a paradigm shift from the obsolete methods of content delivery of Christian Religious Education instructions in Secondary Schools Nigeria by the teachers of CRE to a more interesting innovative approach like the constructivist teaching and learning approach. This could enable resuscitate decades of student's declined interests in the subjects.

Teachers of CRE as a matter of urgent importance should be equipped through training and retraining, so that, they will be properly grounded in the modern pedagogical and theological aims of the subject. Effective teaching is dependent upon teacher's skills and knowledge and these variable must be sorted out to enable the teaching of the subject achieve its set goals in the learner's lives.

There should always be a constant evaluation and assessment for learning from the students by the teachers to ascertain student's level of interests immediately after constructivist teaching to checkmate when or whether

there is a decline in interests. There is need for educational administrators, parents, governmental and non-governmental organizations to always emphasize on the teaching and learning of CRE in Nigeria owing to the vast profit of the subject to the nation at large.

REFERENCES

- Anonymous, 2004. Constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning. Educational Broadcasting Corporation. New York, USA. https://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/constructivism/index_sub2.html
- Ashley, C., 2016. Understanding purposive sampling: An overview of the method and its applications. Dotdash Publishing, New York, San Francisco, Chicago. <https://www.thoughtco.com/purposive-sampling-3026727>
- Gray, A.J., 1997. Constructivist teaching and learning. Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada.
- Lawal, B., 2010. Factors affecting academic achievement of students in senior school certificate examination (SSCE) in Christian religious knowledge. *Afr. Res. Rev.*, 4: 420-433.
- Lunenburg, F.C., 2011. Critical thinking and constructivism techniques for improving student achievement. *National Forum Teach. Educ. J.*, 21: 1-9.
- Madu, B.C. and M.U. Ezeamagu, 2013. Effects of constructivist based approach (5Es) on the pupils achievement in primary mathematics in Enugu State, Nigeria. *Intl. J. Educ. Sci. Res.*, 3: 59-70.
- Njoku, N.C. and D.I. Njoku, 2015. Challenges to effective implementation of Christian Religious studies curriculum: A study of secondary school pupils in Ebonyi State of Nigeria. *J. Educ. Pract.*, 6: 176-180.
- Renninger, K.A., 2009. Interest and identity development in instruction: An inductive model. *Educ. Psychol.*, 44: 105-118.
- Taber, K.S., 2012. Constructivism as Educational Theory: Contingency in Learning and Optimally Guided Instruction. In: *Educational Theory*, Hassaskhah, J. (Ed.). Nova Science Publishers, Hauppauge, New York, USA., pp: 39-61.
- Tobin, K. and D. Tippins, 1993. Constructivism as a Referent for Teaching and Learning. In: *The Practice of Constructivism in Science Education*, Tobin, K.G. (Ed.). Routledge, Abingdon, UK., pp: 3-21.
- Uric, C.G. and D.W. Rudge, 2002. A review of research on constructivist-based strategies for large lecture science classes. *Electron. J. Sci. Educ.*, 7: 1-22.