



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 2 (June, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: May 26, 2026 Accepted: June 24, 2026 Published: June 30, 2026

Citation: Duruji, Simeon U. N. "Christian Religious Education and Global Competitiveness in Secondary Schools in Imo State." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (2): 207-215.

Article

Open Acces

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IMO STATE

Simeon Uzochukwu N. Duruji

Department of Religion and Cultural Studies
Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education
Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria

Corresponding Email: venduruji@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examined Christian religious education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. The study adopted correlational survey research design. The population of the study comprised 2506 teachers in 74 public schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State. A sample size of 270 teachers were selected from 15 public secondary school using multistage sampling technique. Two objectives and two corresponding hypotheses guided the study. The instrument for data collection was a self-designed instrument titled: Christian Religious Education and Global Competitiveness Questionnaire (CREGCQ). The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Educational management and Guidance and Counselling Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education. Cronbach's Alpha test of reliability for the instrument yielded a co-efficient reliability score of 0.8. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (PPMCC) of the analysis revealed that a significant relationship exists between Christian religious education and global competitiveness. based on the findings, the study recommended among others that Christian religious education should be taught in all secondary schools and made compulsory. Teachers of Christian religious education should also be retrained through workshops and conferences for better productivity.

Keywords: Christian, Religious Education, Global Competitiveness, Secondary School, Imo State.

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

Introduction

Education is generally accepted and recognized all over the world as a process of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes to learners with significant impact on national development. It is the systematic training done by instruction through which knowledge, abilities, character and mental power are developed and nurtured in the life of the learner. Education is widely accepted as an important instrument of change in modern societies. Achilike (2011) viewed education as a process of transmitting culture in terms of continuity and growth and for disseminating knowledge either to ensure control or to guarantee rational direction of the society hence every educational system seeks to achieve their goals. Christian Religious Education is pivotal to character and skills development. It is a type of education that tries to achieve the integral development of the individual, which molds character, inculcates discipline and morals in the individual. It brings about peace and progress to the nation, promotes social harmony and cohesion, personal sacrifice, service mentality and integrity that makes for individual and national development. Religious education is relevant to national and individual development, for no nation or individual can develop without discipline and morals. Christian Religious Education is a component of the holistic-oriented education, by means of which the students are led towards progressive habitualization for social duties towards the community to which one belongs and in which he has a share (Okeke, 2011).

Christian Religious Education is intended to lead students towards the acquisition of human and christian values which are indispensable for living an integral life (Okeke, 2021). The purpose of Christian Religious Education is to effect integral formation. The integral human formation includes holistic, development, social and personal harmony. Christian religion seeks to assist every person in developing his or her unique capabilities and talents so that each one having received a solid formation, may as a good citizen contribute to the welfare and further development of the community. Christian Religious Education in its development function seeks to help the people to progressively attain real development and liberation. This type of development according to Okeke (2011) comes through the acquisition of knowledge gained through research and through continuous effort, dedication, and creativity. Human life is not only developmental, it is also social; Christian Religious Education therefore concerns itself with the formation of the human person to attain holistic social harmony in consonance with his nature as a social being. Yaro (2018) outlined the aims of teaching Christian Religious Knowledge in Nigeria schools to including:

- i. Raising a generation of people who can think for themselves
- ii. Raising people that can respect the views and findings of others
- iii. Raising people that can respect moral values stated in the anthem as good citizens
- iv. Raising people that respect dignity of labour
- v. Preparing learners for useful living through inculcation of Christian attitudes and values
- vi. Preparing learners for their salvation in heaven with God Almighty
- vii. Preparing learners for useful life peaceful co-existence in the society
- viii. Preparing learners to be able to adapt to the teachings of Jesus Christ to be able to love one another as Christ's disciple
- ix. Preparing learners to practice Christian discipline and molding of moral characters.
- x. Shape the human behaviour and moral values

For Elu and Ikwumelu (2019) teaching Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) is capable of instilling in the Nigerian youth the required and desired knowledge, values, behaviours, attitudes and skills that would ensure their effective adaptation in an ever-changing multi-

faith and multi-ethnic society and more so in this era of global competitiveness. In attaining the goals of the secondary school, the Federal Government laws placed religious studies as one of the core subjects in Group A at the senior secondary level. This is probably because religion goes a long way in determining individual behaviour and aspiration, which in turn determines not only developmental strides of the society but also its internal harmony. Teaching of CRK at senior secondary level is aimed at achieving the objectives of the discipline at that level which include preparation for useful living within the society and preparation for higher education.

The national curriculum of CRK for senior secondary school has among its objectives as: to develop in the youth Christian attitudes and values such as humility, respect, love, kindness, justice, and fair play. Others include spirit of forgiveness, obedience, devotion to duty, orderly behaviour and selfless service to God and humanity. One of its content areas of pedagogy includes amongst others dignity of labour, self-employment, contentment. Okeke (2021) posited that Christian Religious Education is a veritable tool for character and skills development. The author maintained that man in the course of interacting with his physical and social environment, comes across certain challenges in his efforts to attain an orderly, more meaningful and purposeful life. Anyacho (1994) in Okeke (2021) emphasized that the general purpose of Christian Religious Education is to help learners inculcate moral uprightness, social justice, well-meaningful environment through the acquisition of relevant knowledge and practical skills. Skill development is therefore an important aspect of Christian Religious Education for students. Christian Religious Education inculcates in the students' skills which include intellectual and Manipulative example of the skills include: thinking or reasoning critically, solving problems, finding information (research skills), giving direction, making use of information and communication technology. Christian Religious Knowledge therefore inculcates in students patience, perseverance, humility and self-determination in the use of ICT. Okeke (2021) opined that on the part of the students, they are encouraged and challenged to go to the internet, go to Google and download information for creativity. According to Lilian (2002), development of information and communication technology has turned the world into a global village.

Global competitiveness refers to the ability of nations to supply high quality goods and services at reasonable cost, resulting in satisfactory returns. It is also seen as a set of institutions, policies and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country; the productivity of a nation over a sustained period of time. According to the World Economy Forum (WEF 2021), Nigeria is the 116th most competitive nation in the world out of 140 countries ranked in the 2019 edition of the Global Competitiveness Report published by the World Economic Forum. WEF (2021) defined global competitiveness as the ability of a country to achieve sustained high rates of growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. The International Institute for Management and Development defines competitiveness as a field of economic knowledge which analyzes the facts and policies that shaped the ability of a nation to create and maintain an environment that sustains more value creation for its enterprises and more prosperity for its people. A competitive economy is a productive one. Global competitiveness, therefore refers to the capability of every nation of the world to remain internationally competitive in the global knowledge-based economy. It is a requirement of the accelerated history phenomenon of the present millennium (Obanya, 2004). Education and in particular the curriculum, is expected to be a prime contributor to a nation's capacity for global competitiveness. Obanya (2004) explained that education is not just a preparation for life but life itself. He explained that over the

years, functional education has shifted from functional context to functional “skills” education. Nigeria is required by the international community to be a full member of the African Union of the global community of the 21st Century.

Knowledge economy is a direct twin-product of the acceleration of history, and the digital revolution in addition to being the prime mover of globalization, (Obanya, 2004). The defining characteristic of the knowledge economy according to Obanya (2004) is that knowledge has replaced raw materials, national resources, machines and manual labour as the most valuable factors of production. In other words, knowledge economy relies basically in the use of ideas instead of physical activities. It also refers to the application of technology to the transformation of raw materials or the exploitation of cheap labour. Knowledge economy is propelled by globalization, the digital revolution and it holds on every day living as well as the fast movement of goods and services, persons and ideas. Nwagbara (2013) maintained that education is an instrument per excellence for producing a knowledge based worker. It is a precursor of knowledge and the most important instrument for change. Knowledge economy thus demands development of human capital. A key concept of the knowledge economy is that knowledge and education are often referred to as “human capital”. Thus, knowledge and education are compatible body fellows and must go hand in gloves. When human capital is developed, the result is a dynamic economic, an adequate standard of living and there is a general increase in positive attitude toward the future.

Christian Religious Education and Global Competitiveness

The importance of Christian Religious Education (CRE) in skill development cannot be overemphasized. The word “skill” is to be understood in two senses. First, it is an ability to do something expertly and well. Second, it is an experience gained through training and learning. CRE is a discipline that deals with man’s moral and integrity within the society. CRE enables an individual to inculcate moral uprightness, social justices, well meaningful environment through the acquisition of relevant knowledge and practical skills. CRE aids the individual in thinking and reasoning critically, solving problems, giving directions and finding information. (Nawose & Kerich, 2023). Globalization has given rise to knowledge explosion in the society through Information Communication Technology (ICT). ICT has become a global phenomenon of great importance and concern in all spheres of human endeavour. ICT is the sole creation of human kind that has thrown off-balance the conventional perceptions of time and space and that has broken down geographical barriers for the transmission of knowledge, ideas and information. With the teaching of CRE, students will develop the patience, discipline and moral uprightness in participating in the global economy. Christian Religious Education will help in character formation and skills development of individuals for a meaningful society. (Okeke, N.D 2021).

CRE in its developmental function seeks to help the human person to progressively attain real development and liberation, which will always be self-development and self-liberation. And in this process of development, it is the truth which will make him free and help him to grow. Truth comes through the acquisition of knowledge gained through research and through continuous effort, dedication and creativity. Christian Religious Education is pivotal to character and skills development. It tries to achieve the integral development of the individual. It moulds the character, inculcates discipline and morals in the individual. It brings peace and progress to the nation, promotes social harmony, and cohesion, personal sacrifice, service mentality and integrity that make for individual and national development. Religious education is relevant to national and individual

development for no nation or individual can develop without discipline and moral. (Okeke, 2021).

Christian Religious Education (CRE) is the teaching of Bible knowledge and Christian values to help people grow good character like honesty, discipline, and respect for others. It is taught in schools, at home or church and it helps the individual. It also teaches useful life skills, like how to treat people well, so learners can grow into responsible citizens who help their community and country develop. Cultural competitiveness on the other hand, means knowing your own culture and values well, while also being able to mix and work well with people from other cultures. It means holding on to your important values even when the world around you is changing, and using your upbringing as a strength like discipline, manners, and good work ethic to do well in school, work, or life in general. When CRE and cultural competitiveness come together, the idea is this: the character and values that CRE builds in a person (discipline, morals, respect) become the same qualities that make that person culturally competitive able to stand firm in their identity, get along with others, and use their values as an advantage rather than a weakness in today's mixed and fast-changing world (Okeke, 2021). Knowledge has become the most important factor for economic development in the 21st Century. Through its capacity to augment productivity, it increasingly constitutes the foundation of a country. The goals of Christian Religious Education have been implemented in all levels of education for many years now without success in terms of inculcating the values and skills of good citizenship and this explains the reasons for increase in crime in our society.

Statement of Problem

The Federal Ministry of Education instructed through the National policy on education that Christian religious education should be one of the core subjects in group A at senior secondary school level because of its indispensable position in human socio-cultural, economic, spiritual and moral development of students at that educational level. It also goes a long way in determining individual behaviour and aspiration which in turn determines not only developmental strides of the society but also its internal harmony. Today, our society is filtered with all kinds of nefarious activities as a result of moral decadence comprising of kidnapping, cybercrime, robbery of all kinds, child-trafficking, sexual immorality, cultism, thuggery, examination malpractices among others are on the increase day by day in our society. When one considers these social problems, one would wonder the effect of religious education on our students. This leaves the question on the relationship between Christian Religious Education and character formation of students especially in this era of globalization.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teaching Christian Religious Education and Global Competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone I in Imo State. Specifically, the study focuses on:

- i. The relationship between teaching Christian Religious Education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone I in Imo State.
- ii. Determine the relationship between the goals of Christian Religious Education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone I in Imo State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested to guide the proposed study:

- i. There is no significant relationship between the teaching of Christian religious education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone I in Imo State.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between the goals of Christian religious education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone I in Imo State.

Methodology

The researcher adopted correlational survey research design. The population of the study comprised 25% of teachers in 24 public secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone I of Imo State. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a total of 270 participants from 15 public secondary schools used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a self-designed instrument titled: Christian Religious Education and Global Competitiveness Questionnaire (CREGCQ). The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Educational Management and Guidance and Counselling, Alvan Ikoku Federal university of Education. Cronbach's Alpha test of reliability for the instrument of this study yielded a reliability score of 0.8. The instrument was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). Equally, Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tool was used to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Test of Hypotheses

Before the two hypotheses are tested, it is worth being explicit about what the two key variables in this study actually measure, since "Christian Religious Education" is not a single, easily pinned-down idea. The literature reviewed earlier in this study (see, for example, Yaro, 2018) identifies as many as ten distinct strands running through CRE, among them character building, moral, spiritual and mental growth, the promotion of human dignity, the building of community bonds, and the cultivation of a sense of belonging. Rather than treating each of these strands as a separate variable, this study combined them into two composite measures "Teaching of Christian Religious Education" and "Goals of Christian Religious Education" using a Likert-type questionnaire on which respondents rated how strongly each strand was reflected in CRE instruction and practice within their schools. The mean scores reported in Tables 1 and 2 should therefore be read as an aggregate picture of CRE as a whole rather than as a reading on any one of its components in isolation. This composite approach keeps the analysis manageable, but it also means that a relationship found at the aggregate level could be driven more strongly by some strands than others; this point is returned to after the hypotheses are tested.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between the teaching of Christian religious education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Educational Zone I in Imo State.

Table 1: Relationship Between Teaching Christian Religious Education and Global Competitiveness

Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	r-tab	r-cal	Decision	Remarks
Teaching Christian Religious Education	260	3.28	1.34	258	0.146	0.68.2	Reject	Significant
Global Competitiveness	260	3.10	1.29					

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level, SD = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom and $\bar{x}$ = mean

As Table 1 shows, the calculated r-value of 0.682 is well above the tabulated value of 0.146 at 258 degrees of freedom and the 0.05 level of significance. On this basis, the null hypothesis – that no significant relationship exists between the teaching of Christian Religious Education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I – is rejected, and the alternative is accepted: schools where CRE is taught more actively also tend to score higher on the global competitiveness measure. It is worth being cautious about what this correlation can and cannot say. A coefficient of 0.682 indicates a fairly strong association, but association is not the same as cause, and a single composite score for "teaching of CRE" does not tell us which of its constituent strands – character formation, moral and spiritual instruction, the promotion of human dignity, or the others – is doing the most work in producing this pattern. What the result does support is the more modest claim that schools with a stronger CRE teaching presence are also, on the whole, schools whose students and staff report higher levels of the attributes captured under "global competitiveness" in this study.

That said, it is reasonable to ask why a subject built around character, discipline and moral reasoning should track with something as outwardly economic as global competitiveness. Recent work on the link between religion and economic performance in Nigeria offers a plausible bridge: Ojone, Elejo and Avosuahi (2023) argue that religious institutions function as informal structures that condition how people behave economically, instilling habits such as honesty, diligence and self-restraint that feed directly into productivity. Read alongside this, the present finding is consistent with the idea that CRE's emphasis on discipline and moral seriousness is one channel through which schooling shapes the kind of workforce attitudes that competitiveness indicators try to capture.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between the goals of Christian religious education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State.

Table 2: Relationship Between the Goals of Christian Religious Education and Global Competitiveness in Public Secondary Schools

Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	r-tab	r-cal	Decision	Remarks
Goals of Christian Religious Education	260	3.31	1.36	258	0.146	0.616	Reject	Significant
Global Competitiveness	260	3.10	1.29					

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level, SD = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom and $\bar{x}$ = mean

Table 2 tells a similar story for the second hypothesis. The calculated r-value of 0.616 again exceeds the tabulated value of 0.146 at the same degrees of freedom and level of significance, so the null hypothesis – that the goals of Christian Religious Education bear no significant relationship to global competitiveness – is rejected in favour of the alternative. Schools where the stated goals of CRE are more strongly pursued also tend to report higher global competitiveness scores.

This second result invites the same question raised after Hypothesis One, but more pointedly, because the "goals" of CRE are explicitly about character and conduct rather than economics. Among the goals identified in this study's literature review are that learners come to think for themselves, respect the views of others, value the dignity of labour, and practise Christian discipleship – none of which is, on the face of it, an economic goal. Global

competitiveness, by contrast, is normally discussed in terms of productivity, wealth generation and rising standards of living. The bridge between the two lies in human capital: a learner who reasons independently, respects others, and treats work as dignified rather than demeaning is, in effect, being formed into the kind of disciplined, cooperative and trustworthy worker that productive economies depend on. This is the same logic Ojone, Elejo and Avosuahi (2023) apply to religion more broadly in the Nigerian context, where religious institutions are treated as informal training grounds for the habits and dispositions that later show up in economic behaviour. Understood this way, the moral and spiritual goals of CRE are not competing with the goals of global competitiveness; they are plausibly one of its upstream sources.

One limitation is worth flagging openly rather than glossing over. Because both "teaching of CRE" and "goals of CRE" were measured as single composite scores, the ten or so strands that Yaro (2018) and the wider literature reviewed in this study associate with CRE – character building, moral, spiritual and mental growth, human dignity, community bonds, sense of belonging, and others – are folded into one number apiece. The two hypotheses tested here can therefore only show that CRE, taken as a whole, relates to global competitiveness; they cannot show whether, say, the dignity-of-labour strand is doing more of that work than the discipleship strand, or whether some strands have no relationship at all and are simply being carried by the others in the average. A natural next step, and one this study did not have the scope to take on, would be to disaggregate the questionnaire items along these ten strands and test each one against global competitiveness separately. That would turn the present finding that CRE matters, in aggregate into a more precise account of which parts of CRE matter most, and why.

Discussion of Findings

Result from table 1 reveal that there is a positive and significant relationship between the teaching of Christian religious education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Zone 1 in Imo State. This is in line with Okere (2011) and Nelson (2015) who asserted that Christian religious education is relevant to national and individual development, for no nation or individual can develop without discipline and morals. They opine that Christian religious education inculcates in students' skills which include: thinking or information (research skills), giving direction and making use of information and communication technology, students' patience, perseverance, humility, and self-determination in the use of ICT which has turned the world into a global village. Results from Table 2 revealed that there is a significant relationship between the goals of Christian Religious Education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri 1 in Imo State. The finding corroborates with Eluu and Ikwumelu (2019) who concluded that the importance of Christian religious education is captured in the goals of secondary education in Nigeria which is to mould character and develop sound attitude and morals in students as well as preparing them for useful living within the society. Yaro (2020) further adds that the goals of Christian religious education will instill in students attitudes and values, behaviour, skills that will ensure their effective adaptation in an ever increasing multi-facet and multi-ethnic society in this era of global competitiveness.

Conclusion

Information and Communication Technology has turned the world into a global village which has led to global competitiveness among different sectors. The goals of Christian religious education is intended to instill in students a form of dignity of labour and acquisition of skills

which will imbibe morals, skills and values towards building a globally competitive society. Results from the studies therefore conclude that there is a significant relationship between the teaching of Christian religious education and global competitiveness; and a significant relationship also exist between the goals of Christian religious education and global competitiveness in public secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone 1 in Imo State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- i. The teaching of Christian religious education should be continually taught in public secondary schools in Imo State.
- ii. The goals of Christian religious education should be emphasized more by providing more professional trainings for Christian religious education teachers so as to guide them on the basics of putting into practice the fundamentals of the subject.

References

- Achilike, B. A. (2011). Re-branding education for self-empowerment. *Journal of Nigerian Society for Psychical Research*, 3(1), 120-132.
- Anyacho E.O (1994). Christian Religious Education: A Tool For Character And Skills Development. *UNIJERPS (University of Nigeria Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies)*,
- Elu, P. E. & Ikwumelu, S. N. (2019). Effective Teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge at the Senior Secondary School Level for Curbing Insurgency in Nigeria: Some Impediments. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 24(5), 55-58.
- Lilian, R. A. (2002). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) necessary for national development. *Nigeria Journal of Computer Literacy*, 3(1),14-30.
- Nawose, I & Kerich, M. (2023). Christian Religious Teachers' Use of Valuing Methods for Learner Value Acquisition, A Study of National Secondary Schools in Kenya. *International Journal of Arts and Social Science*, 6(9), 40.
- Nwagbara, C. (2013). Teacher preparation and professional development in Nigeria, challenges of the 21st century. education for all: Progress and challenges. Proceedings of the 28th Congress of the Nigerian Academy of Education held at Whyte New Hotel, Awka, Anambra State from 4th – 8th Novemeber, 2013.
- Obanya, P. A. A. (2004). Education for knowledge economy, Mosuru Publication.
- Okeke, C. (2021). Christian religious education: A tool for character and skills development. *Unizik Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 5(5), 43-58.
- Okeke, C.O. (2011). The role of Christian religious education in integral human development. *Journal of Arts & Social Sciences*, 3(1), 88-102.
- World Education Forum,
- Yaro, J. B. (2018). Relevance of Christian religious education in a dwindling economy of Nigeria. *International Journal of Academics*, 5(1), 247-258.