

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ASSESSMENT OF LIFE-APPROACH METHOD OF TEACHING CHRISTIAN
RELIGIOUS STUDIES: A SURVEY OF SELECTED SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOLS IN BRONG AHAFO REGION

MARTIN OWUSU

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SCHOOLS IN BRONG AHAFO REGION

BY

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Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Curriculum Studies.

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DECLARATION

Candidate's declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's signature.....

Date.....

Name: Martin Owusu

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal supervisor's signature.....

Date.....

Name: Prof. Theophilus Ossei-Anto

Co-supervisor's signature.....

Date.....

Name: Rev Seth Asare-Danso

ABSTRACT

The study assessed the use of Life-Approach method of teaching Christian Religious Studies in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region. To be specific, the study looked at the use of the method, problems associated with its use, instructional resources available to support its use and how teachers' instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method.

The descriptive survey design was employed to carry out the study. The purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 36 teachers and 319 students of Christian Religious Studies (CRS). Questionnaire and observation guide were the instruments used in collecting the data. The data were analysed through the computation of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation.

CRS teachers use the Life-Approach method to a large extent and their instructional practices conform to the method. The only problem they faced in using the method is inadequate instructional resources to support the use of the method. Though Christian Religious Studies teachers have the requisite professional qualification, their efforts would not yield good results if the Ghana Education Service fails to provide them with the necessary instructional resources.

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DEDICATION

To my lovely wife Mrs. Stella Owusu

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
CHAPTER	1
ONE INTRODUCTION	1
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	4
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Questions	8
Significance of the Study	8
Delimitation	9
Limitations	9
Organization of the Rest of the Study	10
TWO REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	11
Conceptual/Theoretical Framework	11
The Life-Approach Method	11
The Existential Approach of Teaching Religious Education	16
Teacher Quality in Christian Religious Education	19

Instructional Practices in Religious Education	23
The Lecture Method	29
The Questioning Technique	32
Grouping	33
Discussion	36
The Use of Role-Play in Religious Education	39
How Assessment Procedures in Christian Religious Studies	
Conform to the Life-Approach Method	42
The Use of Instructional Resources in the Teaching and Learning	
of CRS	46
Problems Associated with the Use of Instructional Resources in	
Teaching CRS	53
Summary of Literature Review	54
THREE METHODOLOGY	56
Research Design	56
Population	57
Sample and Sampling Procedure	57
Research Instruments	59
Validity and Reliability of Instruments	60
Data Collection Procedure	61
Data Analysis	62
FOUR RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	63
To what extent do teachers use the Life-Approach Method in	

Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region?	67
What are the Instructional Resources Available for the use of Life-Approach Method of Teaching CRS in the Brong Ahafo Region?	80
What are the Problems Encountered in the use of the Life-Approach Method of in Teaching CRS in the Brong Ahafo region?	89
To what Extent do the Instructional Practices of CRS Teachers in the Brong Ahafo Region conform to the Life-Approach Method?	96
FIVE SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	109
Summary of Research Process	109
Summary of Key Findings	110
Conclusions	111
Recommendations	112
Areas for Further Research	112
REFERENCES	114
APPENDICES	123
A Introductory Letter	123
B Questionnaire for Teachers	124
C Questionnaire for Students	130
D Observation Guide	135
E Reliability Coefficient for Teachers Questionnaire	137

F Reliability Coefficient for Student Questionnaire	141
G Reliability Coefficient for Observation	145

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
1 Characteristics of Sampled Students	63
2 Characteristics of Sampled Teachers	65
3 The Views of Students as to the Extent CRS Teachers Use the Life-Approach Method in Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools	67
4 The Views of Teachers as to the Extent They Use the Life-Approach in Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools	73
5 The Extent to Which CRS Teachers Use Life-Approach Method	79
6 The Instructional Resources Available for the Use of Life-Approach Method in Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo; Students' Response	81
7 The Instructional Resources Available for the Use of Life-Approach Method in Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo Region; Teachers' Response	83
8 Instructional Resources Available for the Use of Life-Approach Method a Data from Observation Sections	87
9 Problems Associated with the Use of Life-Approach Method as Indicated by Students	89
10 Problems Associated With the Use of Life-Approach Method as Seen by Teachers	92

11 Problems Associated with the Use of Life-Approach Method, an Observation Data	95
12 The Extent to Which Teachers Instructional Practices Conform to the Life-Approach Method as seen by the Students	96
13 How Teachers Instructional Practices Conform to the Life – Approach Method, Teachers View	102
14 How Instructional Practices of the Teachers Conform to the Life-Approach Method, Data from Observation.	106

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Teaching is seen as an interaction between the teacher and the learner. The teacher, through various techniques, places his or her abilities, personality, knowledge, skills, attitudes and perceptions at the disposal of the learner. Here, the ultimate aim is to bring the physical, social, mental and emotional facets of the learner's development in tune with the needs and aspirations of the society. Teaching is directed by the expectations of certain outcomes. In this case, the main aim of teaching is to "...change individuals in some way: to add to the knowledge they possess, to enable them perform, to develop certain understandings, insights and appreciations" (Taba, 1962, p.194). She continues to say that "the innate tendencies of an individual are modified, suppressed or encouraged according to social demands around him to produce standardized means by which to gratify the primary needs" (Taba, 1962, p. 131). In order to achieve this, it remains incumbent on the teacher to choose, adopt, and apply effective, suitable, as well as appropriate teaching methods in Christian Religious Studies lessons.

"In the educative process, the primary factors are teaching, learning (specifically the teacher who teaches and the student who learns), the curriculum (what is being taught) and methodology (how it is being taught)" (Williamson, 1970, p.103). The method of teaching remains very important

because it serves as the vehicle and transit point for what is to be taught to reach the learner. In fact it is through methods that the teacher is able to “... create learning experiences and learning situations for others” (Grimmitt, 1978, p. 146). Grimmitt (1978) postulates that, “there are no distinctive teaching methods uniquely applicable to Religious Education. Like his colleagues dealing with other subjects, the Religious Education teacher makes use of the common ‘pool of methods’ ... by adapting them to his subject-matter, to his own style of teaching and to the needs, interests and abilities of his students” (p. 144).

This statement does not in any way mean that all methods of teaching are applicable to Christian Religious Studies (CRS). It remains the duty of teachers to concentrate on methods that, according to William (1970), are “... able to induce the attitude formation and change in the course of religious education” (p. 253). He continues to say that “... genuine religious education ought to have effects, right or wrong on moral decision of those who receive it” (p. 253). There is now empirical evidence to show that such methods are available. However, a lot of questions could be raised about these methods because their degree of learner-centeredness varies and not all of them are deemed suitable and appropriate for teaching Christian Religious Studies in the Senior High Schools.

One method of teaching Christian Religious Studies is the Life-Approach method. The method is geared towards making the human situation and people’s experiences the centre of Religious Education (Muthoni, 1992). Teaching methods that are learner-centred are very useful tools for inducing

attitude formation, and the Life-Approach Method makes lessons real, concrete, practical and assimilative.

According to Onsongo (2002), the Life-Approach method has a long standing history especially in the teaching of catechism in Catholic Church and it was developed between the 1950s and 1960s through catechetical congresses held in Bangkok, Thailand in 1962; Katingo, Uganda, Manila, Medellin, Philippines in 1967; and Colombia in 1968. She continues to say that the main aim of adopting the Life-Approach method in teaching of catechism was to incarnate the word of God into the culture of the people. In terms of education, the method has its origins in Britain in the 1960s and 1970s. This period was characterised by two revolutions which necessitated drastic changes in the approaches to teaching religious education namely a shift from subject-centred teaching to child-centred teaching and ensuring that religious education could contribute significantly to the learners general education Holm(as cited in Onsongo, 2002). Basically the method emanated from ideas adopted from educational psychology and philosophy during the two revolutions.

From personal experience as a CRS student in Twene Amanfo Secondary Technical School in Sunyani, we were made to read sections of the Bible to the hearing of the whole class. This was followed up with an explanation of what was read by the teacher. There was over-verbalisation, because the teacher did most of the talking. The only time that we participated fully was during the evaluation stage where students were made to talk about the moral competences they have gained from the lesson and the significance

of the Bible story. Here, students were made to relate what they have learnt from the Bible to real life situations.

The West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) requires that the students answer a first part of a question which deals basically with the recall of biblical experiences (giving an account of the historical background of topics at stake). For the second part, the candidate is required to provide real life application of the topic (that is, significance and moral teachings that can be drawn from the topic). For instance, after a candidate has given a comprehensive account of the Pharisees, he has to follow this up with the attendant contribution of socio-political parties to a country's development. Consequently relating the biblical experience to real life experience forms an integral part of the mode of assessing the knowledge of CRS students. Inevitably, a CRS student who is not taught with the Life-Approach method would find it very difficult in answering questions in the WASSCE.

Statement of the Problem

Christian Religious Studies (CRS) as a school subject has undergone many changes over the past 50 years in terms of content, methodology and purpose. CRS has experienced the changes which have occurred in other curriculum areas, such as the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to student-centred learning and the move towards outcomes (Ryan, 1997). The import of student-centeredness is that the success of a lesson is measured by the changes that can be observed in the learner and not the teacher. This statement is not intended to draw a strict difference between teaching and learning. It is

obvious that, “teaching and learning are opposite sides of the same coin; for a lesson is not taught until it has been learned” (Farrant, 1980, p. 168).

From my own observation during off-campus teaching practice, the substantive teacher used to ask students to read pamphlets aloud and periodically a brief explanation was given. The students were also made to read Bible verses where necessary. In relation to how the Bible stories were related to the real life experiences of the students during the instructional process, the learners were asked to talk about the moral competences that they have developed from the lesson only at the closure stage of the lesson. Thus, learners were asked to state how what have been studied could be related to practical Christian life experiences in order to improve upon day-to-day lives. The learners are expected to be doers of the word not just hearers to deceive themselves. The question is why can teachers not relate what is in the Bible to real life experiences during the lesson delivery, but try to do that at the closure stage if they know that relating the lesson to real life experiences of the learner is so important? This presented a significant challenge to the researcher to find out the extent to which teachers are able to relate the Biblical stories to real life experiences of students in the instructional process.

In the same vein, according to the International Council of Religious Education (1959, p. 4), Christian Religious Education is to “...seek to foster in growing persons consciousness of God as a reality in human experience and a sense of personal relationship to him and ...then... effect in growing persons the assimilation of the best religious experience of the race, pre-eminently that recorded in the Bible, as effective guidance to present experience”. Grimes (as cited in Williamson 1970), holds a similar position:

The most significant learning occurs through the experience we may call personal and creative encounter. From a Christian point of view, nothing has really been learned until it affects one personally (existentially) in terms of his relationships ... it involves, at least on its deeper levels, this personal encounter between the learner ...and the Lord of Life (p. 121).

The crux and the whole business of using life approach method are to give the students the opportunity to personalise biblical concepts in the instructional process. Ghanaian education in general is examination driven. What a person becomes by going through a course of study depends much on the methods that were applied for learning to take place. Thus, “the things that learners already understand are a very significant influence on what they can learn in the future. Therefore, the learners’ background knowledge should be deliberately and consistently incorporated into their new learning” (Yeigh, 2008, p. 20). This background knowledge according to him might be derived from personal experience, prior formal study, community and cultural sources. Some methods lead to rote learning and do not lend themselves to connecting new knowledge to personal experiences. It is necessary for CRS teachers in the Senior High Schools to employ methods that will help the learner to apply the knowledge acquired to the present as well as future life – life long education. The Life-Approach method is one of the methods that seek to bridge the gap between personal life experiences and the new things to be learnt.

According to Grimmitt (1978), Religious Education "...should reflect the principle that the essence of religion is to be found in life itself, in all experiences and all subjects" (p.147). This is the underpinning principle which guides the teacher in the use of the Life-Approach method. Relating the study of religious phenomena to the immediate experiences, interest and thinking of students will help to "...ensure that Religious Education has much to do with the dialogue with experience as with the dialogue with living religions" (Grimmit, 1978, p. xii). The extent to which learning connects to the real world of the student determines the extent to which what is learnt will be valued and have meaning beyond the instructional setting. Three of the ways to make these connections are basing learning around the learners' personal experiences, real world public problems and giving learners opportunity to share their work with audiences beyond their classroom (Yeigh, 2008). There was a hug gap between how I was taught CRS during my Secondary School days, how the substantive teacher delivered his lessons during my off-campus teaching practice and the principles undergirding the teaching of CRS as I know as religious educationist. This challenged me to find out the extent to which CRS teachers in the Brong Ahafo region use the Life-Approach method, the challenges they face in using the method and how their instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method. This was crucial to me because I wanted to find out the situation in Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo Region.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to assess the use of the Life-Approach method in teaching Christian Religious Studies at the Senior High

School level. Specifically, the study sought to find out the extent to which teachers' instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method and the problems teachers encounter in using the method.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. To what extent do teachers use the Life-Approach method in teaching CRS in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region?
2. What are the instructional resources available for the use of Life-Approach method for teaching CRS in the Brong Ahafo Region?
3. What are the problems encountered in the use of the Life-Approach method in teaching CRS in the Brong Ahafo Region?
4. To what extent do the instructional practices of CRS teachers in the Brong Ahafo Region conform to the Life-Approach method?

Significance of the Study

This study was geared towards providing information or blueprint on the effective use of the Life -Approach method for teaching CRS in Senior High Schools. It would therefore serve as a guide to the practice of teaching the subject at the Senior High School level.

The study could also serve as a guide to policy makers and curriculum planners to provide the needed instructional resources and professional training for teachers to enhance the effective teaching of the subject. Finally, the study could contribute to research on the use of the Life-Approach method as a teaching technique in schools.

Delimitations

In setting the boundaries for this study, I concentrated on Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo region. The study also focused on only the Life-Approach method of teaching CRS in the Senior High Schools. Specifically the areas that were covered were the extent to which teachers use the Life-Approach method, instructional resources available for the use of the method and problems teachers encounter in the use of the method. Lastly the study dealt with how teachers' instructional practices like questioning, grouping, explanations, assessment procedures, use of role-play and discussions conform to the use of the Life-Approach method.

Limitations

At the time of data collection, three schools were involved in sporting activities and so there was no way they could participate in the study. This reduced the return rate of the questionnaire for students to 90.63%. The teacher's questionnaire return rate also reduced to 80%. According to the information I collected from the Brong Ahafo Regional Education office, there were 45 CRS teachers in the selected schools but only 36 were found to be teaching in the 29 accessible schools. Apparently there have been changes in subject allocation in the schools. The data could have been enriched if all the schools have been involved. All the same since the return rate is high, the effect of this is infinitesimal. The use of participant observation might have made some teachers teach the way they taught. However, since they did not know what I was looking for, my presence did not affect their teaching so much. To deal with this, questionnaires were administered after the second observation section.

Organization of the Rest of the Study

The study was organized into five main chapters. The first chapter dealt with the general introduction of the study, covering the background to the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation of the study as well as limitations of the study. Chapter Two of the study dealt with the review of related literature. It covered the theoretical framework/conceptual base of the study. It also had a section for empirical review under which studies related to the study were reviewed. Chapter Three also dealt with the methodology which includes: research design; population; sample and sampling procedure; research instrument; validity and reliability of instrument; data collection procedure; as well as data analysis. Chapter Four of the study dealt with the presentation of results/findings of the study. The final chapter, which was chapter five, covered the summary of the study, conclusions based on the findings, and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this section, relevant literature related to the research were reviewed covering the following: the Life-Approach method as a conceptual framework of the study, the Existential Approach of Teaching Religious Education as a theoretical basis for the study, Teacher quality in Christian Religious Studies, Instructional practices in Christian Religious Studies, and The use of instructional resources in Christian Religious Studies.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

The Life Approach Method

One of the skills that are pertinent to a particular method is the teacher's "ability to relate content to past and future experiences of learners" (Oliva, 1992, p.142). The heart of the Life-Approach method navigates around this statement. Meanwhile, an attempt would be made to examine this method as it is used in teaching CRS in the Senior High Schools. The following are what some scholars have to say about the meaning of the Life-Approach method.

Langtree (1997) asserted that the confessional approach of teaching religion failed because it made false assumptions about learners' religiosity and failed to relate religion meaningfully to pupils' lives. That is the confessional approach tried to indoctrinate the learners. This is, very unfortunate because "within several of the great world religions moreover,

there is wide variety of sects and schools of thought” (Anderson, 1984, p. 13). So is it right for a teacher to try to convert his or her learners to their faith where learners come from diverse religious denominations in teaching C. R. S. through the methods they employ?

Kerry (1984) made his stance clear about the Life-Approach method when he posited that “children need to find passages within the Bible which are *related to their own experience and understanding of life*, as well as being within their own verbal comprehension” (p. 23) (emphasis added). This is a sure way of helping the learners to learn for life and also facilitate the transfer of what has been learnt in real life situations that they face. Kerry (1984) continues to say that:

perhaps it would be useful too, to try to step into the child’s shoes. Again as series of questions might help the teacher to do this, she might ask:

Following this method will the pupils

1. be active rather than passive learners?
2. handle real objects and materials?
3. be stimulated to explore ideas, problems and issues?
4. see the relevance of the task to their own lives?
5. come to share in the planning of their own learning?

(p. 69)

There is no way the learner cannot participate actively, and see the relevance of the content of the Bible to their lives, when the teacher is able to link what is to be learnt with the real life experiences of the learners.

Loukes (1965) defines the Life-Approach method as starting to teach with the real, concrete and the present situation of the learners and letting them arrive at a religious understanding of those experiences. In the same way Muthoni (1992) defines it as the approach which emphasises the human person as receiver of Gods' self-revelation to humanity. The approach demands that God speaks to people through situations and experiences. According to Grimmit (1973), "Religious concepts 'only come alive' when we are able to relate them sometimes partially, sometimes completely to our life experience" (p. 52). From the foregoing definitions of the Life-Approach method, it is obvious that the method essentially emphasises the use of the learner's day-to-day experience as the basis of teaching Christian Religious Studies.

Onsongo (2002) gave the steps involved in the use of the method as follows:

1. Introduction

The teacher involves the learners in reflecting on their day to day experiences related to the subject matter. This stage arouses their interest in the content.

2. Lesson Development

This stage involves four steps where learners are taken through Human experience, The Biblical experience, Explanation and Application and then Response. According to her, these are ideally the steps to go through in using the Life-Approach.

There is a very strong justification for the relevance of the use of the Life-Approach method. Its chief advocates are Harold Loukes, Ronald

Goldman and Micheal Grimmitt. These people saw it as an attempt to correct the body-of-knowledge emphasis of the Biblical syllabi existing in Britain during the time (Onsongo, 2002). Some reasons why the Life -Approach method is preferred to other methods of teaching are given in the following statements:

- i. According to DiGiacomo (1989),
the topics should be introduced and illustrated, not just from the Bible and official church but also from a variety of sources, including the minor world of teen, the small world of teens together, the outside world of ordinary people, as well as events featuring famous people (p. 45).
- ii. Religious beliefs cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential (Grimmitt, 1973).
- iii. The pluralist and materialistic nature of the present-society cannot allow for the use of traditional methods of teaching religion. To some extent, religion has a private affair so the approach in teaching it should be one that can help the learner to make his/her own free choice (Onsongo, 2002). She continues to say that the most important justification for the Life-Approach is that Jesus Christ, the gospel teacher, used the approach.
- iv. The presence of religious education in the school curriculum must be justified on educational grounds. This means a shift from the traditional faith-fostering role to a life-centred education (Loukes, 1965).

- v. “Ideally, education ought to prepare students to face the challenges of life. For this, education has to be linked with different life skills to measure up to these challenges”(Singh & Rana, 2004, p. 201).

On the whole as stated earlier, the degree of participation of the learner (learner centeredness) and how the content is related to the relevant previous knowledge of the learner makes this method a preferable one. Thus “the unique characteristic of the Life-Approach is that it would be performance oriented, based on action and behaviour modification” (Singh & Rana, 2004, p. 201).

Onsongo (2002), conducted a research on how to use the Life-Approach method in teaching Christian Religious Education in Kenyan Secondary Schools. The study found out that teachers were not adequately professionally trained to use the approach in terms of pre-service training. As a result the teachers used the approach to a limited extent in teaching Christian Religious Education. It was also found out that the teachers encountered a number of problems in their attempts to use the Life-Approach, namely, shortage of time, an overloaded syllabus; inadequate guidance on how to use the approach, and inadequate teaching-learning resources to support the use of the method. It was suggested at the end of the study that, to improve on the use of the method, the inspectorate division of the Kenyan Education Service should intensify supervision of teachers in Secondary Schools so as to guide teachers, organise seminars and workshops on how to implement the syllabi using Life-Approach. Again, curriculum developers and book authors need to update the main Christian Religious Education text books to make it Life centred in approach.

The little problem that I personally have on the use of the Life-Approach method is the question of how to make up for the diversity or variations in learners' individual experiences because they come from different religious and social backgrounds. What should be done in a situation where learners have contradictory experiences because, they come from different religious, economic, and social backgrounds? Here a common life experience which applies to a greater number of them will best suit them for their maximum participation. Learners should be given the opportunity to share their experiences with others and relate what is being learnt to their personal experiences.

Particular attention has been given to this method because undoubtedly, it is a teaching method:

“-that builds on the foundation of knowledge already possessed by pupils

-that encourages children to learn by doing

-that ensures that learning grows out of useful experiences

-that uses teaching aids effectively” (Farrant, 1980, p. 170).

The Existential Approach of Teaching Religious Education

The existential approach emphasises individual responsibility, individual personality, individual existence and individual freedom of choice. All people are fully responsible for the meaning of their own existence and creating their own essence of self-definition. Knowledge, as perceived by the existentialist, originates in and is composed of what exists in an individual's consciousness and feelings as a result of one's experiences (Anonymous, n. d.).

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (Third Edition) "existentialism is the modern system of belief made famous by Jean-Paul Sartre in the 1940s in which the world has no meaning and each person is alone and completely responsible for their own actions, by which they make their own character" (2008, p. 489). In the same way, Kelly posits that "every human being, it is claimed, must be defined as a unique individual and not as a mere representative of some wider grouping" (2004, p. 29). In this case the individual must be held responsible for his actions and inactions. In fact, for the existentialist, "The highest interest of the individual must be his own existence" (Onwuka, 1996, p. 153).

Having talked about the meaning of existentialism, the question is what is the role of the teacher in using the existential approach? The teacher must not exert his/her wishes on the members of the class. Each student is an individual and has his or her own personality as reiterated in the explanations above. For a teacher to try to determine what is best for students is effectively to impose his or her wishes on the students, to dominate them. This is destructive of individuality and personality and is wrong in teaching religion. The teacher should rather act as a resource person or a facilitator in the course of teaching CRS in Senior High Schools so that he or she will develop understanding of concepts by encouraging creativity and discovery learning. The learner's individual personality, forming the centre stage of CRS lessons, is a sure way of preventing the teachers from implanting his own Christian beliefs into the learners through non rational means.

In the personalist and existentialist approach, religious education offers itself as a contribution to the young person's quest for

meaning in life. This is the religious education which deals with ultimate problems, with mystery and awareness that which seeks to provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living. This is another important strand in the British tradition of religious education (Hull, 1993, pp. 16-17).

Thus in teaching CRS in the Senior High Schools, the attention of the teacher should be on trying to help the learners to find meaning in their individual lives and not the teacher's own life. We cannot draw a very sharp line between the life of the teacher and the life of the learner because there are cases where the learner's life is influenced partially by the teacher's life. Nevertheless, the CRS teacher is expected to teach and not preach.

In the mean time, in teaching CRS, there is the need to use the approach that

- i. seeks to create in pupils certain capacities to understand and think about religion as a unique mode of thought and awareness,
- ii. starts with the child's own feelings, acts and experiences and helps children to build conceptual bridges between their existential experiences and the central concepts of religion" (Grimmitt, 1973, p. xv).

The core of the existential approach to the teaching of Christian Religious Education centres on these three points stated by Grimmitt (1973). This approach to religious education – Christian Religious Studies is grounded in making the learner's characteristics, namely the existential experiences become the basis for forming religious concepts. Although it is as important

and necessary to the CRS teacher to follow the existential approach in teaching, existential approach has its own limitations in its attempt to enable learners to discover meaning and purposes in their lives, the personal/existential approach tends to become excessively individualistic (Hull, 1993). Obviously this approach tends to personalise religion extremely. Though this would promote peaceful coexistence of the numerous variations in Christianity, it does not capitalise on the strong similarities and commonalities that exist in Christian denominations. After all “All religions have theology of other religions’ whether expressed or not, and today we are all under pressure to review it, relate more positively to people of other faiths and grow, in togetherness and as a community” (World Council of Churches, 1986, p. ix). The question which then comes to mind is: is it possible to individualize the work of the teaching process to provide specifics for each student? What happens if the existential experiences contradict?

In a nutshell, “Religion permeates into all the department of life so fully that it is not possible to isolate it. A study of these religious systems is, therefore, ultimately a study of the people themselves in all the complexities of traditional and modern life” (Mbiti, 1979, p. 1). Therefore an approach that focuses on the individual lives of the learners is a laudable one which must as a necessity, be employed in teaching CRS.

Teacher Quality in Christian Religious Education

The need for competent personnel, especially teachers, is a very pertinent issue because Christian Religious Studies as a school subject is structured along the subject pattern of curriculum organization and as Smith, Stanley and Shores (1957) clearly point out, well trained teachers is one of the

requirements for the effective operation of the subject curriculum. The role of the teacher in the effective implementation of the Christian Religious Studies curriculum cannot be overemphasized. According to Marsh and Willis (2003), “whenever policies and programmes have originated from above, teachers must plan their activities around them for periods of time, ranging from a full-year course to a daily lesson of a few minutes” (p. 197). They further explain that teachers rely on the content and methods outlined in textbooks, syllabi, and teachers’ guides for their planning, but what they actually teach depends on their own preferences. They synthesize instinctively, in keeping with their own artistic flairs. Thus teachers, by their own ingenuity, break down the Christian Religious Studies curriculum into a form that could easily be assimilated by the learner in the classroom. The implication of this is that, a case of teacher ineffectiveness in the presentation of Christian Religious Studies lessons is likely to have a debilitating effect on students’ performance as well as on the acquisition of the basic skills and knowledge required of them. This calls for regular monitoring of Christian Religious Studies teachers, to ensure effective teaching of the subject at the Senior High School level.

It is an undeniable fact that teaching is a challenging profession. The responsibility of organising and planning students’ learning is entrusted to the teacher. “Teaching is not merely instruction, but the systematic promotion of learning by whatever means. Teaching strategy is an important aspect of curriculum” (Stenhouse, 1987, p. 24). It is necessary for stakeholders in Religious Education to provide teachers with the requisite opportunities so that they will acquaint themselves with the nuances of quality teaching – use of suitable and appropriate methods of teaching. In fact “...curriculum

development must rest on teacher development and that it should promote it and hence the professionalism of the teacher” (Stenhouse, 1987, p. 24).

Right from the outset of this critique, it must be noted that “Educational considerations thus come into the teacher’s thinking about the methods they employ in teaching” (Browne & Haylock, 2004, p. 38). Herein lays the necessity for teachers to abreast themselves with effective methods of teaching. In order to achieve qualified teacher status in England, one of the criteria is that teachers should be able to improve their own teaching, by evaluating it, learning from the effective practices of others and from evidence, and lastly take increasing responsibility for their own professional development (Cole, 2002). This is very similar in the Ghanaian setting because all these are taken into consideration before a teacher proceeds through the ranks in the profession. This invariably leads to the maintenance of high professional standards through regulation of the profession by members of the profession and the provision of evidence-led advice, in order to maintain and develop expertise within teaching.

According to DiGiacomo (1989), “Religion teachers need a solid background and willingness to develop their skills through continuing education” (p. 21). This would help them to sharpen their skills in using the various methods of teaching Religion of which the Life-Approach is one of them. Unfortunately, “Too few recognise the importance of teaching children how to learn and how to use what they know” (Farrant, 1980, p. 168). Granted that this is the situation on the ground in the Senior High Schools in Ghana, then it needs a very urgent attention. This is because what learners become after going through a course of study is very important plumb line for

measuring how the aims and objectives of teaching a subject have being achieved. Farrant (1980) continued to say that efficient teaching in school demands of the teacher a sound knowledge of all the pupils must know, together with an ability to relate the content, methods, sequence and pace of his work to the individual needs of his pupils, using the environment and appropriate media to support him. It takes professional teachers to go through all these processes successfully. Hence teacher quality depends largely on these.

In relation to how to improve teacher quality in schools, Aggarwal (2001) suggested that “in order to provide guidance to teachers in the techniques of teaching various subjects, subject experts should be appointed at the District level. They should provide guidance to teachers when they visit their schools” (p. 306). Curriculum leaders should be appointed and given the necessary expertise so that they will be able to supervise teachers of CRS periodically. This will rekindle their zeal to perform creditably and be circumspective in their choice of methods of teaching. Issues concerning teacher quality are very paramount because “It is agreed by all that in the last analysis the quality of education must necessarily depend on the quality of teachers” (Aggarwal, 2001, p. 307). Although the teachers’ professionalism is seen to be very important, “Professionalism tends to be weak among teachers in the developing countries because the criteria of a true profession are not completely met” (Farrant, 1980, p. 224). I share the concern of Farrant in that some teachers are left to their fate after completing their professional training without any seminars and workshops to update their skills in teaching. Also, there are situations where Reverend Ministers are made to handle CRS

without any professional training in education. Why can't we require teachers to go on contract so that those who do not upgrade themselves have their contracts terminated?

In relation to this, "Professor Eric Hoyle has drawn attention to varying degrees of professionalism among teachers. Those with limited concern for professionalism, he described as restricted professionals and those with high interest in professionalism as extended professionals" (Farrant, 1980, p. 225). He went on to prescribe some areas of professional concern namely, teaching skills, perspectives in the classroom, classroom events, teaching methods, value of teaching and involvement in non-teaching activities.

In the final analysis, quality teaching is the bedrock and backbone of quality education and so it is worthwhile for stakeholders of the teaching profession to try and provide the requisite opportunities and logistics to develop teacher's professionalism. This will invariably sharpen teachers' pedagogical skills.

Instructional Practices in Religious Education

Bruce and Weil (1980), posit that teaching is the process of helping pupils to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and appreciations by means of a systematic method of instruction. The complexity inherent in teaching could be noticed by looking at the dimensions that the objectives of teaching are set to achieve namely psychomotor, affective and cognitive. It is necessary for CRS teachers to combine appropriate instructional practices to give all the dimensions the needed attention. Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005) also explain teaching as an activity of imparting knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to learners. It involves creating situations to facilitate learning and

motivating learners to have interest in what is being transmitted to them. These two definitions vaguely describe the complex process of teaching, identifying the major components involved, namely the teacher, the learner, and the subject matter (i.e. knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, etc). These components play very important roles as they interact continuously, making it possible for an effective teaching and learning process.

Teaching can be said to be both a science and an art. The science is based on psychological research that identifies cause-effect relationships between teaching and learning. The art is how those relationships are implemented in successful and artistic teaching. All excellent teaching does not look the same but does contain the same basic psychological elements Madeline (as cited in Ornstein & Lasley 2000). It is therefore evident from the above that teachers need to combine conventional teaching practices with their own artistic flair to transmit what is considered to be educationally worthwhile to learners. Again, it is important to note that the consideration of both conceptions of teaching make it possible to come out with a comprehensive description of the concept of effective teaching from both the artistic and scientific standpoint of defining teaching. In this case Christian Religious Studies teachers are tasked to combine the artistic and scientific strategies in the classrooms in order to achieve effective teaching.

According to Bruce and Weil (1980), teaching is the process of helping pupils to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or appreciations by means of a systematic method of instruction. Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005) also explain teaching as an activity of imparting knowledge, skills, attitudes and

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It is worthy to note that the use of right strategies, methods and techniques in the instructional process smoothens and facilitate learning. A teaching strategy is said to be a “generalized plan for a lesson which includes structure, desired learner behaviour in terms of the goals of instruction, and an outline of tactics necessary to implement the strategy” Strasser (as cited in Aggarwal, 1995, p. 124). Aggarwal (1995) sees method as a wider term which includes strategies and techniques of teaching. These are much related concepts and sometimes difficult to draw their differences. In fact effective teaching is multifaceted and involves an effective combination of methods, strategies and techniques. Aggarwal (1995) further states that “while evolving an appropriate approach and method, a teacher has to take into consideration certain basic tenets that guide the direction in which he/she should proceed, viz., from simple to complex, easy to difficult known to unknown, concrete to abstract, particular to general and whole to parts”(p. 128). This principle also undergirds the use of the Life-Approach method in teaching which has its basis on “... what the participants are doing physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually as they live on personal, interpersonal and social levels.” (Groome, 1980, p. 184). Here the student’s known, practical, real life

experience “becomes the starting point and the ultimate purpose of religious education” (Goldman, 1965, p. 65).

In teaching CRS, in the Senior High Schools, the instructional practices that are adopted should as a necessity be tactically selected. Wender (2009) postulates that “This approach not only inspires students to critically evaluate the narrow concepts of religion that is peculiar to modern society; it also makes concrete, intimate and compelling such phenomena a transcendence, the sacred, and ultimate commitments, thereby deepening students’ understanding of how religious experiences imbues the whole of human life” (p. 14). The various instructional practices that are employed in teaching CRS in the Senior High Schools could be adopted to suit the above principle. Thus an attempt would be made to look at how the various instructional practices in Religious Education lend themselves to and encourage the use of the Life-Approach method.

The methods employed by teachers in teaching CRS or any other subject have their own ramifications on how learning will take place. Teachers are to look out for the loopholes and strengths of the various teaching methods so that they would be able to make up for it or decide to choose a particular method which will be suitable and appropriate for their lessons. In this vein, according to Browne and Haylock (2004), “There are both ethical and educational questions to be raised about methods or processes themselves...” (and the way teachers act (how they do things: the strategies or processes they use) and the value these actions reveal, may have moral implications and also educational ones” (pp. 38, 39). According to Tamakloe, Atta and Amedahe (2005) “Paradoxically, teaching methods are the processes

which are adopted by both teacher and the student to induce learning in a teaching interaction” (p. 324). They continue to say that when one looks at the spectrum of processes which take place in teaching-learning interaction, one is tempted to opt for the term “teaching-learning methods”. This they say stems from the fact that there are teachers and students in the interaction leading to an inter-play of teacher activity and student activity.

Apparently,

there is close relationship between teaching and learning and it is possible to modify, improve and develop teaching strategies for quality attainment. By illustrations, lecturing, probing questions, reinforcing pupil participation, having fluency in questioning and putting divergent questions, no doubt, the quality of teaching can be improved. The mentioned methods and guidelines if followed correctly will make drastic changes in teaching technology and improve quality assurance in teaching (Singh & Rana, 2004, p.13).

In all these cases, the appropriateness or otherwise of a teaching method can be looked at with the spectacle of the degree of participation of the learner (child- centeredness), practical nature of the lesson, and how the method helps to relate knowledge to the day-to-day life of the learner. These are going to be my criteria for examining the methods selected. Fischer and Fischer (1979) made their position clear:

We do not consider all styles of teaching and learning to be equally valid. All often, indefensible practises are justified with the claim, ‘well that’s my style. I have mine, you have

yours, and each is as good as the other'... since the very idea of style is based on a commitment to individualism of instruction and the development of learner autonomy, styles that encourage undue conformity and dependence are not acceptable to us (p. 4).

Since there are many methods that can be applied during teaching, it takes the professionalism of the teacher to be able to decide which particular method can best suit the learners. The extent to which some methods promote learner autonomy must be accorded the needed consideration because at the end of the day, its the changes that have occurred in the learner that matters and so any method that seem not to promote this must be discarded.

Farrant (1980) also posited that "Teaching is one of those activities of which it can be said that there is no general rule as to what is the right way or wrong way. That is not to say that the teacher should not constantly be searching for ways to improve his methods" (p. 171). The method employed by a teacher in a particular situation may not be applicable to another situation. The application of methods of teaching requires strategic planning, which is not an easy task. Farrant (1980) does not mean that teaching is devoid of principles, in fact, in teaching CRS there are very strict principles that must be followed in order to distinguish the teaching from preaching. The teacher of religion is conscious that his task differs from that of teaching French, chemistry, mathematics or economics. He realises that, since religion as a way of life is so deeply rooted in the lives of the students he teaches, he needs to guard his artistry of pedagogy with particular care (Thomas, 1940). The

following are some of the instructional practices that teachers could employ them in the teaching learning process.

The Lecture Method

According to Tamakloe, Atta and Amedahe (2005), the “lecture method is one of the oldest methods of teaching” (p. 324). The lecture method, although considered by modern educators as traditional or outdated, is probably still one of the most widely used procedures of teaching. Even in secondary schools, teachers fall back on this method when they have had insufficient time to prepare their lessons. Often, beginning teachers resort to lecturing using portions of their own lecture notes gathered while they were students themselves (Nacino- Brown, Oke & Brown, 1990). They continue to give the advantages of the lecture method as follows:

it has high inspirational and motivational value, it supplements and enriches materials found in students’ textbooks, the teacher has complete control over the choice of knowledge the student learn, it results in the economy of time and effort and it can be used to teach large classes (pp. 45-46).

These points given above are very true and realistic. Notwithstanding this, what is the degree of participation of learners (learner-centeredness) in the teaching learning process? The disadvantages would help us to answer this question. Aggarwal also added his voice to the merits of using the lecture method when he said that it is suitable “For presenting factual and informational materials” (1995, p. 130). To Gage and Beliner (1998) on the benefits of using lecture method, the technique is appropriate when (i) the basic purpose is to disseminate information, (ii) the information is not

available elsewhere, (iii) the information needs to be presented in a particular way or adapted to a particular group and (iv) the information needs to be remembered for a short time. Do we want students to remember what they learn for a short time or we want them to learn for life? Can we classify just a dissemination of information as teaching?

Reacting to how the use of the lecture method can be detrimental, Gage and Beliner (1998), Nacino-Brown, Oke & Brown (1990) listed the following points:

1. It does not promote long-term learning
2. Objectives other than the acquisition of information cannot be sought
3. It violates one of the principles of learning, i.e. learning through active involvement
4. It reduces students to passive recipients of ideas which do not encourage the enquiring or creative mind.

In the words of Ornstein and Lasley (2000), “During lectures delivered by a teacher, there is little give-and-take between the teacher and students or among students. Lecturing is often described as “unnecessary “, dull and “a waste of time” (p. 173). In fact, it can be seen from the foregoing that the use of lecture method can increase students’ passivity and reduce the student’s role to note taking instead of engaging students in a more active learning (Eisner, 1987). In using the lecture method of teaching, the teacher- learner interaction is very minimal and a communication gap is created between the teacher and the learner, which is not supposed to be the case. Although there are exceptions, the lesser you talk and the more your students talk the more effective you are as a teacher. The greatest danger is that by talking too much,

you will create a passive audience and lose the learner's interest. Brief lectures and explanations of 3 to 5 minutes at most are suitable for elementary school students (Ornstein & Lasley, 2000). Since the so-called advantages of the use of the lecture method cannot be justified on educational grounds in the teaching of CRS in the secondary schools, and numerous inadequacies exist in it, it is not far from the truth to say that the lecture method must be discarded in its entirety or it may be used sparingly.

The lecture method is being discussed here because methods are not used in isolation. Quality teaching is poly-methodical (i.e. quality teaching is achieved via a combination of different teaching methods). There is therefore the need to consider the methods that are widely used by teachers to help them be aware of the loopholes and make up for them because teachers may be tempted to combine methods in the teaching-learning process. From the foregoing, it could be seen that the lecture method is the most widely used form of presentation. Every teacher should know how to develop and present a lecture. They also should understand the advantages and limitations of this method. Lectures are used for introduction of new subjects, summarizing ideas, showing relationships between theory and practice, and reemphasizing main points. The lecture method is adaptable to many different settings, including either small or large groups. Lectures also may be used to introduce a topic. Finally, lectures may be combined with other teaching methods to give added meaning and direction. The lecture method of teaching needs to be very flexible since it may be used in different ways.

The Questioning Technique

A variety of questions are asked by teachers in the instructional process. In the same way questions are periodically welcomed from students during the teaching and learning process. In this sense questioning can be said to be a very useful way of finding out what students know about a subject or topic, revising previous work done, discovering students' understanding, motivating students, maintaining interest and alertness, developing a line of thought, getting students involved in lessons and so on (Tamakloe, Atta & Amedahe, 1996). Ornstein and Lasley (2000) are of similar view and postulate that "Good teaching involves good questioning, especially, when teaching large groups of students. Skilful questioning can arouse the students' curiosity, stimulate their imagination and motivate them to search out new knowledge" (p. 179). In relation to the use of the questioning technique in the instructional process, "it is a common belief among teachers that the effectiveness of teaching can be measured to some considerable extent by the teacher's ability to ask the right type of question, at the right time, in the right way" (Nacino-Brown, Oke & Brown, 1982, p. 115). The questioning technique could be employed at the beginning of a lesson, in the course of the lesson and at the end of the lesson. The type of question asked at a particular point in time depends, to a large extent, on the purpose and use of the questions. Questions are categorised into various forms. According to Kissock and Lyortsum (1982), we have Low order questions and high order questions. In a similar way Nacino-Brown, Oke, and Brown (1982) classified questions to be factual and thought questions. No matter the type of questions that are used by the CRS teacher, it becomes incumbent on him or her to be tactical and aware of

the rules that govern the questioning technique. According to Ornstein and Lasley (2000) “Good teachers can skilfully strike a balance between factual and thought provoking questions and select questions to emphasize major points and stimulate likely discussion” (p. 179). This will invariably influence the quality of classroom interaction and result in effective instruction. The implication of this therefore is that, in the use of the Life-Approach in teaching CRS, the teacher is expected to use high order questions (usually, application questions) to enable students to apply real life experiences to the Biblical experience in the teaching-learning process.

From the foregoing, questions are so much a part of teaching that they are often taken for granted. Effective use of questions may result in more student learning than any other single technique used by teachers. In general, instructors should ask open-ended questions that are thought provoking and require more mental activity than simply remembering facts. Since most of the questions from teachers are at the understanding level of learning, or higher, questions should require students to grasp concepts, explain similarities and differences, and to infer from biblical concepts thereby bridging the gap between existential experiences and biblical concepts. The question then is: do CRS teachers have the pedagogical skills to ask questions that encourage the student to use their real life experiences to answer the questions? To what extent does teachers’ use of the questioning technique conform to the Life-Approach method? The study would seek answers to these questions.

Grouping

Maintaining a positive teaching and learning environment is one of the most difficult tasks in the classroom. The situation compounds when the

number on roll of the class is too large. Large classes are characterized by much disruptive behaviour. Such behaviours could best be reduced to the barest minimum when the teacher is able to employ effective classroom management practices. One of such practices is grouping of students during the instructional process. In this case, appropriate grouping strategies could be used to create the groups with equal or unequal number of participants depending on the needs of the teacher. According to Tamakloe, Atta and Amedahe (2005), “In classroom teaching and learning, grouping is the clustering of students for efficient instruction. It refers to the way students are organized for teaching. Students can be arranged in small groups, large groups or in singles for individual work” (p. 131). Though classroom grouping promotes effective teaching, it is necessary to follow the principles underpinning classroom grouping in order to achieve the objective for which grouping is done. Tamakloe, Atta and Amedahe further state that the teacher can formally group the students by deliberately organizing them. There is also an informal grouping where the group is unstructured peer or friendship group naturally in the classroom. According to Charles (1983), grouping should be flexible. This is advantageous because it allows teaching to match the needs of topics, activities, materials and individual students. In grouping students during CRS lessons, teachers should employ the strategy which is less prescriptive, more aware of different personal or family options with regard to the way; the Christian faith is being lived, and should be more of an invitation to personal commitment through a variety of practices and activities (Rummery, 2001). This is not in any way suggesting to the teacher that the students should be grouped according to the Christian faith they belong.

Though students' similar Christian experiences and real life situations could be a very good basis for grouping students, when their experiences are diverse, they will have access to a multi-dimensional knowledge. This is a sure way of broadening the student's horizon. According to Nacino – Brown, Oke and Brown (1982),

in comparing groups of four students of similar personality, traits to groups in which the students were different, it has been found that the heterogeneous groups produced superior solutions. Researchers suggest that heterogeneous groups are more likely to have a variety of alternatives proposed and that this permits inventive solutions (p. 51).

In contrast, White (2004), is of the view that “Pedagogical practice should provide a diverse range of opportunities for students to reconstruct their learning experiences in a manner that makes sense to them and ideally, will reflect their personal learning style” (p. 119). This means that the CRS teacher should be flexible enough and allow students to acquaint themselves with diverse experiences in the teaching-learning process. In fact grouping students based on diverse Christian experiences ensures that learning is seen as a multifaceted endeavour to interpret the world (Bounds, 1997). Considering individual real life experiences in grouping students is paramount because “Religious education is not just about facilitating understanding but it is also about evoking commitment and deriving personal meaning” (White, 2004, p. 117). Collaborating allows students to talk amongst each other and listen to all points of view, especially, in the discussion process. Here students are able to share their life experiences among themselves. Of particular

interest to this study is to find out the extent to which the CRS teacher's grouping strategies conform to life-approach method.

Discussion

“If there is one truism in teaching, it is, there is no one way to teach anything or anyone” Orlich (as cited in Reed, Bergemann & Olson, 1998, p. 57). In fact there is a plethora of teaching methods that could be adopted at particular point in time during the instructional process. One of such methods that is mostly used in teaching CRS is the discussion method. Teachers often use a discussion method of instruction because the method emphasizes high level of teacher student interaction. Here, the teacher may present ideas and raise questions to stimulate debate or dialogue among the students. According to Meyers (1986), the discussion process helps to engage students' interest, challenge students' present thinking processes, and creates the atmosphere where active reflection and interchange replaces caution and passivity. Tamakloe, Atta and Amedahe (2005), added to the importance of the use of discussion method when they postulated that the method is a powerful means of developing the prowess of critical thinking in students.

Talking about some advantages of using the discussion method, Nacino-Brown, Oke and Brown (1982) stated that it is efficient in coordinating or relating facts or materials learned for better understanding and also help to facilitate transfer of learning from one situation to other related situations. According to Balogun, Okon, Musaaazi and Thakur (1981) the discussion method is highly recommended for its high degree of student participation which ensures better understanding and retention of material. The more students are involved in the teaching learning process, the more

successful the lesson becomes. The discussion method is one of the methods of teaching which ensures that the student participate fully in the discussion process. The nature of the topic and teacher's classroom management strategies are very great determinants of the success or otherwise of the discussion exercise. Topics that can generate debate and provoke the thinking of the students are very suitable for classroom discussion. Topics are also not to be too difficult to give only the brilliant student the opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

Lewin (1958), also postulates that the discussion method of teaching is very effective in developing the affective competencies of students. Some of the methods of teaching try to develop only the cognitive and psychomotor domains of the learners neglecting the affective side of it. Some teachers tend to focus on the development of the cognitive and the psychomotor domain. In religious education, the affective domain of student is very paramount. One method that facilitates the development of the affective domain in the teaching learning process is discussion. Research studies demonstrate consistently that the use of discussion method of teaching can lead to attitude change. For example Fisher (1968), conducted an experiment in which one group of fifth grade students read a series of stories designed to promote positive attitude toward American Indians. Another group of students were made to read the same story and in addition participate in a discussion after each reading period. The study found out that those students in the discussion group developed significantly more positive attitude toward American Indians than the student who only read the stories without discussions.

According to the Flight Instructors Handbook (2007), in the discussion method, as is true with any group learning effort, the teacher typically relies on the students to provide ideas, experiences, opinions, and information. A teacher may use this method during classroom periods, preferably after a field trip and after the students have gained some knowledge and experience. He continues to say that fundamentally, the discussion method is almost the opposite of the lecture method. The teachers' goal is to draw out what the students know, rather than to spend the class period telling them. The teacher should remember that the more intense the discussion and the greater the participation, the more effective the learning. All members of the group should follow the discussion. The teacher should treat everyone impartially; encourage questions, exercise patience and tact, and comment on all responses. Also sarcasm or ridicule should never be used, since it inhibits the spontaneity of the participants. In a guided discussion, the teacher acts as a facilitator to encourage discussion between students. It is the teachers' responsibility to help students prepare themselves for the discussion. Each student should be encouraged to accept responsibility for contributing to the discussion and benefiting from it. Applegate (1968), found out that "a classroom discussion implies open and active participation. However, in most instances it becomes a limited dialogue between the teacher and a few students, with the remaining ones sitting mute and inactive" (p. 78). Certain groups of students tend to talk more in discussion than others. Lockheed and Hall (1975), postulated that boys tend to initiate more statements and exert more influence than girls. It has also being found out that younger students tend to participate less than older students (Deal, 1970). Some people feel

reluctant to express their view due to the fear of being wrong. This normally happens when the teacher is unable to ensure good classroom control during the discussion and allow some of the students to ridicule their colleague when they commit a mistake. This means that good classroom control is paramount in using the discussion method effectively. It is therefore necessary that the teacher prepares the students adequately for the discussion, by making them aware of the lesson objectives and the need to participate in the discussion.

Generally, research has found that discussions groups are more effective than individuals in solving problems draw on the diverse talents of their peers, which have multiple solutions and which will commit students to a course of action (Gall & Gall, 1976). They went on to develop a list of skills for facilitating the discussion process namely maintaining an open discussion in which students feel free to say what they think, listening to others and keeping the discussion focused, analysing different points of view expressed in the discussion and evaluating what happened in the discussion. All these strategies when adequately put in place could help promote successful classroom discussion. It is important to emphasize here that the use of the Life-Approach method of teaching requires the drawing of relevant relationships between the biblical experiences and the student's own personal life experiences. Herein lays the need to find out how the CRS teacher's use of the discussion method conforms to the Life-Approach method of teaching.

The Use of Role-Play in Religious Education

The use of Role-playing in teaching religious helps to offer a friendlier and fun environment for students to learn biblical concept. The result of this is that students are able to participate in the instructional process fully. The only

problem with role-playing exercise is that non-participants do not appear to get as much benefit from the role-playing exercise as the participant themselves. It is recognised not all students would want to be actively involved and some may in fact feel intimidated by the process. It is also recognised that adopting a role-playing approach may lead to an increase in the workload of the teacher and this will have to be considered when implementing role-playing.

According to Teed (2009), in most role-playing exercises, each student takes the role of a person affected by an issue and studies the impacts of the issues on human life and/or the effects of human activities on the world around us from the perspective of that person. More rarely, students take on the roles of some phenomena, to demonstrate the lesson in an interesting and immediate manner. Role-playing is simultaneously interesting and useful to students because it emphasizes the "real-world". It challenges them to deal with complex problems with no single "right" answer and to use a variety of skills beyond those employed in a typical research project. In particular, role-playing presents the student a valuable opportunity to learn not just the course content, but other perspectives on it.

According to Biggs (2001), there are three levels of teaching. Level one which focuses on what the student is (emphasis on good or bad students), level two which focuses on what the teacher does (emphasis on the teacher's transmission of concepts and understandings) and level three which focuses on what the student does (emphasis on teaching as supporting learning). The use of role-playing is one of the methods that focus on the third stage of teaching as described by Biggs.

O'Toole (1992) suggests that unintended trivialisation of the subject matter during role-playing exercises can become a problem, especially if people in perceived authority (such as teachers) are involved in the role-playing exercise. The same author also suggests that this type of interaction usually ends up being somewhat self-conscious with an approach to the drama, being based on the notion of public performance. Despite the recommendations of O'Toole (1992) regarding people in authority not being involved, the authors consider that the teacher should be part of the role-play as it is difficult for students to initiate some discussions.

Budden (2004) posits that incorporating role-play into the classroom adds variety, a change of pace and opportunities for a lot of language production and also a lot of fun! It can be an integral part of the class and not a 'one-off' event. If the teacher believes that the activity will work and the necessary support is provided, it can be very successful. However, if the teacher isn't convinced about the validity of using role-play the activity will fall flat on its face just as you expected it to. It follows that the success or otherwise of the use of role-play in teaching Christian Religious Studies depend largely conviction of the teacher.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of role play lies in its contribution to the learning experience. Tolan and Lendrum (1995) have commented that role play is able to stimulate the imagination and enable course members to engage with people's concerns and complexities within a supportive environment. They go on to point out that being observed as a role player highlights the differences between how people think they are communicating and how their communication is perceived by others. Using role play as a teaching strategy

allows the student to test out their repertoire of behaviours, or to study the interacting behaviours of the group, and helps them to cope with the idea of uncertainty (Van-Ments, 1983).

How Assessment Procedures in Christian Religious Studies Conform to the Life-Approach Method

There is an array of assessment procedures in religious education that could improve the quality of teaching when they are appropriately employed. Recent decades have witnessed significant developments in the field of educational assessment. New approaches to the assessment of student achievement have been complemented by the increasing prominence of educational assessment as a policy issue. In particular, there has been a growth of interest in modes of assessment that promote, as well as measure, standards and quality. (<http://www.tandf.co.uk>). The modes of assessments employed by teachers have very great ramifications on how students will be able to apply what has been learnt to their lives in real life situations. This has made it necessary for teachers to look for and employ appropriate assessment procedures in order to achieve aims of education in the country. The rate at which some assessment procedures promote life-long education and help students to bridge the gap between existential experiences and biblical concepts is quite minimal.

Assessment is the process by which progress is measured and communicated to pupils so that they can take their learning forward. It also serves to inform the teacher whether learning objectives have been met and what steps need to be taken to enable students to progress further. In Religious Education, as in all subjects, assessments should be designed so that students

have opportunities to show what they know, understand, and can do. The process of assessment should be conducted in line with the whole school assessment policy and take account of national developments in this field (<http://schools.norfolk.gov.uk>)

The non-statutory national framework for Religious Education sets out standards for learning and attainment and exemplifies the contribution Religious Education makes to the school curriculum. The framework highlights the significant contribution Religious Education makes to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and its important role in preparing pupils for life in a diverse society. The framework is designed to benefit all students by improving the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education (<http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk>). It was further stated that, the assessment procedures in religious education should help the students to ask, and suggest answers to, questions of identity, relating them to their own and others' lives; explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.

The assessment of religious education should also be based on the objectives relating to knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes within each section of the course. While students will draw on their own experience in an examination, their personal faith commitment and/or affiliation to a particular religious grouping will not be subject to assessment for national certification (<http://www.curriculumonline.ie/en>)

According to Cox and Godfrey (1997) during the 1980's researchers in the field of religious education were able to present strong arguments that supported the use of assessment strategies in the teaching of religious

education. A sound philosophical framework to support the introduction of assessment strategies in the teaching of religious education was developed. Cox and Godfrey (1997) conducted a research to test the validity of the philosophical arguments supporting the use of assessment strategies in the teaching of religious education in a classroom situation. The researchers attempted to answer those who continue to challenge the validity of the arguments supporting the use of assessment strategies. In fact the aim of the study was to investigate whether the use of formal assessment procedures in the teaching of religious education has an effect on student learning outcomes. The study found out that teachers who did utilise assessment strategies do have information about their teaching and how well their students were learning. They could make informed judgments about their selected teaching strategy and adjust the strategy as the teaching progresses. The results of the study also indicated that the use of assessment strategies may have a motivating effect on students. Unfortunately, many teachers continue to reject the use of assessment procedures in teaching of religious because of the failure to recognise the important role that appropriate assessment procedures play in effective teaching in Senior High Schools. In this case, Religious Education teachers in secondary schools need to ensure that assessment is undertaken regularly for all students in line with the profile dimension in the syllabus. It is also important for religious education teachers to consider how assessment may be managed, both effectively and efficiently, by thinking carefully about what and how much to assess within each unit of work. The following is description of the profile dimensions of Christian religious studies in the senior high schools in Ghana.

According to the Christian Religious Studies syllabus for Senior High Schools (2007), a central aspect of the syllabus is the concept of profile dimensions that should be the basis for the instruction and assessment. A dimension according to Ministry of Education is a psychological unit for describing a particular learning behaviour. Learning may be divided into a number of classes. A student may acquire some knowledge through learning. The student may learn to apply or use the knowledge acquired in some new context. For instance, the birth date and stories of Jesus Christ is knowledge fact a student should learn in the subject. The application of the teachings of Jesus Christ is however a different form of behaviour the student is required to learn in school. If the teacher requires the students to apply and practice the teachings of Jesus Christ, the teacher is in this case asking for a practical application and personal acquisition of a religious teaching which is obviously different from learning the birth story Jesus. The syllabus specifies three behaviours name “knowledge”, “application” and “attitudes and values”. These are referred to as the dimensions of knowledge. Unfortunately instruction in most cases has tended to stress knowledge acquisition to the detriment of other higher level behaviours such as application, analysis and so on. It is note worthy that the focus of the teaching and learning of Christian Religious Studies has moved from the didactic acquisition of knowledge and rote learning to a position where students are made to apply their knowledge, develop analytical thinking skills, synthesise information and use their knowledge in a variety of ways to deal with learning problems and issues in lives. Each of the dimensions has been given a percentage weight that should be considered in teaching learning and testing. The percentage weights are

knowledge and understanding (35%), application (40%) and attitudes and values (25%). The pedagogical implications of this is that since students are required to answer question in accordance with the profile dimensions stated above, it follows that teachers are required to teach in accordance with the same profile dimension. One of the methods that bridge the gap between existential experiences and biblical concepts is Life-Approach method. Assessment procedures that conform to the life-approach method facilitate application of knowledge to the real life situations. Of great interest to the study is to find out how assessment procedures employed by the teachers conform to the life approach method.

The Use of Instructional Resources in the teaching and learning of CRS

Modern teaching and learning requires that the teacher provides the most congenial atmosphere necessary for meaningful as well as practical instruction to take place. Teachers are entrusted with this key role of creating the most congenial atmosphere for learning to take place.

Thus, a classroom that provides a truly educational environment is a place where children will learn unconsciously as well as consciously. In it they will find interesting things such as pictures about current affairs, working models of things they are learning about display shelves with exhibits of interest for nature study, and toys and books which they can use whenever they have finished their work satisfactorily before the rest of the class (Farrant, 1980, p. 169).

One of the important faculties of using appropriate pedagogy, andragogy and in fact quality teaching is the teacher's ability to select and use

appropriate instructional resources. It is necessary that the teacher acquaints himself/herself with the requisite skills needed for application of instructional resources in the teaching-learning process. Though the importance of the use of instructional resources in teaching cannot in any way be overemphasized, it has its own problems. This underscores the key role that professionalism plays in the effective use of instructional resources.

A well equipped classroom in terms of instructional resources could enhance learning. It is very important, that teachers who are the foot soldiers of curriculum implementation realize the key role that they play in selection, use and maintenance of instructional resources in the classroom. Effective learning could be accomplished through seeing, hearing, feeling, manipulation and examining relevant instructional resources. The various senses of human person become the main vehicle that the mental faculty utilizes in order to retain what is learnt. In line with this, it can be articulated that the various senses are, as it were, transit points for effective teaching – learning process. Singh (2006) opines that instructional resources may be seen as a separate field in the theory of education that deals with the development and application of educational resources. Thus, the development, application and evaluation of systems, techniques, technologies and aids to improve the process of human learning is a very important aspect of teaching and learning. It must be noted that instructional resources are not end in themselves but a means to accomplish instructional objectives.

According to Ornstein and Lasley (2000), “Pedagogical aids sometimes called instructional aids or teaching aids, are materials designed for teacher use that are provided as supplements to textbook” (p. 235). They went

on to give teacher's manuals, transparencies or cut-outs to duplicate, supplementary tables, graphs, charts, maps, bulletin board displays, parent involvement materials, teacher resource binders, computer software, audio and video cassettes as some examples of these instructional resources. These resources according to them are used before, during and after lessons. In the words of Aggarwal (1995),

In addition to reading, vicarious experiences can be gained from still pictures, films, filmstrips, resource persons, simulations, mock ups, television and the like. The more concrete and realistic the vicarious experience, the more nearly it approaches the learning effectiveness of the first levels (pp. 296-297).

It is through the use of appropriate and suitable instructional materials that the CRS teacher can provide these experiences. Nacino-Brown, Oke and Brown, (1982) gave four varieties of instructional resources as follows:

1. Visual: examples are three dimensional materials, printed materials, chalkboards, flannel or felt boards, bulletin boards, still pictures and graphics.
2. Audio: examples include radio, record players, and tape records
3. Audio- visual: examples are motion pictures and television.
4. Community resources: examples include resource persons and places of interest.

These are indispensable as far as effective teaching and learning of CRS is concerned.

There is a great variety of materials around that can be used to make our meanings more vivid and more

interesting. The mere use of these materials however, does not guarantee effective communication, or effective teaching. It is their careful selection and skilful handling by the teacher that renders them useful in facilitating learning (Nacino – Brown, Oke & Brown, 1982, p. 165).

It is therefore very necessary that strict professionalism and strategies need to be applied in selecting and using instructional resources in order to achieve maximum impact. In fact the teacher performs very crucial roles in the selection and use of instructional resources. Herein lays the need for teachers to update and acquaint themselves with the requisite nuances of appropriate as well as suitable use of instructional resources in the teaching of CRS in the Senior High Schools. Walkin (1982) added his voice on the need to be circumspective in the use of instructional resources when he said that

To be successful in the classroom, aids must supplement the teacher's work and should be flexible in their application. The learning resources centre may well be jammed full of the latest multi-media teaching aids, but this will be of little use to a teacher who lacks the know how that they require or who does not have the time to set them up in the instructional situation (p. 261).

He continued to say that before a teacher uses any instructional resources, the teacher must be fully conversant with its operation and application and must rehearse his presentation before confronting the class. These rules are indispensable in the use of instructional resources in the teaching – learning process because the teacher will be able to assess the

efficacy of the resources in helping to achieve the stated objectives and also make up for the weaknesses inherent in the resource in question.

With the effective use of audiovisual resources in the classroom, Ornstein and Lasley (2000) posited that:

Display such aids only when you talk about them;
explain visuals to your audience; use a marker or highlighter when using an overhead to focus students on key points; use the K – i- s –s (keep it short and simple) principle – minimize detail. Make sure visuals are readable from the back of the room (p. 178).

This underscores the need to follow the principles governing a particular instructional resource. Failure to abide by these principles will definitely undermine and water-down the usefulness as well as the effectiveness of the resource.

With regards to the selection and use of instructional resource, Knirk and Gustafson (1986) says that selection should be done only after the designer has developed instructional objectives and examined the characteristics media. After a learning problem has been identified and a solution designed, the user determines whether appropriate instructional resources or new materials need to be created. In this case, if the instructional resources do not exist in the school, it is the duty of the teacher to search for them and use them appropriately.

Tickton (1971) believes that instructional resources of all varieties, when used with advanced planning and preparation of students have been recognized as the basic means of improving the output resulting from

classroom instruction. It should help provide every person with access to excellence. In fact not only can instructional resources recognize individual taste, needs and services; but it can also make such individualization manageable (Dale, 1969).

According to Nacino – Brown, Oke and Brown (1982) there are five factors that affect the selection and use of instructional resources. The teacher therefore must consider such factors when choosing from a variety of instructional resources especially when they are all suitable for the purposes. They mentioned the subject matter, method of teaching, age of learners, how and when the medium would be used or handled, who will use the medium and where to obtain the resource as some of the factors that are to be considered. In this study, the researcher would find out if the CRS teachers consider these factors in the selection and use of instructional resources in their teaching.

In the view of Ornstein and Lasley (2000)

The teacher must incorporate instructional materials into unit plan and lesson plan and modify them in a way that considers the students; developmental stages or age, needs and interests, aptitudes, reading levels, prior knowledge, work habits, learning styles and motivation. The following factors should be considered when presenting materials (published or teacher-made) (p. 226)

Apart from these factors, a lot of questions, according to them should be raised on a particular material that is purported to be used. Some of them are:

Are the materials understandable?

Are the materials organized clearly?

Are the materials sequenced logically?

Are the materials complementary?

Do the materials complement how students learn?

The more the CRS teacher answer “yes” to these questions, the more the resource in question is deemed appropriate and suitable. On the contrary, if the teacher answers “no”, to these questions, then the resource under review must be considered again and other alternative chosen.

According to Robens (1970), in order to use instructional resources effectively, the main role of the teacher is to get the learners actively involve with the material. This means that the CRS teacher should ensure that students have ample experience in interacting with instructional material in question. This will help the learners to acquaint themselves with the requisite skills of manipulating the resources in the real life situation. In fact, “Use of the aid should be validated and its impact evaluated. An aid should be chosen for its function and predicted effect on the audience” (Walkin, 1982, p. 290). This means that the CRS teacher should be able to assess the efficacy and efficiency of the resources to be used. In the final analysis, modern curriculum development tends to adopt multi media approach to learning and so competence in the use of instructional resources is essential for learning new curricula (Farrant, 1980).

Problems associated with the use of instructional resources in teaching

CRS

Instructional resources will certainly persist in alerting us to problems in education. The use of instructional resources in the classroom is associated with a whole lot of problems. Some scholars in the field of education articulated some of the problems as follows.

With respect to the problem of durability and maintenance of instructional resources, Sarfo (2007) says that they are susceptible to damage and cumbersome. In this way, teachers may not have the expertise of repairing these instructional resources when they get damaged or may decide to stop using them due to the difficulty they encounter in handling them.

According to Stolurow (1961), one problem that can be anticipated in the use of instructional resources is getting teachers to accept, let alone use programmed instructional resources and teaching machines. The teacher's perceptions and attitude towards the use of instructional resources affect positively or negatively their readiness to use it. This becomes serious when "the pressures on teachers to go back to traditional method are strong" (Shipman, 1972, p. 58). Actually, some teachers are so conservative that they always want teaching and learning to go on in a traditional way because of the fear that they may be seen to be inefficient.

According to Farrant (1980), the high cost of electricity operated audio visual equipments and the difficulty in finding satisfactory suppliers and after sale service, together with the problem of supplying schools in the rural areas with electricity has limited the introduction of instructional resources in many countries. The situation in Ghana is no exception. The same problem could be

found in some of the Senior High Schools in Ghana. It is very important that the stakeholders of education identify the problems and solve them accordingly in order to promote the use of instructional resources. Farrant (1980) went on to say that complexity of some audio-visual equipment and insufficient number of manufacturers are some of the problems associated with the use of instructional resources.

According to Aggarwal (1995), “While all these aids are becoming more and more popular day by day, there are still some problems to be faced and solved” (p. 302). He mentioned apathy of the teachers, indifference of students, ineffectiveness of the aids, financial hurdles, absence of electricity, lack of facilities for training, co-ordination between centre and states among others as some of the problems associated with the use of instructional resources. Can we talk of these problems as being the case in the Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana? The study will try to examine these problems with the related literature serving as the main plumb line for the evaluation.

Having articulated some of the principles and problems associated with the use of instructional resources in the teaching of CRS, this study will try to find out whether teachers are of similar views with respect to instructional resources in the area under study.

Summary of Literature Review

For effective teaching to take place, good instructional strategies must be adopted by the teacher. A teacher has many options when choosing a style by which he will teach. A lot of the instructional strategies namely lecture; discussion, grouping, questioning, and the use of instructional resources in

teaching and learning of CRS in Senior High schools have been given a critical look in this review. Onsongo (2002) conducted a research to investigate the extent to which teachers of Christian Religious Education used the Life-Approach in teaching. She wanted to find out whether the teachers were academically and professionally prepared to use the life approach. She then looked for suggestions as to how to improve on the use of the Life-Approach method in secondary schools in Nairobi in Kenya. Onsongo (2002) also tried to find out the problems teachers encountered in the use of the method and the teaching learning resources available for teaching Christian Religious Education in Secondary Schools. Of particular interest to this study is to assess the use of the Life-Approach method of teaching in the Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. The study is geared towards investigating the extent to which CRS teachers' instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method of teaching in the Senior High Schools.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This section takes a critical look at the research methods and techniques that were used to carry out this research. It comprises the research design, the population from which sample was selected, sample and sampling procedure, research instrument, validity and reliability of instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis procedure.

Research Design

The research design that was used for this study was the descriptive design. To be specific, the cross sectional survey design was employed in carrying out this study. Descriptive survey design is the one which involves the collection of data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject under investigation (Gay, 1992). This design was chosen because it offered me the opportunity to observe, assess and describe the extent to which the CRS teachers in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region have been using the Life-Approach method. Amedahe (2002) maintains that in descriptive research, accurate description of activities, objects, processes and persons is objective. However, the design has its own weakness as there is no way to statistically analyse results because there is no manipulation of variables as in experimental designs (Shuttleworth, 2008). The use of the Life-Approach method is a process and in order to have an objective analysis of the situation on the

ground, I used the descriptive survey, which was a type of descriptive research design.

Population

Polit and Hungler (1996) describe a population to mean the entire aggregation of cases that meets a designated set of criteria. In this case, whatever the basic unit, the population always comprises the entire aggregation of elements in which the research is interested.

The population of the study comprises all CRS teachers totalling 55 and students numbering 4629 in the Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo region. Teachers of CRS were selected because of the important roles that they play in the selection and application of methods of teaching and in this case the Life-Approach method. The students were involved in the study because they are the direct beneficiaries of teaching methods employed during instructional process. Since teaching and learning are opposite sides of the same coin (Farrant, 1980), it is very important to consider both teachers and learners of CRS when you want to do a thorough assessment of the Life-Approach method. Thus in order to gather information on both the giver and the receiver in the teaching-learning process, this population was considered.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sidhu (1984) postulates that a sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. Thus observing the characteristics of a sample, one can make certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn. Sampling enables the researcher to study a relatively small number of units in place of the target population, and to obtain a representation of the whole target population. In

fact, “samples are expected to be representative. For that reason, samples are expected to be chosen by means of sound methodological principles” (Sarantakos, 1997, p. 140). There are 55 Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region and only 35 out of these schools offer CRS. In determining the sample size for the study, the table for determining sample size from a given population suggested by Krejcie & Morgan (as cited in Sarantakos, 1997, p. 163) was used. Thus, out of the 35 schools, 29 accessible schools were selected for the study. There are 45 teachers and 4352 students of CRS in the 29 accessible schools. Therefore, 36 teachers were involved and 11 students were selected from each of the 29 schools totalling 319. That is, the number of CRS students and teachers that were involved in the study was dependent on the number of people who studied and taught CRS respectively. This could help to increase the representativeness of the sample for onward generalisation.

The purposive sampling procedure was used to select teachers for the study. “In this sampling techniques (also known as judgemental sampling), the researchers purposely choose subjects who in their opinion, are thought to be relevant to the research topic” (Sarantakos, 1997, p. 152). From my own judgement, those who teach CRS in the Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo Region could be in a better position to give me the needed information pertaining to the use of Life-Approach method of teaching. Students were selected using the simple random sampling procedure. “This type of sampling gives all units of the target population an equal chance of being selected” (Sarantakos, 1997, p. 141). The sample unit were selected by using the table of random numbers. “Obviously this method is more convenient and less time

consuming...” (Sarantakos, 1997, p. 142). The students’ attendance register served as sample frame during the use of the table of random numbers. Thus, each student in the accessible population was given a unique number. By the use of the table of random numbers, 319 respondents were selected to be involved in the study. I drew lines and letters of the alphabet across the numbers on the table of random numbers. Any student whose number was crossed by the lines or the alphabets was chosen to serve as respondent.

Research Instruments

The range of approaches that were used to gather data that served as bases for making inferences, interpretations, descriptions and explanations were as follows. According to Gay (1992), all research studies involve data collection. The data of the study were collected using observation guide and questionnaire.

Sidhu (1984) says that a questionnaire is a form prepared and distributed to secure responses to certain questions. It is a systematic compilation of questions that are submitted to a sampling population from which information is desired. As to why I used questionnaire, it is advantageous whenever the sample size is large enough to make it uneconomical for reasons of time or funds to interview every subject in the study (Osuala, 2005).

McBurney (2007) gave two basic categories of questionnaires as closed ended and open ended questions. The questionnaire items were grouped into five parts with the first part dealing with the socio-demographic background information of the respondents and the rest of sections catering for each of the research questions. Apart from the socio-demographic background

which was a mixture of open and closed ended questions the rest were five point Likert scale.

According to Sarantakos (1997), “observation is one of the oldest methods of data collection” and “it literally means ... a method of data collection that employs vision as its main means of data collection” (p. 208). I employed a structured non-participant observation. The observation guide was structured by the use of a likert scale. The application of observation was due to the fact that I wanted to make up for the deficiencies that might occur with the use of only a questionnaire. Besides, the use of observation was relatively inexpensive, not time consuming and first hand information could be gathered with that.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The research instruments were subjected to a validity and reliability test. The instruments were given to an expert to ascertain how they meet face and content validity. The suggestions as given by the expert were used to effect the necessary changes to improve upon the instrument. There after, a pilot test of the instruments was conducted whereby the observation guide and questionnaires were administered in selected schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. This area was chosen for the pilot testing because the curriculum as implemented in this area has the same characteristics in terms of content and pedagogical practices as compared with what pertains in the Brong Ahafo region. The students also bear similar characteristics in terms of age as compared to the students in the Brong Ahafo Region. Moreover, students from the Brong Ahafo Region and those in the Central Region write the same examination and are expected to relate biblical experiences to the existential

experiences. The teachers from both regions have similar characteristics in terms of qualifications. The data gathered were analysed and the Cronbach's alpha established for each of the items that fall under the four research questions. The values of, Cronbach's alpha of .81 (for students' questionnaires) and .90 (for teachers' questionnaires) were obtained. For the observation guide, Cronbach's alpha of .97 was obtained. According to DeVellis (1991), such a reliability coefficient is said to be respectable. Therefore, the instrument was considered reliable and appropriate to collect the relevant data to answer the questions posed. Also Fraenkel and Wallen (2000, p. 17), posited that "For research purposes a useful rule of thumb is that reliability should be at .70 and preferably higher". With this, the instrument could be said to be of good quality capable of collecting useful data for the study. The queries that came out of the item analyses were catered for. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS). All these actions were taken to ensure that the instrument would be capable of collecting quality and useful data for the study.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to ensure a high return rate, the instruments were administered personally by me. Before data collection, I presented copies of an introductory letter from the head of the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE), University of Cape Coast, to heads of Senior High Schools where the study was conducted. The purpose of this introductory letter was to solicit for cooperation and also to create rapport between the researcher and teachers whose students served as respondents for the study.

A discussion was held with teachers of the various schools selected for the study to agree on a convenient time to administer the instrument. Then a sample of students and teachers were selected using table of random numbers. The respondents were then supervised by me to complete the questionnaire. With respect to the observation, the time for the teaching of CRS in the schools involved was collected. Each of the accessible schools was observed two times during the instructional process. Here, I joined them in class and watched closely the proceedings of the lessons while completing the observation guide. In order to prevent teachers from realizing that I was there to assess the Life-Approach method and so attempt to tailor their teaching around students' experiences, the observation preceded the administration of the questionnaire. The data collection was done on district basis.

Data Analysis

This study sought to investigate how teachers use the Life-Approach method in teaching CRS in the Senior High Schools. To answer the research questions that were formulated to guide the study, the type of statistics that was employed in the analysis of the data was descriptive. Specifically, the data were analysed through the computation of frequencies, percentages and mean of means distributions. This was done with the use of computer software called Statistical Product for Service Solutions. The data for teachers and students were analysed separately. The data were analysed under four headings as indicated in the four research questions. Thus discussions and analysis was done according to the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to assess the use of Life-Approach method in teaching Christian Religious Studies in Senior High Schools. A set of questionnaires and an observation guide were employed to gather the requisite data for the study. The data from teachers, students and that of the observation were analyzed through the computation of frequencies, percentages and means of means distributions. In fact, descriptive statistics were employed in the data analysis. This chapter presents the interpretations discussions and inferences that were made from the output.

Analysis of Data from Students, Teachers and the Observation Guide

Table 1 shows the characteristics of CRS students in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region, who served as respondents for the study.

Table 1: Characteristics of Sampled Students

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
Gender	Male	134	42
	Female	185	58
Religious Affiliation	Christianity	303	95
	Islam	13	4.1
	African Trad.	3	.9
	Religion		

(Table 1 continued)

Class	SHS 2	11	3.4
	SHS 3	253	79.3
	SHS 4	55	17.2
Age	10 – 15 years	4	1.3
	16 – 20 years	277	86.8
	21 – 25 years	38	11.9

Out of the targeted sample size of 352 students, the accessible sample size was 319. This indicates 90.63% return rate. This was due to the fact that some three schools were involved in sporting activities during the data collection period. Hence the participation of those schools was not encouraging. From Table 1, out of the 319 students who were involved in the study, 42% of them were males while 58% were females. Therefore majority of the respondents were females. It can also be seen that 95% of the respondents were Christians, 4.1% were Muslims and .9% were from the African Traditional Religions. Thus majority of the respondents were Christians. This is very advantageous because teachers can use the relevant previous knowledge that the students learn from their various churches as a basis to teach Biblical concepts.

Again, Table 1 shows that 3.4% of the respondents belonged to form two class, 79.3% to form three class and 17.2% to the form four class. So majority of the respondents came from the form three class because a greater number of students in form four were writing their Mock examination at the time of the data collection.

Finally, Table 1 shows that 1.3% of the students fell within the age range of 10-15 years, 86.8% were within the ages of 16-20 years and 11.9%

fell within the ages of 21-25. Therefore majority of the respondents fell within the ages of 16-20 years.

Table 2 shows the characteristics of the CRS teachers in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region, who served as respondents for the study.

Table 2: Characteristics of Sampled Teachers

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
Gender	Male	32	88.9
	Female	4	11.1
Religious Affiliation	Christianity	36	100
Teaching experiences	Less than 1 year	2	5.6
	1-5 years	21	58.3
	6-10 years	8	22.2
	11-15 years	3	8.3
	16 years and above	2	5.6
Highest academic qualification	Bachelors' Degree	35	97.2
	Master of Arts	1	2.8
Highest professional qualification	Teachers Cert 'A'	15	41.7
	P.G.D.E	3	8.3
	B.Ed.	16	44.4
	No professional qualification	2	5.6

Out of the intended sample size of 45 teachers 36 were involved in the study. These were the number of teachers who teach CRS in the 29 accessible

schools. All the teachers were involved in the study. This indicates 80% return rate.

From Table 2, out of the 36 teachers who were involved in the study, 88.9% were males, while 11.1% were females. So a greater number of CRS teachers in the study area were males. It can also be noted that all the CRS teachers in the area of study belonged to the Christian religion.

Again, with respect to how long CRS teachers have been teaching the subject, 5.6% have taught for less than a one year, 58.3% for between 1-5 years, 22.2% have taught for 6-10 years, 8.3% have taught for 11-15 years and 5.6% have taught for 16 years and above. It follows that a significant majority have not handled the subject for a long time and so do not have enough experiences.

Also, it is clear from Table 2 that an overwhelming majority of the teachers: 97.2% have the Bachelors Degree and 2.8% have a Masters of Arts Degree. Therefore the teachers have the requisite academic qualifications to teach the subject. What cannot be answered for now is whether the Degrees they pursued were in the field of Religious Education.

Lastly, with regards to the respondents' highest professional qualification, 41.7% had Teachers' Certificate 'A' 8.3% had Post Graduate Diploma in Education, 44.4% had Bachelor of Education and 5.6% had no professional qualifications. Thus, majority of the teachers who teach CRS in the Brong Ahafo Region are professional teachers. This finding contradicts Farrant (1980) who said that "Professionalism tends to be weak among teachers in the developing countries, because the criteria of a true profession are not completely met (p. 224). Does it follow that they will be in the better

position to use the Life-Approach method satisfactorily? The rest of the data analysis will try to answer this question.

This section presents the results and discussions of data collected to answer the four research questions formulated to guide the study. It comprised data from the questionnaire and the observation guide.

Research question 1: To what extent do teachers use the Life-Approach method in teaching CRS in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo region?

The responses given by the students are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The Views of Students as to the Extent CRS Teachers Use the Life-Approach Method in Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools

Statement	M	SD
My teacher teaches CRS with real, concrete and present situations of learners as basis	1.85	.68
Religious concepts only come alive when they are related to life experiences	1.83	1.04
Topics in CRS are introduced and illustrated not just from the Bible but the world of students.	2.41	1.47
Religious concepts cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential.	2.16	1.30
CRS should offer itself as a contribution to students' quest for meaning in life.	1.67	.79
CRS should promote an enquiry into values and commitments in living.	2.00	1.16

(Table 3 continued)

Statement	M	SD
CRS should help students to build conceptual bridges between existential experiences and the central concepts of religion.	1.65	.80
The essence of teaching CRS is to be found in life itself, in all experiences at all subjects.	1.93	1.17
The teacher relates Biblical stories to life experiences of learners to a large extent.	1.59	.78
The teacher relates CRS topics to the life experiences of students to a limited extent.	3.16	1.33
The teacher does not relate CRS topics to real life experiences of learners during teaching.	4.08	1.22

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,
3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means = 2.21

Mean of Standard Deviation = 1.07

Students are at the receiving end of any instructional process. In that case they are strategically positioned to identify the extent to which their instructors use a specific method during the instructional period. A look at Table 3 shows that CRS teachers to a large extent use the Life-Approach method in the teaching of CRS. A mean of means of 2.21 and a Mean of

Standard Deviation of 1.07 clearly indicates that the students agreed to a lot of the statements which were meant to identify the extent of usage of the Life-Approach method by CRS teachers. This is illustrated in the following instances in the rest of the items.

Regarding how teachers teach CRS with real, concrete and present situations of learners, it was found out that a significant majority of the students agreed to the fact. A mean of 1.85 and a standard deviation of .06 were attained. Though the mean is lower than the mean of means of 2.21, the degree of agreement is considered appreciable because the measure of spread is very low. This finding is in accordance with Loukes (1965) who asserts that Religion should be taught with real, concrete and present situation of the learners and students should be helped to arrive at religious understanding of those experiences. Also, the majority of the students agreed to the statement religious concepts come alive when they are related to life experiences. A mean of 1.83 and a standard deviation of 1.04 were attained for this item and this falls within the option “agree” looking at the scale. Thus, the finding goes with Grimmit (1973) who said that “Religious concepts ‘only come alive’ when we are able to relate them sometimes partially sometimes completely to our life experiences” (p. 52).

A high standard deviation of 1.47 and a mean of 2.41 compared to mean of standard deviation of 1.07 and a mean of means of 2.21 clearly indicates that topics in CRS are introduced and illustrated not just from the Bible but the world of students. Even though the respondents agreed, their responses vary since the value of the standard deviation is high. In any case, it could be asserted that majority of the students support this statement. This

finding corresponds with DiGiacomo (1989) who posited that “the topics should be introduced and illustrated, not just from the Bible and official church but also from a variety of sources, including the minor world of teen, the small world of teens together, the outside world of ordinary people, as well as events featuring famous people” (p. 45)

In connection with the statements religious concepts cannot be taught as if they were fact but they are by nature experiential, majority of the students agree to it. The item recorded a mean of 2.16 and a standard deviation of 1.30 which fall under the scale of 2 meaning the respondents agree to the statement. It follows that the students view goes with Grimmitt (1973) who postulated that religious beliefs cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential. The item had a high measure of spread suggesting that some of the students chose strongly agree which also support the view.

In line with the statement CRS should offer itself as a contribution to students quest for meaning in life, a mean of 1.67 and a standard deviation of .79 was recorded meaning to a large extent, the students agree to the statement. Converting the mean to the nearest whole number it could be seen that the mean falls at 2 which depicts that they agree to the statement. The extent to which they agree is also high due to the low standard deviation recorded. Therefore, a significant majority of the students support this assertion. This supports what Hull (1993) asserted that “... religious education offers itself as a contribution to the young persons quest for meaning in life. This is the religious education which deals with ultimate problems, with mystery and awareness that which seeks to provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living” (pp. 16-17). Thus, the teaching of CRS in Senior High

Schools in Brong Ahafo region have been helping students to find meaning in their lives. With respect to whether CRS helps to provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living, a mean of 2.00 and a standard deviation of 1.16 were obtained clearly showing that the respondents agree to that. It could be concluded that majority of the students support Hull's (1993) assertion stated earlier.

Concerning whether CRS helps to build conceptual bridges between existential experiences and the central concept of religion, a mean of 1.65 and a standard deviation of .80 was realised. Hence a greater proportion of respondents to a large extent support the claim that CRS should "start with the child's own feelings, acts and experiences and help children to build conceptual bridges between their existential experiences and the central concepts of religion" (Grimmitt, 1973 p. xv). This is clearly seen from the value of the standard deviation as it is very low compared to the mean of the standard deviation. On the issue of the essence of teaching CRS, greater number of the respondents agreed that it is found in life itself, in all experiences at all subjects. This item had a mean of 1.93 and a standard deviation of 1.17. Though the students agree, the responses varied as the standard deviation is higher than the mean of the standard deviation. This finding affirms Grimmitt (1978) who postulated that the essence of religion is to be found in life itself, in all experiences and all subjects.

From Table 3, it is obvious that teachers use the Life-Approach method to a large extent. A significant majority of the respondents agree to the statement. With this, a mean of 1.59 and a standard deviation of .78 were realised indicating that to a large extent, the respondents agree to it. This

finding contradicts with Onsongo (2002) who conducted a study on the use of Life-Approach method in Kenyan Secondary Schools and found out that the method is used to a limited extent. When the respondents were asked to respond to the statement: the teacher does not use the Life-Approach method, a greater number of them strongly disagreed to the statement. This item recorded a mean of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 1.22. The students disagree with this statement since the mean of the item falls on the scale 4 as stated under Table 3. This means that the teachers use the method to a very large extent.

A good teacher should have the requisite content knowledge, know how students learn and acquaint him or herself with pedagogical skills. These are paramount in facilitating instructional process and achieving success in teaching. In as much as the teacher is entrusted with the selection of methods of teaching in the classroom, it is incumbent on the teacher to play this role tactically and strategically. In fact teachers play very important roles in the selection as well as use of method. It is therefore necessary to consider them when one wants to do a thorough assessment of a teaching method. Teachers' responses as to the extent to which they employ the Life-Approach method of teaching Christian Religious Studies in the Senior High Schools are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: The Views of Teachers as to the Extent They Use the Life-Approach in Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools

Statements	M	SD
I teach CRS with real, concrete objects and present situation of learners as basis.	1.30	.47
Religious concepts only come alive when they are related to life experiences.	1.42	.60
Topics in CRS are introduced and illustrated not just from the Bible but the minor world of students.	1.69	.75
Religious concepts cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential.	1.89	1.28
CRS should offer itself as a contribution to the student's quest for meaning in life.	1.31	.47
CRS should provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living.	1.47	.61
CRS should help students to build conceptual bridges between existential experiences and the central concepts of religion.	1.67	.59

(Table 4 continued)

Statements	M	SD
The essence of teaching CRS is to be found in life itself, in all experiences at all subjects.	1.33	.48
I relate Biblical stories to life experiences of learners to a large extent.	1.33	.48
I relate CRS topics to the life of students to a limited extent.	4.14	1.22
I do not relate CRS topics to real life experiences of learners during teaching.	4.50	1.03

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,
3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means = 2.00

Mean of standard deviation = 0.73

Generally, a careful look at Table 4 shows that the teachers use the Life-Approach method to a large extent. In line with this, a mean of means of 2.00 and a mean of standard deviation of 0.73 was achieved for the items designed to find out the extent to which teachers use the Life-Approach method. The following instances from the individual items attest to that fact.

From Table 4, a mean of 1.30 and 0.47 standard deviation was attained meaning that majority of the respondents strongly agree, that they teach CRS

with real, concrete and present situation of learners as basis. In fact, all the teachers who were involved in the study supports this view. This finding in this instance corresponds with Loukes (1965) who asserts that religion should be taught with real, concrete and present situation of learners and they should be helped to arrive at religious understanding of those experiences. It is worthy to note that while an insignificant majority of the students did not support this assertion all the teachers support it.

It is clearly noticeable from Table 4 that majority of the teachers support the view that religious concepts only come alive when they are related to life experiences. With this item, a mean of 1.42 and a standard deviation of .60 which indicate that the mean falls on the scale 1. The plausible conclusion that could be drawn is that a significant majority of the teachers support this view. This finding goes in accordance with Grimmitt (1973) who posits that “Religious concepts only come alive when we are able to relate them sometimes partially, sometimes completely to our life experiences” (p. 52).

It is obvious from Table 4 that the CRS teachers in Brong Ahafo are able to introduce and illustrate topics not just from the Bible but the minor world of students to a large extent. Concerning this, 1.69 mean and standard deviation of .75 was achieved for this statement. The mean which falls on scale 2 affirms the position that majority of the teachers support this view. This finding goes with DiGiacomo (1989) who posits that “the topics should be introduced and illustrated, not just from the Bible and official church but also from a variety of sources, including the minor world of teen, the small world of teens together, the outside world of ordinary people, as well as events featuring famous people” (p. 45) though student and teachers together support

this point, the students mean exceeds the teachers mean by 0.72 meaning that the degree of agreement for teachers is higher than the student.

In relation to the statement, “religious concepts cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential”, majority of the teachers agreed to it. A mean of 1.89 and a standard deviation of 1.28 were obtained for this item. The mean when converted to the nearest whole number falls on scale 2 which represents the option agree. The high standard deviation also depicts that the responses of the teachers varied so widely. Notwithstanding this, majority of the teachers support this assertion. The finding corresponds with Grimmitt (1973) who said that religious beliefs cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential.

In line with the statement CRS should offer itself as contributing to student’s quest for meaning in life, 1.31 was attained as mean and 0.47 as standard deviation. The masses strongly agreed with the statement since the mean fall on strongly agree. The degree of support to this assertion is high because the item recorded very low standard deviation of 0.47 as compared to the mean of standard deviation of 0.73 for all the items. Also, 1.47 mean and 0.61 standard deviation was achieved for the statement CRS should provoke enquiry into values and commitments in living. It could therefore be said that the bulk of the teachers supports these views. These finding ties in with Hull (1993)’s assertion that “... Religious education offers itself as a contribution to the young person’s quest for meaning in life. This is the religious education which deals with ultimate problems, with mystery and awareness that which seeks to provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living” (pp. 9 - 10).

From Table 4, predominant number of teachers agreed to the statement CRS should help students to build conceptual bridges between existential experiences and the central concepts of religion. In connection with this, 1.67 was obtained as a mean and 0.59 as the standard deviation. It could be seen from the scale under Table 4 that the mean could be placed on the scale 2(agree). This affirms the claim that CRS should “start with the child’s own feelings, acts and experiences and help children to build conceptual bridges between their existential experiences and the central concepts of religion” (Grimmitt,1978, p. xv). It is note worthy that the measure of spread as stated above is lower than the mean of the standard deviation of 0.78 depicting that the bulk of the teachers agree to the assertion.

In line with the statement the essence of teaching CRS is to be found in life itself, in all experiences and all subjects, optimum number of teachers strongly agreed to it. With a mean of 1.33 and standard deviation of 0.48, it could be concluded that all the teachers support this assertion. The mean of the item falls on 1(strongly agree) when run to the nearest whole number showing that a lot of the teachers support the view. The finding agrees with Grimmitt (1978) who wrote that the essence of religion is to be found in life itself, in all experiences and all subjects.

As pertaining to the extent to which CRS teachers use the Life-Approach method, 1.33 was recorded as mean and 0.48 was attained as standard deviation for large extent. From the forgoing it is obvious that the teachers strongly agree that they use the method to a large extent since the mean falls on the scale 1(strongly agree). It is also evident that the responses of the teachers vary to a limited extent. In a related development, greater

number of the respondents disagree that they use the method to a limited extent. A mean of 4.14 and standard deviation of 1.22 were recorded for this item justifying that the teachers disagree with the statement. Therefore according, to the teachers, they use the Life-Approach method of teaching to a large extent. A mean of 4.50 and standard deviation of 1.03 was obtained for the statement: I do not relate CRS topics to the life experiences of students. This means that majority of the respondents oppose that statement. When the mean is converted to the nearest whole number, it falls on the scale 5 (strongly disagree) supporting this position. The foregoing findings sharply oppose the findings of Onsongo (2002) who found out that the Life-Approach method was being used in Kenyan Secondary Schools to a limited extent because the teachers were not adequately professionally trained to use the method just to mention only one of the problems.

Analysis of Data from Observation Sections Conducted in the Selected Schools

In order to have a vivid description of issues concerning the use of the Life-Approach method, instructional processes were observed. Two lessons each were observed in the 29 accessible schools that were involved in the study. The data collected with the use of the observation guide was to serve as a back up information to check whether the data gathered with the questionnaires were truly reflecting the situation on the ground pertaining to the use of Life-Approach method. The following were the findings as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: The Extent to Which CRS Teachers Use Life-Approach Method

Statements	Very much N (%)	Much N (%)	Somehow N (%)	Not at all N (%)
The teacher teaches CRS with real concrete and present situation of student.	35 (60.3)	16 (27.6)	4 (6.9)	3 (5.2)
Topics are introduced and illustrated from the minor world of students.	33 (56.9)	16 (27.6)	4 (6.9)	5 (8.6)
Religious concepts are taught as experiential facts.	28 (48.3)	26 (44.8)	0 (0)	4 (6.9)
The topic is taught in life-centred way.	25 (43.1)	26 (44.8)	4 (6.9)	3 (5.2)

From Table 5, 60.3% of the lesson observed depicts that the teachers use the Life-Approach method very much, 27.6% much, 6.9% somehow and 5.2% indicate that the method was not used at all. It could be concluded that the method was used to a large extent in this instance. Topics were also introduced and illustrated from the minor world of students. With this 56.9% of the lesson conform very much to the Life-Approach, 27.6% much, 6.9% somehow and 8.6% not at all. Religious concepts were also taught as experiential fact because 48.3% of the lessons that were observed conformed very much to that, 44.8% much and 6.9% did not conform to this assertion at all. As to whether the topics were taught in a life-centred way, 43.1% of the lessons were very much, 44.8% were much, 6.9% were somehow and 5.2%

were not taught in conformity to the method. Significant majority of the teachers I observed knew the Life-Approach method and used it to a large extent. The only disparity in the lesson delivery that was observed was the way the teachers used the method. Some of the teachers started by giving the students the opportunity to reflect on their day to day experiences related to the topic and then the Biblical experiences followed. They ended with explanation and application of biblical concepts. Others also started by taking the students through biblical experiences before relating them to learners' day to day experiences. On the whole it was observed that the teachers were aware of the method and tried as much as possible to use the method.

From Table 6, it can be seen that, generally instructional resources are woefully unavailable in the selected Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region. This is noticeable, looking at the value of the mean of means of 3.69 which is approximately 4. It is clear that the mean of means falls on the scale 4(disagree). The following instances buttress this position.

Firstly, with respect to the availability of audio-visual materials, most of the students disagreed that their teachers use the resources in the teaching-learning process. This item had a high mean of 4.34 and a standard deviation of 1.09. The extent to which teachers refuse to use the audio-visual resources was very great since the mean is approximately 4 (disagree).

Research question 2: What are the instructional resources available for the use of life-approach method for teaching CRS in the Brong Ahafo region?

Table 6 presents the responses of students as to the instructional resources that are used to support the Life-Approach method in the teaching-

learning process. The types of instructional resources as given by some scholars in the literature review namely audio-visuals, visuals; audio and community resources were dealt with.

Table 6: The Instructional Resources Available for the Use of Life-Approach Method in Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo

Statements	M	SD
The teacher uses audio-visuals (example TV and motion pictures) in teaching.	4.34	1.09
The teacher uses visual resources (examples chalkboards, felt board, bulletin boards and flash cards).	2.12	1.27
The teacher uses community resources (examples resources persons and places of interest) in teaching.	3.82	1.44
The teacher uses audio materials (example radio and tape recorders) in teaching.	4.49	.82

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,
 3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree
 5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means = 3.69

Mean of Standard deviation=1.16

In the same way, community and audio materials are not used by the CRS teachers. A high mean of means 3.82 and 4.49 were attained for

community resources and audio materials respectively. A great majority of students disagreed that their teachers do use these resources in the instructional process. It was also found out that the most widely used instructional resources were visual resources like chalkboard, felt board, bulletin boards and flash cards. This item recorded a low mean of 2.12 and a standard deviation of 1.27 meaning that to some extent the teachers use these resources. According to Nacino-Brown, Oke and Brown (1982), “There is a great variety of materials around that can be used to make our meanings more vivid and more interesting. The mere use of these materials however, does not guarantee effective communication or effective teaching” (p. 165). So it is one thing acquiring the instructional resources and it is another thing using them effectively to achieve the stated objectives. This is the case that instructional resources are woefully unavailable in the selected schools. What do the teachers do in such a situation? They resort to what they have and leave the rest to chance. In fact the only instructional resources that I saw the teachers used were Revised Standard Version bibles, CRS pamphlets and chalkboard.

The impact that instructional resources have differ in terms of their type, conditions and teachers’ ability to apply them appropriately. According to Tickton (1971), instructional resources of all varieties, when used with advanced planning and preparation of students have been recognized as the basic means of improving the output resulting from classroom instruction. It should help provide every person with access to excellence. In fact not only can instructional resources recognize individual taste, needs and services; but it can also make such individualization manageable (Dale, 1969). It is

unfortunate that the resources are not forthcoming let alone combining them during teaching to achieve the needed results.

Table 7: Instructional Resources Available for the Use of Life-Approach Method in Teaching CRS in Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo Region

Statements	M	SD
I use audio-visuals (example TV and motion pictures) in teaching.	4.36	1.10
I use visual resources (examples chalk boards, felt board, bulletin board and flash cards).	1.53	.51
I use community resources (example resource persons and places of interest) in teaching	3.69	.89
I use audio materials (example radio and tape recorders) in teaching	4.14	1.22
Instructional resources are not available	1.67	1.20
Instructional resources are very expensive	2.17	1.23
Use of instructional resources is time consuming	3.56	1.32
I am incompetent in using instructional resources.	3.94	1.41
I use instructional resources for CRS lesson	3.67	.86
Instructional resources help me to relate biblical stories to real life experiences of students.	1.92	.94

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,
3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means = 3.07

Mean of standard deviation = 1.07

Certainly, appropriate use of the Life-Approach method requires that teachers play their role by selecting and using the needed instructional resources. This section finds out whether teachers use the needed instructional resources to support the use of the Life-Approach method of teaching.

From Table 7, most of the teachers disagreed that they use audiovisual resources in teaching. With a mean of 4.36 and a standard deviation of 1.10 it could be concluded that the mean falls into the scale of 4(disagree). Again, the teachers predominantly agree that they use visual instructional resources. Here, a mean of 1.53 and a standard deviation of .51 were obtained for this item showing the respondents agree to the statement. This was a unanimous decision from the teachers because the item recorded very low measure of spread. Concerning the use of community resources, a greater number of the teachers disagreed. This is evidenced by the mean score of 3.69 and a standard deviation of .89 for this item. The mean is approximately 4, showing that the respondents disagreed. In terms of the use of audio materials, majority of the respondents disagreed that they use the resources. A measure of central tendency score of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 1.22 was achieved for audio resources. Thus in terms of the use of instructional resources to support the Life-Approach method only visual resources like chalkboards, felt pens, bulletin board, and flash cards, are used to support it. A significant majority of

the teachers do not use audio-visuals, audio materials and community resources in teaching. According to Aggarwal (1995), “In addition to reading, vicarious experiences can be gained from still pictures, films, filmstrips, resource persons, simulation, mocking, television and the like. The more concrete and realistic the vicarious experiences, the more nearly it approaches the learning effectiveness of the first levels” (pp. 296-297). It could be seen from the forgoing analysis that the CRS teachers fall short in terms of the use of instructional resources even though resources play very important roles in lesson delivery. According to Arggarwal (1995) “While all these aids are becoming more and more popular day by day, there are still some problems to be faced and solved” (p. 302). What could be the possible reasons why the teachers fail to use the instructional resources? The rest of the items tried to answer this question.

Regarding the statement instructional resources are not available, a mean score of 1.67 and a standard deviation of 1.20 meaning most of the respondents, agreed to the statement. The stakeholders of education responsible for the provision of instructional resources to the various Senior High Schools should be up and doing. Though the teachers can some times improvise instructional resources, many instructional resources like audio, community, and visual cannot be subjected to improvisation. In addition to the problems associated with the use of instructional resources, the teachers were asked to indicate whether instructional resources are expensive, majority of the teachers agreed that they are expensive. This was explicit because a mean of 2.17 and 1.23 indicate that the teachers agree to the statement. According to Farrant (1980), the high cost of electricity operated audio – visual equipment

and the difficulty in finding satisfactory suppliers and after sale service has limited the introduction of instructional resources in many countries. This is the case in Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo region.

Concerning the time consuming nature of using instructional resources, a greater number of the respondents do not support that the use of instructional resources is time consuming. A look at Table 7 shows that a mean of 3.56 and a standard deviation of 1.32 were recorded for this item indicating that the teachers disagreed. Teachers' competency in using instructional resources determines the degree of success that could be chalked from the use of it in teaching. It is in this wise that the teachers were asked to indicate whether they are competent in using instructional resources. With this item, a mean score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 1.41 were achieved. This results illustrate that majority of the teachers disagreed with the statement. It could now be concluded that the respondents are competent in using instructional resources.

The finding depicts that teachers disagreed to the statement: I use instructional resources for CRS lessons. The data shows that a mean of 3.67 and standard deviation of .86 was recorded. The support for this position is very strong since the measure of spread is very low. This confirms the preceding findings that majority of the teachers do not use instructional resources in teaching. Notwithstanding the fact that they fail to use instructional resources, most of them accept the view that the use of instructional resources help them to relate biblical stories to real life experiences of students. As shown in Table 7, a mean of 1.92 and a standard deviation of .94 were obtained. The mean for this item is almost 2, falling on the scale 2 (agree). From the forgoing analysis it could be seen that the

prominent problem that prevent teachers from using instructional resources is the high cost of it. If stakeholders of education are able to provide them and then sensitise the teachers on the benefit of using them together with appropriate guidance, then definitely they will use the resources because modern curriculum development tends to adopt multi media approach to learning and so competence in the use of instructional resources is essential for learning new curricula (Farrant, 1980). The findings of the items purported to look into the use of instructional resources to support the Life-Approach method, especially the teachers' inability to use the resources tally with what Onsongo (2002) found from the Kenyan secondary schools.

Table 8 (a and b) presents what i observed during the classroom interactions regarding the use of instructional resources.

Table 8(a): Instructional Resources Available for the Use of Life-Approach Method a Data from Observation Sections

Statements	Very much N (%)	Much N (%)	Somehow N (%)	Not at all N (%)
The teacher uses audio-visual materials	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	58 (100)
Use of visual resources	0 (0)	14 (24.1)	44 (75.9)	0 (%)
Use of audio resources	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	58 (100)
Use of community resources	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	58 (100)

Table 8(b)

Statements	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
With the aid of instructional resources the teacher is able to relate the Biblical story to real life situation.	0 (0)	58 (100)
The lesson is practical and concrete with the use of instructional resources	0 (0)	58 (100)

From Tables 8 (a and b), it is clear that none of the teachers used audio-visuals, audio, and community resources. Only visual resources were used and even that to a limited extent. The visual resources used were pamphlets, Bibles and the chalkboard. Few of the schools had marker boards. In one of the schools, out of the 35 students only 26 were having their own bibles. On the whole, the use of instructional resources to augment the use of the Life-Approach in CRS lesson was nothing to write home about. This view is corroborated by the data gathered from the teachers and students. Though the teachers know how important the use of the Life-Approach is, they have not recognized the important role that instructional resources play in the teaching-learning process and how instructional resources could be instrumental in using the Life-Approach method. It is note worthy that though the teachers were able to use the Life-Approach method; they did it without the use of instructional resources.

Research question 3: What are the problems encountered in the use of the Life-Approach method in teaching CRS in the Brong Ahafo region?

Table 9 presents the views of students as to the problems teachers face in using the Life-Approach method.

Table 9: Problems Associated with the Use of Life-Approach Method as indicated by Students

Statements	M	SD
The teacher is not adequately and/or professionally trained to relate Biblical concepts to real life experiences of the learners.	4.29	1.08
The teacher does not relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of students because the time allocated to CRS lessons is short.	3.84	1.32
The CRS syllabus is over loaded making it difficult to relate it to life experiences of the learners.	3.68	1.17
The teacher does not relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of learners due to inadequate guidance.	3.73	1.26
Inadequate instructional resources prevent the teacher from relating topics to real life experiences of the students.	2.49	1.11

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,
3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means =3.61 Mean of standard deviation = 1.19

Right from the outset of the analysis of the results in Table 9, it must be noted that the students disagreed with most of the items designed to find out the problems associated with the use of Life-Approach method. A mean of means of 3.61 was recorded for these items meaning that the mean falls on 4 (disagree).

Grossman (as cited in Ornstein, Thomas & Lasley, 2000, p. 508) postulates that if “teachers are to be successful, they must wrestle simultaneously with issues of pedagogical content (or knowledge) as well as general pedagogy (genetic teaching principles)”. Teachers’ professional qualification to a large extent determines how proficient he or she will be in employing a particular method. “Religion teachers need a solid background and willingness to develop their skills through continuing education” (DiGiacomo, 1989, p. 21). Students were asked to indicate whether their teachers were professionally trained to use the Life-Approach method. Significant majority of them said that the CRS teachers were professionally trained to use the method. With a mean of 4.29 and 1.8 standard deviation, it was obvious that the teachers had the requisite professional qualifications. The students disagreed with the negative form of the item which the mean clearly supports. This was also supported by the items that solicited socio-demographic information from teachers. It was evident that out of the 36 teachers selected for the study, only two of them did not have professional qualifications.

When the students were asked to state whether their teachers are not able to use the Life-Approach method due to time constraint, most of them disagreed to that item. With a high mean of 3.84 (scale 4 which stands for disagree) and a standard deviation of 1.32, it was concluded that time frame for the teaching of the subject was not a problem encountered during the use of the method.

Again with reference to Table 9, 3.68 (mean) and 1.17 (standard deviation) were gained for the item: the CRS syllabus is over-loaded making it difficult to relate it to life experiences. It follows that the students deny the position that the overloaded nature of the syllabus is a problem associated with the Life-Approach method.

From Table 9, it could be seen that inadequate guidance is not one of the problems encountered during the use of the Life-Approach method. According, to the responses of the students, this item recorded a mean of 3.73 and standard deviation of 1.26 attesting to the fact that greater number of students chose the option “disagree”.

Lastly, with regard to the item, inadequate instructional resources prevent the teacher from relating topics to real life experiences of the students; it was found out that majority of the students agreed to it. With a mean of 2.49 and 1.11 standard deviation, it could be concluded that to some extent inadequate instructional resources in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo region is an obstacle to the use of the Life-Approach method. The items that dealt with the use of instructional resources as stated in Table 9, clearly buttress this position.

From the foregoing, the findings as shown from Table 9, contradicts with the findings of Onsongo (2002) who saw, shortage of time, overloaded syllabus, inadequate guidance and inadequate teaching-learning resources to support the use of the Life-Approach method as problems associated with the method. However, the only problems that was found in the Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo region which was the same as what Onsongo (2002) discovered was teachers refusal to use the instructional resources to support the use of the method.

Table 10 presents the views of teachers as to the problems they encounter in using the Life-Approach method.

Table 10: Problems Associated With the Use of Life-Approach Method as Seen by Teachers.

Statement	M	SD
I am not adequately professionally trained to relate Biblical concepts to real life experiences of the learners.	4.39	1.13
I am not able to relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of students because of shortage of time.	4.14	1.07
The CRS syllabus is over loaded making it difficult to relate it to life experiences of learners.	3.72	1.16
I do not relate biblical concepts of life experiences of learners due to inadequate guidance.	3.92	1.11

(Table 10 continued)

Statement	M	SD
Inadequate instructional resources prevent me from relating topics to real life experiences of students.	1.97	1.25

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree,
 3 = Uncertain, 4 = Disagree
 5 = Strongly Disagree

Mean of means = 3.63

Mean of standard deviation = 1.14

Every method of teaching has its shortcomings. So it takes strict professionalism in order to solve such problems. Here, teachers must acquaint themselves with the rudiments of values undergirding the method of teaching. The use of the Life-Approach method has its own problems. This section tried to examine the problems teachers encounter in the use of the Life-Approach method. A careful look at the data suggests that most of the problems as stated in Table 10 are non-existent in the schools. A mean of means of 3.63 was attained for all the items in Table 10. The high standard deviation of 1.14 clearly suggests that the responses of the teachers varied. The following conclusions could be drawn for the individual items in Table 10.

Pertaining to the statement, “the teacher is not adequately professionally trained to relate Biblical concepts to real life experiences”, 4.34 (mean) and 1.13 (standard deviation) were reached. This means that majority of the teachers disagreed to the statement because the mean is approximately 4

(disagree). It was also found out that time constraint was not a problem associated with the use of the Life-Approach method. With this, a mean of 4.14 and standard deviation of 1.07 was accomplished clearly indicating that they are able to use the Life-Approach method due to the fact that they have ample time for the subject. A significant majority of the teachers did not support the view that the overloaded nature of the syllabus prevents them from using the Life-Approach method. With regards to this, a 3.73 (mean) and 1.16 (standard deviation) means the respondents disagreed that the over-loaded nature of the syllabus is making it difficult to use the Life-Approach method.

Furthermore, on the problem of inadequate guidance the mean: 3.92 falls into the scale 4, indicating that the teachers disagreed that it prevents teachers from using the Life-Approach method. A perusal of Table 10 shows that a greater number of teachers support the point that inadequate instructional resources prevent them from using the method. A mean of 1.97 and standard deviation of 1.25 was obtained. This is the only prominent hindrance of the use of the Life-Approach method according to the teachers.

In conclusion, issues such as teacher's professionalism, overloaded syllabus, shortage of time, inadequate guidance are not the problems that teachers encounter in the use of the method as found out by Onsongo (2002) in Kenyan Secondary Schools, 9 years ago. The only similarity that is noticeable is that instructional resources that could be used to support the use of the method were woefully not used by the teachers as it happened in Kenya. This could be the reason why teachers are able to use the Life-Approach method to a very large extent in the Brong Ahafo region.

Table 11 presents the data accrued from the observation of classroom interactions which bordered on problems associated with the use of Life-Approach method.

Table 11: Problems Associated with the Use of Life-Approach Method, an Observation Data

Statements	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
The teacher is not conversant with the use of Life-Approach	6 (10.3)	52 (89.7)
The teacher is not able to use the method satisfactorily	5 (8.6)	53 (91.4)
The topic is too broad to be related to life experiences	0 (0)	58 (100)

From Table 11, 89.7 percent of the lessons observed show that the teachers were conversant with the Life-Approach method. Only 10.3% were not conversant with the method. It was also clear that a greater number of the teachers had no problem with the use of the method. With this, 91.4% used the method satisfactorily and 8.6% did not use it satisfactorily. Teachers also tactically selected their topics in such a way that they fit into the time frame allocated for the lesson. In all the lessons observed, the topics were not too broad to be related to life experiences. The only problem observed was the inability of the teachers to use instructional resources to support the use of the method.

Research question 4: To what extent do the instructional practices of CRS teachers in the Brong Ahafo Region conform to the Life-Approach method?

Table 12 presents the views of CRS students as to how their teachers' instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method.

Table 12: The Extent to Which Teachers Instructional Practices Conform to the Life-Approach Method as seen by the students

Statement	M	SD
Student's real life experiences form the basis of discussions in the classroom.	2.17	1.18
sStudents are encouraged to use real life experiences in setting examples in CRS lessons.	1.84	1
Students use real life experiences in explaining what is studied from the bible.	1.85	.95
Concrete real and present situation of learners are considered in asking questions in class.	1.85	.88
Students are encouraged to use real, concrete and present situation in answering questions in class.	1.95	1.03
Through the use of role-play, students are offered the opportunity to relate Bible stories to their own life.	1.67	.86
Assessment procedures that give students opportunity to relate Biblical stories to life are adopted during CRS lessons.	2.19	1.18
Student's experiences are considered in grouping them in the classroom during CRS lessons.	3.46	1.2

Table 12 continued

Statement	M	SD
Students who are able to relate Biblical stories to real life experiences are given rewards to serve as motivation.	1.85	1.2
Religion has a private affair so the approach to teaching it should help learners to make their own free choices.	2.26	1.24

Scale: 1= Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Uncertain 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree.

Mean of means = 2.11

Mean of standard deviation = 1.07

From Table 12, it is obvious that the students, who were involved in the study, agreed with the statement, “Student’s real life experiences form the basis of discussion in the classroom”. Thus majority of the respondents support this assertion because 2.17 (mean) and 1.18 (standard deviation) were obtained for this item. The mean falls on the scale 2 (agree). In line with this finding, Grimes (as cited in Williamson, 1970) holds the view that “the most significant learning occurs through the experiences we may call personal and creative encounter. From a Christian point of view, nothing has really been learned until it affects one personally (existentially) in terms of his relationship ...” (p. 121). So it is in the right direction when students engage in discussion with their own life experiences as a basis.

Concerning whether students are encouraged to use their real life experiences in setting examples, majority of the respondents agreed. From

Table 12, 1.84 was got as mean and 1 as standard deviation. Since the mean falls on the scale 2 it is accepted that the respondents agreed to the statement. Thus when the students are citing instances and examples they use their own past experiences. This finding goes with the view of Yeigh, (2008) who posited that “the things that learners already understand are very significant influences on what they can learn in the future. Therefore, learners’ background knowledge should be deliberately and consistently incorporated into their new learning” (p. 20). In a similar way, the respondents are encouraged to use their real life experiences in explaining what is studied from the Bible. With this, 1.85 (mean) and .95 (standard deviation) were recorded showing that majority of the respondents side with this position.

According to Ornstein and Lasley (2000), “Good teaching involves good questioning, especially, when teaching large groups of students. Skilful questioning can arouse the students’ curiosity, stimulate their imagination and motivate them to search out new knowledge” (p. 179). In this case, skilful questioning implies considering concrete, real and present situation of the students in asking questions. Here, a mean of 1.85 and a standard deviation .88 clearly show that the respondents unanimously support the assertion that their teachers consider their life experiences in asking questions. It was also evident that the students were encouraged to use their own life experiences in answering the questions posed by their teachers. From Table 12, 1.95 and 1.03 was achieved for mean and standard deviation respectively for this item. This means that most of the students agreed that they are encouraged to answer questions using their life experiences.

Again, the use of role-play is one of the ways through which students can be offered the opportunity to relate Bible stories to their own life. In connection with this, 1.67 (mean) and .86 (standard deviation) was accomplished indicating that greater number of them agreed that their teachers use role-play to help them to relate Biblical stories to life. This finding corresponds with Teed (2009), who asserted that in most role-playing exercises, each student takes the role of a person affected by an issue and studies the impacts of the issues on human life and/or the effects of human activities on the world around us from the perspective of that person. More rarely, students take on the roles of some phenomena, to demonstrate the lesson in an interesting and immediate manner. Role-playing is simultaneously interesting and useful to students because it emphasizes the "real-world". It challenges them to deal with complex problems with no single "right" answer and to use a variety of skills beyond those employed in a typical research project. In particular, role-playing presents the student a valuable opportunity to learn not just the subject content, but other perspectives on it.

The extent to which some assessment procedures offer the opportunity for student to bridge the gap between existential experiences and biblical experiences is quite minimal. For example an essay test could give more opportunity to bridge the gap than multiple choice items. When the students were asked to indicate whether their teachers use assessment procedures that give them the opportunity to relate biblical stories to life experiences, 2.19 and 1.18 were obtained for means and standard deviation, respectively. It follows that majority of the respondents admonished that the statement is true in their schools. According to Kissock and Lyortsum (1982), we have low order and

high order questions. The high order question which calls for synthesis and application of knowledge is the most appropriate type of questions that could be used in CRS lessons that employs the Life-Approach method. This finding also supports the findings of Cox and Godfrey (1997) who conducted a research to test the validity of the philosophical arguments supporting the use of assessment strategies in the teaching of religious education in a classroom situation. The researchers attempted to answer those who continue to challenge the validity of the arguments supporting the use of assessment strategies. In fact the aim of the study was to investigate whether the use of formal assessment procedures in the teaching of religious education has an effect on student learning outcomes. The study found out that teachers who did utilise assessment strategies do have information about their teaching and how well their students were learning. They could make informed judgments about their selected teaching strategy and adjust the strategy as the teaching progresses. The results of the study also indicated that the use of assessment strategies may have a motivating effect on students. In this case it could be concluded that just as crs teachers use the life-approach method in teaching to a large extent, assessment procedures that conforms to the principles underpinning the method is also adopted accordingly.

Better still, in grouping students during CRS lessons, teachers should employ the strategy which is less prescriptive, more aware of different personal or family options with regard to the way; the Christian faith is being lived, and should be more of an invitation to personal commitment through a variety of practices and activities (Rummery, 2001). Do CRS teachers in the Brong Ahafo region consider students life experiences in grouping them? To

answer this, 3.46 (mean) and 1.2 (standard deviation) was recorded indicating that the students were not certain. This conclusion was drawn because the mean is approximately 3 (uncertain). However since the standard deviation is higher than the mean of the standard deviation of 1.07 it means this is not a unanimous decision. The most clear cat category that could be used in grouping students is denominations. Though there are disparities in how the Christian faith is practiced, great similarities exist. At least an Orthodox Church member may move on well with another Orthodox member likewise Protestant Church members. It is very unfortunate that the teachers, according to the Table 12, do not consider this important issue in grouping students. According to Nacino-Brown, Oke and Brown (1982) “in comparing groups of four students of similar personality, traits to groups in which the students were different, it has been found that the heterogeneous groups produced superior solutions. Researchers suggest that heterogeneous groups are more likely to have a variety of alternatives proposed and that this permits inventive solutions” (p. 51). So the purpose of grouping will determine whether the members should be heterogeneous or homogeneous in terms of the Christian faith they belong to.

Concerning how students are motivated to relate biblical stories to real life experiences of the learner, majority of the students agreed, to it. A mean of 1.85 and a standard deviation of 1.2 were recorded meaning they are given the necessary motivation. It was evident that majority of the respondents are motivated but one is not certain as to the kind of motivation offered to them.

The pluralist and materialistic nature of the present society cannot allow for the use of traditional methods of teaching religion. To some extent,

religion has a private affair so the approach in teaching it should be one that can help the learner to make his/her own free choice (Onsongo, 2002). In connection with this, 2.26 (mean) and 1.24 (standard deviation) were recorded for the statement religion has a private affair so the approach to teaching it should help learners to make their own free choice. The foregoing finding supports the assertion made by Onsongo (2002) as stated earlier. In fact a greater number of the students support this view. On the whole, the students agreed that to a large extent, their teachers instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method. A look at the mean of means of 2.11 depicts that it falls on the scale 2 (agree).

The views of teachers as to how their instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method are presented in Table 13.

Table 13: How Teachers' Instructional Practices Conform to the Life – Approach Method, Teachers View

Statements	M	SD
Students' real life experiences form the basis of discussions in the classroom.	2.03	1.00
Students are encouraged to use real life experiences in setting example in CRS.	1.53	.51
Students use real life experiences in explaining what is studied from the bible.	1.58	.50
Concrete, real and present situation of learners are considered in asking questions in class.	1.64	.49
Students are encouraged to use real, concrete and present situation in answering.	1.64	.59
Through the use of role-play, students are offered the opportunity to relate bible stories to their own life.	1.69	.47

(Table 13 continued)

Statement	M	SD
Assessment procedures that give students opportunity.	1.78	.93
Students' experiences are considered in grouping them in the classroom.	2.03	.81
Students who are able to relate Biblical stories to real life experiences are given rewards to serve as motivation.	2.19	1.01
Religion has a private affair so the approach to teaching it should help learners to make their own free choice.	1.72	.94

Scale: 1= Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Uncertain 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree.

Mean of means = 1.78

Mean of standard deviation = 0.73

It could be asserted that the use of good instructional practices can facilitate the use of the Life-Approach method. Instructional methodology is not used in isolation. Effective teaching is polymethodic. This is the more reason why the teacher should have the needed expertise in using a method. Thus teachers, in their own creativity, combine instructional practices to facilitate teaching and learning. This section looks at how the teachers' instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method. A look at Table 13 shows that according to the teachers their instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method. This is confirmed by the mean of means of 1.78 and a mean of standard deviation of 0.73 indicating a strong support for the assertion. The following instances explain this position.

Initially, regarding the item, “students real life experiences form the basis of discussions in the classroom”, 2.03 (mean) and 1 (standard deviation) was obtained for this item. The implication of this is that majority of the respondents agreed to this view. Students are also encouraged to use real life experiences in setting examples. This is explicit in the fact that 1.53 mean and .51 standard deviation were obtained for the statement. Thus all the CRS teachers support this view. These findings clearly support the assertion that “things that learners already understand are very significant influence on what they can learn in the future. Therefore learner’s background knowledge should be deliberately and consistently, incorporated into their new learning “(Yeigh, 2008, p. 20). The implication of this is that the gap between the biblical experiences and existential experiences is bridged allowing a free transfer of relevant previous knowledge into the new knowledge.

In connection with how students are given the opportunity to use their own real life experiences in explaining what is studied from the Bible, 1.58 and .50 were the figures obtained for this item. All the respondents support this. It is also clear from Table 13, that concrete real and present situation of learners are considered in asking and answering question in class. For asking and answering questions, 1.64 (mean) each were accomplished just that their standard deviation varied that is .59 and .47. These figures demonstrate that the teachers strongly agree to the statement posed to find out this. In this case a significant majority of the teachers have very good questioning skills that conform to the use of the Life-Approach method. These findings go with Ornstein and Lasley (2000) who posited that “Good teaching involves good questioning, especially, when teaching large groups of students. Skillful

questioning can arouse students' curiosity, stimulate their imagination and motivate them to search out new knowledge" (p. 179).

Furthermore, according to all the teachers, they use, role-play to offer the students the opportunity to relate biblical concepts to their life experiences. Here, 1.69 (mean) and .47 (standard deviation) were gained for the statement. The mean of this item plunges into the scale 2 (agree).

Assessment procedures that give students opportunity to relate biblical stories to life are adopted in teaching CRS. According to Kissock and Lyortsum (1982), we have low order and high order questions. The high order type of questions which calls for synthesis and application of knowledge is the most suitable type of questions that conforms to the Life-Approach method.

In addition, students' real life experiences are considered in grouping them during CRS lesson. Majority of the teachers support this view. The students had stated earlier that their real life experiences are considered in asking and answering questions during CRS lessons. This implies that teacher's assessment procedures conform to the Life-Approach method. During the observation sections in the selected schools, it was realized that a significant majority of the teachers' use assessment procedures that conform to the Life-Approach method. This was noticed both in their oral and written lesson evaluation sections. The teachers indicated that students are motivated to use their real life experiences to answer questions. In line with this, 2.19 (mean) and 1.01 (standard deviation) were recorded for this statement. Marks, praise, claps were the only known motivation that I saw during the observation sections.

Lastly, the statement, “religion has a private affair so the approach to teaching it should help learners to make their own free choice”; has majority of the teachers supporting this position. This finding goes with the position of Onsongo (2002) that religion has a private affair so the approach in teaching it should be one that can help the learner to make his/her own free choice. A careful look at the items that border on finding out how the teachers instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method show that to a large extent teachers instructional practices conform to the method.

Table 14 deals with the data from observation of classroom interactions which dealt with how teachers’ instructional practices conform to the Life-Approach method.

Table 14: How Instructional Practices of the Teacher Conform to the Life-Approach Method, Data from Observation.

Instructional practices	Very much N (%)	Much N (%)	Somehow N (%)	Not at all N (%)
Discussions	30 (51.7)	16 (27.6)	8 (13.8)	6 (6.9)
Questions	20 (34.5)	14 (24.1)	20 (34.5)	4 (6.9)
Group work	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	58 (100)
Explanation of points	10 (17.2)	34 (58.6)	10 (17.2)	4 (6.9)
Giving of example and citing instances	21 (36.2)	27 (46.6)	6 (10.3)	4 (6.9)
Evaluation	19 (32.8)	29 (50)	6 (10.3)	4 (6.9)

From Table 14, it could be seen that majority of the teachers employed instructional practices that conform to the Life-Approach method. This could be seen from the following instances. With discussions, 51.7% of the lesson conform very much, 27.6% much, 13.8% somehow and 6.9% not at all. In line with the use of questioning 34.5% conformed very much, 24.1% were much, 34.5% were somehow and 6.9% not at all. Concerning group work, none of the teachers grouped the students in the lessons I observed. So I could not ascertain whether they consider life experiences in grouping. However, the data from teachers confirm that they consider students' real life experiences in grouping learners. Whiles the students were indifferent, the teachers said they consider their life experiences in grouping.

In explaining points, 17.2% conform very much to the method 58.6% much, 17.2% somehow and 6.9% not at all. In the same way in giving examples and citing instances, 36.2% of the lesson conform to the method very much, 46.6% much 10.3% somehow and 6.9% not at all. So with explanation of points and citing instances majority of the teachers took cognisance of the Life-Approach method. It was found out that the evaluation sections conform to the Life-Approach method. This was depicted both in their oral and written questions that the students were asked to do. Students were asked to talk about the moral lessons that could be drawn from the lessons. They were also asked on several occasions to talk about the significance of the biblical stories under study.

In conclusion, it could be asserted that majority of the lessons that were observed talking of the instructional practices employed in the lesson

delivery conformed to the Life-Approach method to a large extent. The lessons were learner centred and interactive in nature.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Research Process

The knowledge that is acquired in school should reflect in the person's life in order to improve upon his or her life style. This is the reason why the students' real life experiences must form an integral part of the instructional process. The West African Examinations Council requires that conceptual bridges are built between students' existential experiences and the biblical concepts. The use of the Life-Approach method undoubtedly ensures this. It is of crystal importance that researchers assess how the CRS teachers use this method in the instructional process in order to unearth the challenges associated with it. Instructional resources are very important assets that are used to augment the teacher's efforts at bridging the existential experiences of learner and biblical concepts. It is important to look at how it is used in the instructional process. In the use of Life-Approach method, teachers' instructional practices must conform to the rules undergirding the method. It is in this wise that how CRS teachers' instructional practices must conform to the Life-Approach method was looked at in this study. In order to find answers to the research questions that were formulated to guide the study, the descriptive survey research design was employed. The study covered 29 accessible Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region. In all 36 teachers and 319 students of CRS were involved in the study. The simple random and

purposive sampling procedures were used to select students and teachers respectively to serve as respondents.

Two main instruments namely questionnaire and observation guide were used to gather the requisite data for the study. Two sets of five point Likert scale type of questionnaires were used to gather data from students and teachers of CRS. An observation guide was designed to back up the data that were gathered with the questionnaires. It is note worthy that these instruments were subjected to reliability and validity test. The data gathered from the students, teachers and the observation of classroom interactions were analysed with statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages, means as well as standard deviations. The following are the main findings of the study.

Summary of Key Findings

1. Generally, CRS teachers in the Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region use the Life-Approach method to a large extent in the instructional process. The results of the data gathered from CRS students and teachers were confirmed by the observation of the classroom interactions.
2. A great majority of CRS teachers fail to use instructional resources in their teaching to support the Life-Approach method. The only instructional resource that was predominantly used was visual resources such as chalk board, pamphlets and Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Teachers also acknowledged that their main problem associated with the use of instructional resources was that it was very expensive.

3. The main problem associated with the use of Life-Approach method was the inadequate instructional resources to support it. The problem specifically centred on audio-visual, audio and community resources.
4. CRS teachers' instructional practices such as questions, discussions, role-play and evaluation procedures conform to the Life-Approach method.

Conclusions

The following conclusions could be drawn from the findings of the study. With respect to the use of the Life-Approach method differences exist in terms of the steps the teachers take the students through. Some of the teachers employed the method at the closure stage of the lesson while others went rigidly through the stages as suggested by Onsongo (2002). On the whole though there were slight disparities in the use of the method teachers were very much conscious of the method and tried to use it in their teaching.

In addition, teachers acknowledged the important role that instructional resources play in effective teaching and for that matter the use of the Life-Approach method. They failed to use these instructional resources to support their teaching due to the high cost of it. Stakeholders of education responsible for the provision of instructional resources are failing to perform their duty. Probably teachers are also failing to be innovative since some of the instructional resources could be improvised.

The only problem associated with the use of Life-Approach method was the teachers' inability to use instructional resources to support it and the disparities that exist in the steps they follow in using the method. This might be due to the fact that differences exist in terms of professional qualification and teaching experiences among the teachers. Differences that exist in the

intellectual capabilities of students in the various Senior High Schools might also account for this.

Lastly, the situation in Kenyan Secondary Schools 9 years ago as found by Onsongo (2002) is very different from the situation in Brong Ahafo Region. In terms of the use of the Life-Approach method, the teachers' instructional practices conformed to a large extent to the Life-Approach method. Notwithstanding this, the situation in the remaining nine regions in Ghana is not known.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, below are some recommendations to some key stakeholders of education. Initially, the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and Curriculum Research and Development Division, should organise an in-service training on the use of the Life-Approach method for CRS teachers in the Brong Ahafo Region. This will help sharpen CRS teacher's pedagogical skills in order to stand in a better position to use the method.

Also, the Government, Non Governmental Organisations should help by funding the provision of instructional resources for teachers to use in Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo Region. Alternatively, teachers should be trained on how to improvise instructional resources to support their teaching.

Areas for Further Research

This study assessed the use of Life-Approach method of teaching CRS in Senior High Schools in Brong Ahafo Region. The study could be replicated in other regions in the country to find out what persists there. The

main problem associated with the use of the Life-Approach method is the inadequate instructional resources to support its use. It is suggested that a thorough investigation should be conducted to look into the use of instructional resources in the teaching of CRS in the country.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

Questionnaire on the use of Life Approach method in the teaching of Christian Religious Studies (CRS) in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region. This questionnaire is purely for academic work. I therefore ask for your maximum co-operation and assure you that information provided here will be treated with outmost confidentiality.

FOR TEACHERS

Please respond to each of the following items by ticking (√) the appropriate response box.

SECTION A

1. Gender:

- a. Male []
- b. Female []

2. Religious Affiliation

- a. Christianity []
- b. Islam []
- c. African Traditional Religion []
- d. Others (please specify).....

3. For how long have you been teaching CRS?

- a. less than a year []
- b. 1 - 5 years []
- c. 6 -10 years []
- d. 11 – 15 years []
- e. 16 years and above []

4. What is your highest academic qualification?

- a. Bachelor’s Degree []
- b. Master of Arts []
- c. Master of Philosophy []
- d. Other (specify).....

5. What is your highest professional teaching qualification?

- a. Teacher’s Cert ‘A’ []
- b. Diploma in Education []
- c. Post Graduate Diploma in Education []
- d. Bachelor of Education []
- e. Masters in Education []
- f. Other (specify).....

SECTION –B

Please tick (√) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on these statements

key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
6. I teach CRS with real, concrete and present situation of learners as basis					
7. Religious concepts only come alive when they are related to life experiences					
8. Topics in CRS are introduced and illustrated not just from the Bible but the minor world of students					
9. Religious concepts cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential					
10. CRS should offer itself as a contribution to the students quest for meaning in life					
11. CRS should provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living					
12. CRS should help students to build conceptual bridges between existential experiences and the central concepts of religion					
13. The essence of teaching CRS is to be found in life itself, in all experiences at all subjects.					
14. I relate Biblical stories to life experiences of learners to a large extent					
15. I relate CRS topics to the life of students to a limited extent					
16. I do not relate CRS topics to real life experiences of learners during teaching					

SECTION C

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on these statements. Key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
17. I use audio-visuals (example TV and motion pictures) in teaching					
18. I use visual resources (examples chalkboards, felt board, bulletin, boards and flash cards).					
19. I use community resources (example resource persons and places of interest) in teaching					
20. I use audio materials (example radio and tape recorders) in teaching					
21. Instructional resources are not available					
22. Instructional resources are very expensive					
23. Use of instructional resources is time consuming					
24. I am incompetent in using instructional resources					
25. I use instructional resources for CRS lessons					
26. Instructional resources help me to relate biblical stories to real life experiences of students					

SECTION D

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on the following statement. Key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
27. I am not adequately professionally trained to relate Biblical concepts to real life experiences of the learners					
28. I am not able to relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of students because of shortage of time.					
29. The CRS syllabus is over loaded making it difficult to relate it to life experiences of learners.					
30. I do not relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of learners due to inadequate guidance					
31. Inadequate instructional resources prevent me from relating topics to real life experiences of students					

SECTION E

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box to indicate your candid opinion on following statement. Key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
32. Students' real life experiences form the basis of discussions in the classroom					
33. Students are encouraged to use real life experiences in setting example in CRS lessons.					
34. Students use real life experiences in explaining what is studied from the Bible					
35. Concrete, real and present situation of learners are considered in asking questions in class.					
36. Students are encouraged to use real, concrete and present situation in answering questions in class.					
37. Through the use of role-play, students are offered the opportunity to relate Bible stories to their own life					
38. Assessment procedures, that give students opportunity to relate Biblical stories to life, are adopted during CRS lessons					
39. Students' experiences are considered in grouping them in the classroom during CRS lessons.					
40. Students who are able to relate Biblical stories to real life experiences are given rewards to serve as motivation					
41. Religion has a private affair so the approach to teaching it should help learners to make their own free choice.					

APPENDIX C

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

Questionnaire on the use of Life Approach method in the teaching of Christian Religious Studies (CRS) in Senior High Schools in the Brong Ahafo Region. This questionnaire is purely for academic work. I therefore ask for your maximum co-operation and assure you that information provided here will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

FOR STUDENTS

Please respond to each of the following items by ticking (✓) the appropriate response box.

SECTION A

1. Gender:

c. Male []

d. Female []

2. Religious Affiliation

e. Christianity []

f. Islam []

g. African Traditional Religion []

h. Others (please specify).....

3. Class:

SHS 1 []

SHS 2 []

SHS3 []

SHS 4 []

4. Age:

10-15 years []

16-20 years []

21-25 years []

SECTION –B

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on these statements
key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly
Disagree (SD).

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
5. My teacher teaches CRS with real concrete and present situation of learners as basis					
6. Religious concepts only come alive when they are related to life experiences					
7. Topics in CRS are introduced and illustrated not just from the Bible but the world of students					
8. Religious concepts cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential					
9. CRS should offer itself as a contribution to students' quest for meaning in life					
10. CRS should provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living					
11. CRS should help students to build conceptual bridges between existential experiences and the central concepts of religion					

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
12. The essence of teaching CRS is to be found in life itself, in all experiences at all subjects.					
13. The teacher relates Biblical stories to life experiences of learners to a large extent					
14. The teacher relates CRS topics to the life of students to a limited extent					
15. The teacher does not relate CRS topics to real life experiences of learners during teaching					

SECTION C

Please tick (√) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on these statements. Key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
16. The teacher uses audio-visuals (example TV and motion pictures) in teaching					
17. The teacher uses visual resources (examples chalkboards, felt board, bulletin, boards and flash cards).					
18. The teacher uses community resources (example resource persons and places of interest) in teaching					
19. The teacher uses audio materials (example radio and tape recorders) in teaching					

SECTION D

Please tick (√) the appropriate box to indicate your opinion on the following statement. Key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
20. The teacher is not adequately and/or professionally trained to relate Biblical concepts to real life experiences of the learners					
21. Teacher does not relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of students because the time allocated to CRS lessons is short.					
22. The CRS syllabus is over loaded making it difficult to relate it to life experiences of learners.					
23. The teacher does not relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of learners due to inadequate guidance					
24. Inadequate instructional resources prevent the teacher from relating topics to real life experiences of students					

SECTION E

Please tick (√) the appropriate box to indicate your candid opinion on following statement. Key: Agree (A); Strongly Agree (SA); Uncertain (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD)

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
25. Student's real life experiences form the basis of discussions in the classroom					
26. Students are encouraged to use real life experiences in setting example in CRS lessons.					

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
27. Students use real life experiences in explaining what is studied from the Bible					
28. Concrete real and present situation of learners are considered in asking questions in class.					
29. Students are encouraged to use real, concrete and present situation in answering questions in class.					
30. Through the use of role-play, students are offered the opportunity to relate Bible stories to their own life					
31. Assessment procedures that give students opportunity to relate Biblical stories to life are adopted during CRS lessons					
32. Students' experiences are considered in grouping them in the classroom during CRS lessons.					
33. Students who are able to relate Biblical stories to real life experiences are given rewards to serve as motivation					
34. Religion has a private affair so the approach to teaching it should help learners to make their own free choice.					

APPENDIX D

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR ASSESSING THE USE OF THE LIFE-
APPROACH METHOD IN TEACHING CRS IN THE SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL LEVEL

The Extent to which CRS teachers use the life-approach method

	Very much	Much	Somehow	Not at all
1. The teachers teaches CRS with real, concrete and present situation of student				
2. Topics are introduced and illustrated from the minor world of students				
3. Religious concepts are taught as experiential facts				
4. The topic is taught in a life-centered way				

Instructional resources available for the use of life-approach method

	Very much	Much	Somehow	Not at all
5. Teacher uses audio-visual materials				
6. Use of visual resources				
7. Use of audio resources				
8. Use of community resources				

	Yes	No
9. With the aid of instructional resources the teacher is able to relate the Biblical story to real life situation		
10. The lesson is practical and concrete with the use of instructional resources		

Problems associated with the use of life-approach method

	Yes	No
11. The teacher is not conversant with the use the life approach method.		
12. The teacher is not able to use the method satisfactorily.		
13. The topic is too broad to be related to life experiences.		

How instructional practices of the teacher conform to the life-approach method.

	Very much	Much	Somehow	Not at all
14. Discussions				
15. Questions				
16. Group work				
17. Explanation of points				
18. Giving of example and citing instances				
19. Evaluation				

Further comments:

APPENDIX E

Reliability Coefficient for Teachers Questionnaire

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	9	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	9	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.904	36

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
6. I teach CRS with real, concrete and present situation of learners as basis	94.7778	237.694	.284	.908
7. Religious concepts only come alive when they are related to life experiences	95.0000	238.500	.636	.898
8. Topics in CRS are introduced and illustrated not just from the Bible but the minor world of students	94.8889	254.611	.103	.904
9. Religious concepts cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential	94.2222	237.194	.511	.900
10. CRS should offer itself as a contribution to the students quest for meaning in life	94.4444	240.278	.436	.901

11. CRS should provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living	94.6667	249.500	.280	.903
12. CRS should help students to build conceptual bridges between existential experiences and the central concepts of religion	94.8889	254.111	.138	.904
13. The essence of teaching CRS is to be found in life itself, in all experiences at all subjects.	94.4444	244.778	.301	.903
14. I relate Biblical stories to life experiences of learners to a large extent	92.0000	253.000	.189	.904
15. I relate CRS topics to the life of students to a limited extent	92.8889	247.111	.268	.904
16. I do not relate CRS topics to real life experiences of learners during teaching	92.8889	229.361	.881	.894
17. I use audio-visuals (example TV and motion pictures) in teaching	93.7778	251.194	.118	.906
18. I use visual resources (examples chalkboards, felt board, bulletin, boards and flash cards).	94.5556	231.028	.673	.897
19. I use community resources (example resource persons and places of interest) in teaching	93.6667	232.500	.660	.897
20. I use audio materials (example radio and tape recorders) in teaching	92.7778	232.694	.624	.898
21. Instructional resources are not available	93.8889	228.611	.476	.902
22. Instructional resources are very expensive	92.7778	238.444	.413	.902
23. Use of instructional resources is time consuming	92.1111	244.361	.500	.900
24. I am incompetent in using instructional resources	92.1111	244.361	.500	.900
25. I use instructional resources for CRS lessons	93.1111	244.361	.500	.900

26. Instructional resources help me to relate biblical stories to real life experiences of students	94.3333	245.750	.451	.901
27. I am not adequately professionally trained to relate Biblical concepts to real life experiences of the learners	95.4444	251.028	.360	.903
28. I am not able to relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of students because of shortage of time.	92.3333	227.750	.670	.897
29. The CRS syllabus is over loaded making it difficult to relate it to life experiences of learners.	92.0000	253.000	.189	.904
30. I do not relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of learners due to inadequate guidance	95.4444	251.028	.360	.903
31. Inadequate instructional resources prevent me from relating topics to real life experiences of students	94.6667	238.250	.436	.901
32. Students' real life experiences form the basis of discussions in the classroom	92.8889	238.861	.822	.897
33. Students are encouraged to use real life experiences in setting example in CRS lessons.	95.0000	245.250	.686	.900
34. Students use real life experiences in explaining what is studied from the Bible	94.7778	247.444	.829	.900
35. Concrete, real and present situation of learners are considered in asking questions in class.	95.2222	243.444	.762	.899
36. Students are encouraged to use real, concrete and present situation in answering questions in class.	94.7778	240.694	.616	.899
37. Through the use of role-play, students are offered the opportunity to relate Bible stories to their own life	95.4444	251.028	.360	.903

38. Assessment procedures, that give students opportunity to relate Biblical stories to life, are adopted during CRS lessons	95.0000	255.250	.047	.905
39. Students' experiences are considered in grouping them in the classroom during CRS lessons.	92.5556	233.528	.464	.901
40. Students who are able to relate Biblical stories to real life experiences are given rewards to serve as motivation	94.7778	240.194	.637	.899
41. Religion has a private affair so the approach to teaching it should help learners to make their own free choice.	94.7778	247.444	.829	.900

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
96.6667	256.250	16.00781	36

APPENDIX F

Reliability Coefficient for Student Questionnaire

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	47	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	47	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.810	30

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
5. My teacher teaches CRS with real concrete and present situation of learners as basis	82.8723	173.114	.168	.810
6. Religious concepts only come alive when they are related to life experiences	81.9149	169.080	.180	.812
7. Topics in CRS are introduced and illustrated not just from the Bible but the world of students	81.7021	152.170	.599	.790
8. Religious concepts cannot be taught as if they were facts but they are by nature experiential	81.6170	164.459	.340	.804
9. CRS should offer itself as a contribution to students' quest for meaning in life	82.3830	171.981	.163	.810
10. CRS should provoke an enquiry into values and commitments in living	81.7872	165.432	.347	.804

11.CRS should help students to build conceptual bridges between existential experiences and the central concepts of religion	82.5106	173.168	.167	.810
12.The essence of teaching CRS is to be found in life itself, in all experiences at all subjects.	82.2766	167.813	.347	.804
13.The teacher relates Biblical stories to life experiences of learners to a large extent	82.5106	166.212	.406	.802
14.The teacher relates CRS topics to the life of students to a limited extent	80.9362	164.278	.360	.803
15.The teacher does not relate CRS topics to real life experiences of learners during teaching	80.1064	168.184	.248	.808
16.The teacher uses audio-visuals (example TV and motion pictures) in teaching	79.8085	166.202	.455	.801
17.The teacher uses visual resources (examples chalkboards, felt board, bulletin, boards and flash cards).	82.0851	170.123	.161	.812
18.The teacher uses community resources (example resource persons and places of interest) in teaching	81.4255	163.337	.350	.804
19.The teacher uses audio materials (example radio and tape recorders) in teaching	79.9362	166.583	.415	.802
20.The teacher is not adequately and/or professionally trained to relate	79.8723	168.244	.341	.804
21.Teacher does not relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of students because the time allocated to CRS lessons is short.	80.4894	167.168	.274	.807
22.The CRS syllabus is over loaded making it difficult to relate it to life experiences of learners.	80.4255	172.902	.113	.813

23.The teacher does not relate Biblical concepts to life experiences of learners due to inadequate guidance	80.2766	171.639	.178	.810
24.Inadequate instructional resources prevent the teacher from relating topics to real life experiences of students	80.7234	167.465	.291	.806
25.Student's real life experiences form the basis of discussions in the classroom	81.7234	160.465	.477	.798
26.Students are encouraged to use real life experiences in setting example in CRS lessons	82.2766	165.944	.414	.802
27.Students use real life experiences in explaining what is studied from the Bible	82.1489	166.260	.343	.804
28.Concrete real and present situation of learners are considered in asking questions in class.	82.2128	171.389	.192	.809
29.Students are encouraged to use real, concrete and present situation in answering questions in class.	82.1702	172.536	.139	.811
30.Through the use of role-play, students are offered the opportunity to relate Bible stories to their own life	82.6383	166.801	.411	.802
31.Assessment procedures that give students opportunity to relate Biblical stories to life are adopted during CRS lessons	81.8723	156.418	.574	.793
32.Students' experiences are considered in grouping them in the classroom during CRS lessons.	81.1489	161.390	.435	.800
33.Students who are able to relate Biblical stories to real life experiences are given rewards to serve as motivation	81.5957	167.420	.259	.808

34. Religion has a private affair so the approach to teaching it should help learners to make their own free choice.	81.8085	164.897	.358	.803
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Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
84.3191	177.309	13.31574	30

APPENDIX G

Reliability Coefficient For Observation

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	5	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	5	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.968	19

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. The teachers teaches CRS with real, concrete and present situation of student	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964
2. Topics are introduced and illustrated from the minor world of students	45.8000	195.200	.846	.966
3. Religious concepts are taught as experiential facts	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964
4. The topic is taught in a life-centered way	45.6000	212.800	.976	.966
5. Teacher uses audio-visual materials	45.0000	197.500	.974	.964
6. Use of visual resources	45.6000	206.800	.521	.971
7. Use of audio resources	46.0000	219.000	.262	.973
8. Use of community resources	45.4000	182.800	.972	.965

9. With the aid of instructional resources the teacher is able to relate the Biblical story to real life situation	46.6000	212.800	.976	.966
10. The lesson is practical and concrete with the use of instructional resources	46.6000	212.800	.976	.966
11. The teacher is not conversant with the use the life approach method.	44.6000	212.800	.976	.966
12. The teacher is not able to use the method satisfactorily	44.6000	212.800	.976	.966
13. The topic is too broad to be related to life experiences.	46.0000	222.000	.241	.972
14. Discussions	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964
15. Questions	45.6000	212.800	.976	.966
16. Group work	45.2000	200.200	.972	.964
17. Explanation of points	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964
18. Giving of example and citing instances	46.0000	197.500	.974	.964
19. Evaluation	45.0000	219.000	.363	.971

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
48.2000	228.700	15.12283	19