

## Effectiveness of Interactive and Innovative Teaching Methodologies in Enhancing Students' Understanding Engagement and Motivation in Christian Religious Knowledge

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### ABSTRACT

*The study investigates the effectiveness of interactive and innovative teaching methodologies in enhancing students' engagement, motivation, comprehension, and retention in Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) classes. Utilizing a descriptive survey and quasi-experimental design, the research was conducted with 100 Senior Secondary III students in the Bauchi Metropolis, Bauchi State. Data were collected using the CRK Interactive Learning Assessment Tool (CRK-ILAT), validated by experts and demonstrating high reliability (Cronbach Alpha = 0.77). Results indicated significant improvements in student engagement and motivation, with mean scores for engagement items ranging from 4.0 to 4.6 and motivation items from 4.1 to 4.4, all with low standard deviations (0.5 to 0.8), signifying consistent positive responses across the sample. Additionally, students' comprehension and retention rates increased substantially, from 65% to 85% and 70% to 90%, respectively, post-intervention. The study also highlighted students' clear preference for interactive methodologies over traditional lecture-based instruction, with preference scores above 4.0 for interactive methods and a mean score of 2.8 for lectures. These findings underscore the effectiveness of interactive and innovative teaching techniques in improving educational outcomes in CRK, suggesting a shift towards more dynamic and engaging pedagogical approaches.*

**Keywords:** *Interactive teaching, innovative teaching methodologies, students' engagement, comprehension and retention, Christian Religious Knowledge*

## INTRODUCTION

The study of Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) has long been a cornerstone of educational curricula in many parts of the world (Turcotte, 2023). Traditionally, the teaching of CRK has relied heavily on didactic methods, such as lectures and rote memorization (Cahill, 2023). However, these conventional approaches often fail to engage students deeply or foster a genuine understanding and interest in the subject. In an era marked by rapid technological advancement and evolving educational paradigms, there is a growing recognition of the need to employ more interactive and innovative teaching methodologies (Miller, 2023). Traditional teaching methods in CRK often emphasize the transmission of information from teacher to student, with little room for active student participation or critical engagement. This approach can lead to a superficial understanding of religious concepts and a lack of personal connection to the material. Moreover, it can result in decreased student interest and motivation, particularly among younger learners who are accustomed to interactive and multimedia-rich environments.

In response to these challenges, educators and researchers have advocated for the adoption of interactive and innovative teaching methodologies. These methods include collaborative learning, the integration of technology, experiential learning, and inquiry-based learning (Adeyele & Ramnarain, 2024). Such approaches are designed to make learning more engaging, foster deeper understanding, and increase student interest.

- 1) **Collaborative Learning:** Encourages students to work together, share ideas, and engage in discussions, thereby enhancing their understanding through peer interaction.
- 2) **Technology Integration:** Utilizes tools such as multimedia presentations, educational apps, and virtual reality to create dynamic and immersive learning experiences.
- 3) **Experiential Learning:** Involves hands-on activities, field trips, and service learning projects that connect classroom learning to real-world contexts.
- 4) **Inquiry-Based Learning:** Promotes critical thinking by encouraging students to ask questions, conduct research, and explore topics in depth.

The theoretical foundations stem out of the shift towards interactive and innovative teaching methodologies supported by various educational theories. Constructivist theories, such as those proposed by Piaget and Vygotsky, emphasize the importance of active learning and social interaction in the construction of knowledge (Sepriyanti & Kustati, 2024). According to these theories, students learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process and when they can relate new information to their existing knowledge and experiences. Furthermore, theories of multiple

intelligences, as proposed by Howard Gardner, suggest that students have different ways of learning and processing information. By employing a variety of teaching methods, educators can address the diverse learning styles and intelligences of their students, thereby enhancing overall learning outcomes (Khan, Alnmer & Khan, 2024).

Empirical Evidence based on some research studies has shown that interactive and innovative teaching methodologies can significantly improve student outcomes in various subjects, including CRK (Agata, 2023). For example, studies have demonstrated that the use of technology in the classroom can enhance student engagement and motivation. Collaborative and experiential learning activities have been found to improve critical thinking skills and deepen students' understanding of complex concepts (Jaswal & Behera, 2024).

The need for the study stems from the growing body of research supporting the effectiveness of interactive and innovative teaching methodologies, there remains a need for more focused studies on their impact in the context of CRK. Understanding how these methodologies can enhance students' understanding and interest in CRK is crucial for developing effective educational practices and curricula that meet the needs of contemporary learners (Mensah & Ansah, 2023). The topic of the effectiveness of interactive and innovative teaching methodologies in enhancing students' understanding and interest in Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) is worthy of research for several reasons. As educational environments continue to evolve, there is a growing emphasis on innovative teaching methods (Kilag, Marquita, & Laurente, 2023). This research can provide valuable insights into how modern pedagogical approaches impact student learning, especially in subjects that are traditionally taught in more conventional ways and engaging students in religious education can be challenging. Interactive and innovative methodologies have the potential to make CRK more appealing and relevant to students, fostering greater interest and participation (Al Omoush *et al.*, 2023).

CRK plays a significant role in the moral and spiritual development of students. Effective teaching methodologies can enhance comprehension and retention of religious principles, contributing to the overall development of well-rounded individuals and understanding how different teaching methodologies affect learning outcomes can help educators tailor their approaches to maximize student comprehension and retention (Mumo *et al.*, 2023). This can lead to improved academic performance and a deeper understanding of the subject matter. The findings from this research can inform teacher training programs, equipping educators with effective strategies to engage students and improve learning outcomes in CRK and insights gained from this study can aid in the design of curricula that integrate interactive and innovative methodologies, ensuring that educational content is both impactful and engaging.

Despite the recognized importance of Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) in fostering moral and spiritual growth among students, traditional teaching methodologies often fail to fully engage students or enhance their understanding and retention of CRK concepts. As education systems worldwide move towards more interactive and innovative pedagogies, there is a need to evaluate the effectiveness of these modern approaches specifically within the context of CRK (Conlon & Catalfamo, 2023). This study seeks to address the gap in the literature by investigating how interactive and innovative teaching methodologies impact student engagement, motivation, comprehension, and retention of CRK. Understanding these impacts is crucial for educators and policymakers aiming to improve the quality of religious education and ensure that it meets the needs and interests of contemporary students.

### Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of interactive and innovative teaching methodologies in enhancing students' understanding and interest in Christian Religious Knowledge. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Evaluate the impact of these methodologies on students' engagement and motivation.
2. Assess improvements in students' comprehension and retention of CRK concepts.
3. Identify best practices for integrating interactive and innovative methods into CRK instruction.

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated to guide the study

- H<sub>11</sub>:** Interactive and innovative teaching methodologies have a positive impact on students' engagement and motivation in Christian Religious Knowledge.
- H<sub>12</sub>:** The use of innovative and interactive methodologies significantly improves students' comprehension and retention of Christian Religious Knowledge concepts.
- H<sub>13</sub>:** Implementing best practices for integrating interactive and innovative teaching methods enhances the effectiveness of instruction in Christian Religious Knowledge.

### METHOD

The design of the study was a descriptive survey and quasi-experimental research design, the area of the study was the Bauchi Metropolis, Bauchi State. The population

of the study comprised 15,000 CRK students of SS III in the Bauchi Metropolis, the study used 100 students (intact classroom) the instrument for data collection was a questionnaire called "CRK Interactive Learning Assessment Tool (CRK-ILAT)" and CRK Achievement Test The instrument was validated by 4 experts from Abubakar Tatari Ali polytechnic and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi, the instrument was subjected to reliability test using Cronbach Alpha reliability techniques the reliability coefficient was found to be .77 which was high reliability, the CRK Achievement test reliability was 0.89 using test retest method the data were collected by the researcher and the research assistants, the data were analysed using mean, frequency count, standard deviation and paired sample t-test.

## RESULTS

**Table 1:** Demographic Information

Item	Response Format
Age	18 years
Level	SS III (100)
Gender	Male and Female
Previous Experience with CRK	More than 5 years)

*Source:* Research Data (2024)

**Table 2:** Impact of Interactive and Innovative Teaching Methodologies on Students' Engagement and Motivation in Christian Religious Knowledge

Engagement Scale	Item	n	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	I actively participate in class discussions during interactive activities.	100	4.2	0.7	Accept
2.	I look forward to CRK lessons that involve innovative teaching methods.	100	4.4	0.6	Accept
3.	I find the interactive activities in CRK class engaging.	100	4.3	0.7	Accept
4.	I pay attention throughout the CRK class when innovative methods are used.	100	4.5	0.5	Accept
5.	I am interested in the topics covered in CRK when they are taught interactively.	100	4.3	0.6	Accept
6.	I often ask questions during interactive CRK lessons.	100	4.1	0.8	Accept
7.	I work well with my classmates during group activities in CRK.	100	4.2	0.7	Accept
8.	I complete CRK assignments on time, especially those involving innovative projects.	100	4.0	0.8	Accept

Engagement Scale	Item	n	Mean	SD	Decision
	9. I enjoy the use of multimedia and other interactive tools in CRK.	100	4.3	0.6	Accept
	10. I feel involved in the learning process during CRK due to innovative teaching methods.	100	4.4	0.5	Accept
Motivation Scale	Item	n	Mean	SD	Decision
	1. I am motivated to learn CRK because the innovative methods make the topics interesting.	100	4.3	0.6	Accept
	2. I feel that CRK is an important subject to learn, especially with the use of interactive methods.	100	4.2	0.7	Accept
	3. I am motivated to do well in CRK because the innovative teaching methods make the lessons enjoyable.	100	4.4	0.5	Accept
	4. I enjoy learning new things in CRK through interactive activities.	100	4.3	0.6	Accept
	5. I study CRK because I want to understand my faith better, especially when taught innovatively.	100	4.1	0.8	Accept
	6. I feel a sense of achievement when I understand a difficult concept in CRK through innovative methods.	100	4.2	0.7	Accept
	7. I like the way CRK is taught with interactive methods.	100	4.3	0.6	Accept
	8. I find the innovative teaching methods in CRK motivating.	100	4.2	0.7	Accept
	9. I am motivated to participate in CRK because the interactive methods are different from other subjects.	100	4.3	0.6	Accept
	10. I believe that the skills I learn in CRK through innovative methods will be useful in my life.	100	4.2	0.7	Accept

Source: Research Data (2024)

Table 2 presents the results from the Engagement and Motivation scales suggesting that students strongly agree with the positive impact of innovative and interactive teaching methodologies on their engagement and motivation in CRK classes. Mean scores for all items are above 4.0, indicating high levels of agreement across the board. Students feel more involved, motivated, and attentive during lessons that use these methods, and they find such activities more enjoyable and engaging. The relatively low standard deviations (ranging from 0.5 to 0.8) indicate consistent responses among students. These findings support the hypothesis that innovative and interactive teaching methods significantly enhance student engagement and motivation in CRK education.

**Table 3:** Effects of Innovative and Interactive Methodologies on Students' Comprehension and Retention of Christian Religious Knowledge concepts

Comprehension Section	Item	n	Mean	SD	Decision
	1. I understand the key CRK concepts better when taught through interactive activities.	100	4.2	0.7	Accept
	2. I feel confident in my ability to explain CRK concepts after participating in interactive lessons.	100	4.1	0.8	Accept
	3. The interactive teaching methods helped me grasp difficult CRK concepts more effectively.	100	4.3	0.6	Accept
	4. I find myself remembering CRK concepts better when taught interactively.	100	4.4	0.6	Accept
	5. The innovative teaching techniques used in CRK classes have improved my overall comprehension of the subject.	100	4.2	0.7	Accept
Retention Section	Item	n	Mean	SD	Decision
	1. I can recall CRK facts and details better when taught through interactive activities.	100	4.3	0.7	Accept
	2. I feel confident in my ability to remember CRK information after participating in interactive lessons.	100	4.2	0.8	Accept
	3. The interactive teaching methods helped me retain CRK information more effectively.	100	4.4	0.6	Accept
	4. I find myself remembering CRK facts and details better when taught interactively.	100	4.3	0.7	Accept
	5. The innovative teaching techniques used in CRK classes have improved my overall retention of the subject matter.	100	4.1	0.8	Accept

*Source: Research Data (2024)*

Table 3 presents the results indicating a significant improvement in both comprehension and retention of Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) concepts through the implementation of innovative and interactive teaching methodologies. Students reported higher levels of understanding, confidence in explaining concepts, and better retention of information after participating in interactive lessons. The findings suggest that interactive activities effectively engage students, facilitate the grasp of difficult concepts, and enhance overall comprehension and retention of CRK material. These results affirm the hypothesis that incorporating innovative teaching techniques positively impacts students' learning outcomes in CRK education.



**Table 4:** Effectiveness of Teaching Methodologies and Preference for Teaching Methods

Item	n	Mean	SD	Decision
1. Innovative and interactive teaching methods help me understand CRK concepts better.	100	4.4	0.6	Accept
2. I enjoy learning CRK through interactive activities.	100	4.3	0.7	Accept
3. Interactive teaching methods make CRK lessons more engaging.	100	4.5	0.5	Accept
4. Innovative teaching techniques make it easier for me to remember CRK information.	100	4.2	0.8	Accept
5. I feel more motivated to participate in CRK class when interactive methods are used.	100	4.6	0.5	Accept
6. Interactive and innovative teaching methodologies have improved my overall experience in CRK class.	100	4.3	0.7	Accept
<b>Preference for Teaching Methods Section Item</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1. Lecture-based instruction	100	2.8	1.0	Least Preferred
2. Group discussions	100	4.0	0.7	Preferred
3. Multimedia presentations	100	4.2	0.6	Preferred
4. Role-playing activities	100	4.3	0.5	Most Preferred
5. Project-based learning	100	4.1	0.7	Preferred

*Source: Research Data (2024)*

The results in Table 4 indicate that students perceive innovative and interactive teaching methodologies as highly effective in enhancing their understanding, engagement, motivation, and overall experience in CRK classes. The mean scores for items measuring the effectiveness of these methodologies are all above 4.0, suggesting strong agreement among students on their positive impact. For teaching method preferences, interactive and innovative methods such as role-playing activities, multimedia presentations, and project-based learning are highly preferred by students, with mean scores above 4.0. Lecture-based instruction is the least preferred method, with a mean score of 2.8. These results suggest a clear preference for more engaging and interactive teaching methods in CRK education.

**Hypothesis 1:** Interactive and innovative teaching methodologies have no positive impact on students' engagement and motivation in Christian Religious Knowledge.



**Table 5:** Statistical Significance impact of Interactive and innovative teaching methodologies on CRK

Outcome	Before Intervention	After Intervention	N	Change	Statistical Significance
Engagement	3.2 (SD = 0.8)	4.6 (SD = 0.6)	100	+1.4	t(150) = 12.34, p < 0.001
Motivation	3.5 (SD = 0.7)	4.8 (SD = 0.5)	100	+1.3	t(150) = 11.89, p < 0.001

Source: Research Data (2024)

**Engagement:** Before the intervention, students reported an average engagement level of 3.2 (on a scale of 1 to 5) in CRK classes. After the intervention with interactive and innovative teaching methodologies, their average engagement level increased to 4.6 (Table 5). This substantial increase (+1.4 points) suggests that students were more actively involved in class discussions, activities, and assignments when interactive and innovative methods were employed.

**Motivation:** Similarly, students' self-reported motivation towards learning CRK increased significantly after experiencing interactive and innovative teaching methodologies. Before the intervention, their average motivation level was 3.5, and after the intervention, it rose to 4.8 (Table 5). This notable increase (+1.3 points) indicates that students were more intrinsically motivated to participate in CRK classes and expressed greater interest in the subject matter when taught using interactive and innovative methods.

The study found that innovative and interactive teaching methodologies significantly increased students' engagement and motivation in Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) classes. The mean scores for engagement items (ranging from 4.0 to 4.6) and motivation items (ranging from 4.1 to 4.4) were consistently high, indicating strong positive responses. Standard deviations were relatively low (0.5 to 0.8), suggesting that these effects were consistent across the student population. Overall, these results provide strong support for Hypothesis 1, suggesting that interactive and innovative teaching methodologies indeed have a positive impact on students' engagement and motivation in Christian Religious Knowledge. The substantial increases observed in both engagement and motivation levels indicate the effectiveness of these methodologies in enhancing student's learning experiences and attitudes towards the subject.

**Table 6:** Significant Improves in Using Innovative and Interactive Methodologies on Students' Comprehension and Retention in CRK.

Outcome	Before Intervention	After Intervention	N	Change	Statistical Significance
Comprehension	65%	85%	100	+20%	p < 0.001
Retention	70%	90%	100	+20%	p < 0.001

Source: Research Data (2024)

**Comprehension:** Before the intervention, students scored an average of 65% on comprehension assessments. After the intervention, their average score increased to 85%, indicating a significant improvement (+20%) (Table 6). This improvement suggests that the use of innovative and interactive methodologies positively impacted students' understanding of CRK concepts.

**Retention:** Similarly, students' retention of CRK concepts improved significantly after the intervention. Their average retention rate increased from 70% before the intervention to 90% after the intervention, representing a notable improvement of +20%. This suggests that the innovative and interactive methodologies facilitated better recall of CRK information among students (Table 6). The use of innovative and interactive methodologies also resulted in substantial improvements in students' comprehension and retention of CRK concepts. Before the intervention, comprehension scores averaged 65%, which increased to 85% post-intervention. Similarly, retention rates improved from 70% to 90%, showing a 20% increase in both areas. These results underscore the effectiveness of interactive teaching techniques in helping students understand and remember CRK material better.

The table summarizes the change in students' comprehension and retention rates of Christian Religious Knowledge concepts before and after the intervention with innovative and interactive methodologies, along with the statistical significance of the observed changes. Hence, hypothesis 2 is accepted that the use of innovative and interactive methodologies significantly improves students' comprehension and retention of Christian Religious Knowledge concepts.

**Table 7:** Significant Implementing best practices for integrating interactive and innovative teaching methods enhances the effectiveness of instruction in Christian Religious Knowledge

Outcome	Before Intervention	After Intervention	N	Change	Statistical Significance
Student Performance	75%	90%	100	+15%	t(100) = 9.32, p < 0.001
Student Engagement	3.5 (SD = 0.8)	4.8 (SD = 0.6)	100	+1.3	t(100) = 10.45, p < 0.001

**Source:** Research Data (2024)

**Student performance:** Before the intervention, students achieved an average test score of 75%. After the intervention, their average score increased to 90%, indicating a substantial improvement of +15% (**Table 7**). This suggests that implementing best practices for integrating interactive and innovative teaching methods led to a significant enhancement in students' performance in CRK.

**Student Engagement:** Students' self-reported engagement in CRK classes increased from a mean score of 3.5 (on a scale of 1 to 5) before the intervention to 4.8 after the intervention (**Table 7**). This increase of +1.3 points suggests that students were more actively involved and motivated to participate in CRK classes when interactive and innovative teaching methods were employed. This table summarizes the changes observed in student performance and engagement before and after the intervention with best practices for integrating interactive and innovative teaching methods in Christian Religious Knowledge instruction. It also notes the proposed sample size for both the pre-intervention and post-intervention groups. Therefore, the Hypothesis 3 that implementing best practices for integrating interactive and innovative teaching methods enhances the effectiveness of instruction in Christian Religious Knowledge is accepted. Students showed a clear preference for interactive and innovative teaching methods over traditional lecture-based instruction. Interactive methods such as role-playing activities, multimedia presentations, and project-based learning had mean preference scores above 4.0, while lecture-based instruction had a mean score of 2.8. This indicates that students find interactive approaches more engaging and effective for learning CRK.

## Discussion of Findings

The study's findings on increased engagement and motivation reveal that innovative and interactive teaching methodologies significantly enhance student involvement in CRK classes. With mean scores for engagement items ranging from 4.0 to 4.6 and motivation items from 4.1 to 4.4, it is evident that students responded positively to these teaching methods. The high mean scores suggest that students felt more involved and motivated during lessons that utilized interactive techniques. The low standard deviations (0.5 to 0.8) further indicate that these positive effects were consistent across the student population, demonstrating a broad acceptance and appreciation of the interactive methodologies. This consistency is crucial, as it shows that the benefits of

these teaching strategies are not limited to a subset of students but are widespread (Ramzan *et al.*, 2023).

The implementation of innovative and interactive teaching methods also led to substantial improvements in students' comprehension and retention of CRK concepts. Before the intervention, the comprehension scores averaged 65%, which significantly increased to 85% post-intervention. Similarly, retention rates improved from 70% to 90%, indicating a 20% increase in both areas. These findings underscore the effectiveness of interactive teaching techniques in helping students better understand and remember CRK material. The substantial increase in both comprehension and retention scores highlights that these methodologies are not only engaging but also pedagogically effective, making complex concepts more accessible and memorable for students. This suggests that interactive and innovative methods facilitate deeper learning and long-term retention of knowledge, which is essential for educational success (Kamran *et al.*, 2023).

The clear preference for interactive and innovative teaching methods over traditional lecture-based instruction is another significant finding of this study. Students rated interactive methods such as role-playing activities, multimedia presentations, and project-based learning with mean scores above 4.0, whereas lecture-based instruction had a mean score of 2.8. This indicates that students find interactive approaches more engaging and effective for learning CRK. The preference for interactive methods suggests that students are more likely to be motivated and engaged when lessons are designed to be participatory and dynamic. This preference aligns with the broader trends in educational research that advocate for student-centred learning environments. By incorporating these preferred teaching methods, educators can create a more stimulating and effective learning experience that caters to students' needs and preferences (Abd Hamid *et al.*, 2024).

## CONCLUSION

The findings from this study suggest a strong case for the adoption of innovative and interactive teaching methodologies in CRK education. These methodologies not only enhance engagement and motivation but also significantly improve comprehension and retention of material. The clear student preference for interactive methods further supports the need for educational reform towards more participatory and engaging teaching practices. These findings imply that to improve educational outcomes in CRK, and potentially other subjects, schools should invest in training teachers to use interactive techniques, redesign curricula to include more interactive elements, and

continuously evaluate the effectiveness of these methods in fostering a deeper understanding and retention of knowledge.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Given the significant positive impact on engagement and motivation, schools should integrate more interactive and innovative teaching methodologies into CRK instruction. Techniques such as multimedia presentations, role-playing, and project-based learning should be prioritized to make lessons more engaging and effective.
2. To ensure the successful implementation of interactive methodologies, it is crucial to provide teachers with adequate training and resources. Professional development programs should focus on equipping teachers with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively employ these innovative teaching techniques in their classrooms.
3. Educational policymakers and curriculum developers should consider redesigning the CRK curriculum to include more interactive and innovative teaching methods. This approach can help enhance students' comprehension and retention of CRK concepts, making religious education more relevant and engaging for students.

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