

The Application of the Know-Meet-Share-Express Method to Improve Students' Catholic Faith

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the level of students Catholic faith knowledge before and after the application of the Know-Meet-Share-Express (KMSE) method from YOCAT Indonesia, to describe its application in pastoral catechesis learning, and to test its effect on grade X students at SMAK St. Aloysius Palangka Raya. The study employed a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design. The sample consisted of 56 students selected through simple random sampling, comprising 27 students in the experimental group taught with the KMSE method and 29 students in the control group taught with the conventional method. Data were collected through a 25-item multiple-choice test and a questionnaire, then analyzed using descriptive statistics and an independent samples t-test with SPSS 23. The results show that the experimental group mean rose from 49.48 to 78.07 (gain 28.59), while the control group rose only from 49.93 to 56.83 (gain 6.90). The t-test produced $t = 10.160$ with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), so the null hypothesis was rejected. Questionnaire responses were also highly positive, ranging from 83.3% to 93.3% across the four stages. The study concludes that the KMSE method has a significant effect on improving students Catholic faith knowledge and offers a meaningful, transformative learning experience.

Keywords: Know-Meet-Share-Express Method, Catholic Faith Knowledge, Pastoral Catechesis

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INTRODUCTION

Faith education cannot be reduced to a mere transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next. It is a living encounter between a growing person and God who speaks in the midst of human experience. This is what distinguishes catechesis from an ordinary academic subject. As John Paul II affirmed in the Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979), catechesis is the education of children, young people, and adults in the faith, given generally in an organic and systematic way, with the aim of introducing them to the fullness of Christian life. This statement affirms that catechesis is not about memorizing doctrine, but about the integral internalization of faith across the whole of life.

In Indonesia, religious learning in Catholic schools has long been carried out, yet it has not always succeeded in reaching the deepest dimension of faith internalization. Many students formally attend religion classes, memorize the order of the sacraments, and even score well on tests, yet do not experience a real spiritual transformation in their daily lives. School-based catechetical ministry, historically the backbone of forming the faith of the young generation, faces a great challenge in this digital era, namely how to make faith relevant, alive, and able to dialogue with the concrete experience of young people whose attention is fragmented among screens, social media, and pressures of identity. This challenge is not merely a matter of methodology, but touches the very mission of catechesis (Gravissimum Educationis, 1965).

Directory documents reinforce this direction. The General Directory for Catechesis (1997) affirms that catechesis is one moment within the process of evangelization and that its primary task is to foster an active, not passive, knowledge of faith. The renewed Directory for Catechesis (2020) further emphasizes the importance of methods centered on the life experience of students, that are contextual and able to produce a personal encounter with God, explicitly encouraging catechists and religion teachers to develop approaches that go beyond conventional instruction.

At the senior high school level, catechetical ministry becomes a strategic context. High school students are in a critical phase of cognitive and identity development; they are no longer satisfied with simple answers and begin to question the foundations of the beliefs they once accepted. Piaget (1972) called this the formal operational stage, in which young people begin to think abstractly and require rationally accountable arguments, while Fowler (1981) identified ages 15 to 18 as the stage of Synthetic Conventional Faith, in which confidence in faith is not yet fully formed and is strongly influenced by community and relational experience. These findings affirm that a catechetical method for high school students must accommodate their intellectual and relational needs simultaneously.

SMAK St. Aloysius Palangka Raya is a Catholic school that faces particular challenges in delivering pastoral catechesis. Although the subject is part of the curriculum, in reality it has not fully succeeded in forming students faith knowledge deeply. Based on the researcher initial observation through an interview with the principal, most students entering this school came from regional schools where, at the junior high level, they did not receive Catholic Religious Education, or where such teaching was delivered by teachers without adequate catechetical background. This condition directly affects the quality of faith knowledge that students bring, so that they arrive with very minimal preparation, even in the most basic tenets of the Catholic faith, and experience confusion when first confronting deeper catechetical material.

Lalu (2007) explains that good catechesis must be able to answer the real needs of the community being formed, rather than merely following the sequence of a textbook. In line with this, Groome (1980) introduced the Shared Praxis Approach, a model of faith education that begins from the life experience of students, proceeds with critical reflection, then enters into dialogue with the Christian tradition, and finally produces new decisions and commitments. Berangka and Devonsa (2025) found that applying the Shared Christian

Praxis model to young Catholics produced a very significant effect on their active participation, strengthening the position of Groome model as a tested theoretical foundation for understanding why the KMSE method holds great potential in Indonesian catechetical ministry.

The KMSE method, developed by YOUCAT Indonesia and inspired by YOUCAT (the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church), integrates several tested pedagogical and catechetical traditions: narrative catechesis rooted in life experience, collaborative learning rooted in Vygotsky (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, and a tradition of spirituality that recognizes the inseparability of faith education from authentic prayer and spiritual encounter. These traditions cohere in four stages. Know responds to the intellectual need of faith; Meet, the theological heart of the method, presents an encounter with God through communal prayer and Scripture meditation; Share responds to the communal dimension of faith through small-group sharing; and Express responds to the call to embody faith in concrete action.

This study was designed as an academic response to that real pastoral need. Through a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, the researcher intends to measure empirically the extent to which the application of the KMSE method in grade X pastoral catechesis learning at SMAK St. Aloysius produces a measurable and significant improvement in students Catholic faith knowledge. It is not enough for the Church and Catholic educational institutions to believe intuitively that a certain method works; the twenty-first century demands empirical evidence of the magnitude of the effect of praxis-based methods. The objectives of this study are to describe the level of students faith knowledge before and after the intervention, to describe the application of the KMSE method, and to test empirically whether it has a significant effect on improving students Catholic faith knowledge.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design. This approach was chosen because the researcher applied the Know-Meet-Share-Express (KMSE) method directly in grade X pastoral catechesis learning at SMAK St. Aloysius Palangka Raya and then measured its effect on improving student's Catholic faith knowledge (Sugiyono, 2019). The quasi-experimental type was used because full randomization of subjects is not possible in a formal school setting, since students are already grouped into running classes (Creswell, 2014). The specific design applied was the pretest-posttest control group design, in which both groups received an initial test before the treatment and a final test after it, enabling the researcher to measure the magnitude of change and to compare whether the change in the experimental class differed significantly from that in the control class.

The study was conducted at SMAK St. Aloysius Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan, during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The population comprised all grade X students, and the sample was drawn through simple random sampling, yielding two classes: one experimental group taught with the KMSE method and one control group

taught with the conventional lecture-and-question method. Both groups received the same material across an equal number of sessions, differing only in the learning method. The distribution of research subjects is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Research Subjects

Group	Number of Students	Treatment
Experimental	27	KMSE Method
Control	29	Conventional Method
Total	56	-

Source: Primary research data, 2026

The independent variable (X) was the KMSE method, applied integratively so that its four elements (Know, Meet, Share, Express) ran organically within each session. The dependent variable (Y) was student's Catholic faith knowledge in the cognitive dimension, measured with an objective multiple-choice test covering the ability to recall, understand, analyze, and apply the core tenets of the Catholic faith. Data were collected using two complementary techniques: a test to measure faith knowledge before and after the treatment (Arikunto, 2013), and a Google Form questionnaire administered to the experimental group to explore students' perceptions of each KMSE stage (Sugiyono, 2019). The instrument consisted of 25 multiple-choice items covering three core topics, namely the Foundations of the Catholic Faith, the Church and Sacraments as Celebrations of Faith, and Living the Faith in Daily Life.

Before use, the instrument was validated through expert judgment involving an expert in pastoral catechesis and an expert in educational measurement, who assessed the suitability of the items with the indicators, the accuracy of the language, and the appropriateness of the difficulty level; all 25 items were declared suitable with editorial adjustments. Data analysis used descriptive statistics, prerequisite tests of normality (Shapiro-Wilk) and homogeneity (Levene test), and hypothesis testing through an independent samples t-test using SPSS 23. The criterion for decision-making was that the null hypothesis is rejected when the significance value is less than 0.05.

RESULT

Students Faith Knowledge Before and After the KMSE Method

Before the treatment, both groups showed a relatively low and equal level of faith knowledge, with a mean pretest score of 49.48 for the experimental group and 49.93 for the control group. This condition is consistent with the identified problem, namely that most grade X students entered the school with very minimal faith knowledge as a result of the lack of faith formation at the previous junior high level. After three learning sessions, the experimental group rose sharply to a mean posttest score of 78.07, while the control group reached only 56.83. The difference in gain scores between the two groups (28.59 versus 6.90) shows that the KMSE method produced a far greater improvement than the conventional method. Figure 1 visualizes this contrast.

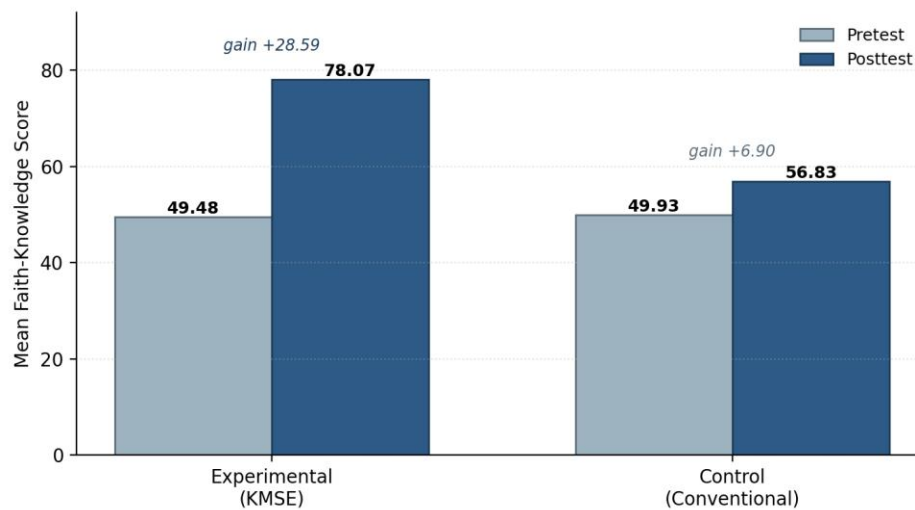


Figure 1. Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Means for the Two Groups

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest

Statistic	Exp. Pretest	Ctrl. Pretest	Exp. Posttest	Ctrl. Posttest
Mean	49.48	49.93	78.07	56.83
Median	44.00	44.00	76.00	56.00
Mode	40.00	40.00	76.00	44.00
Highest	72.00	72.00	88.00	76.00
Lowest	32.00	32.00	68.00	44.00
Std. Deviation	11.70	12.17	4.88	11.08

Source: Data analysis results, 2026

Table 2 confirms that the two groups began from an almost identical baseline, satisfying an important prerequisite for the validity of the quasi-experimental design. After the treatment, the experimental group not only reached a higher mean but also a much smaller standard deviation (4.88 versus 11.08), indicating that the KMSE method produced improvements that were both higher and more evenly distributed across students.

The Application of the KMSE Method and Its Effect on the Cognitive Dimension

The application of the KMSE method in the experimental class proceeded organically across the sessions, each consistently implementing the four complementary stages. In the Know stage, students were systematically introduced to Catholic faith content through Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and YOUCAT, building a firm cognitive foundation that responds to the intellectual need of faith. The Meet stage, the theological heart of the method, facilitated an authentic spiritual encounter through communal prayer, Scripture meditation, and structured moments of silence. The Share stage divided students into small groups to share their understanding, questions, and reflections, an exercise in articulating faith in everyday language. The Express stage

encouraged students to express their faith knowledge through structured reflective writing, concept maps, and sharing, operationalizing the highest cognitive levels of Bloom taxonomy. Figure 2 summarizes the four stages together with the positive-response percentage each received from students.



Figure 2. The Four Stages of the KMSE Method and Students Positive Responses

The independent samples t-test produced $t = 10.160$ with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), statistically proving that there is a significant effect of applying the KMSE method on improving students Catholic faith knowledge in the cognitive dimension. The prerequisite tests showed that the experimental group gain scores were normally distributed (Shapiro-Wilk $W = 0.948$; $p = 0.194$), while the control group were not ($W = 0.628$; $p = 0.000$), and the Levene test indicated non-homogeneous variances ($p = 0.000$); nevertheless, given the sample size and the very large practical difference in gain scores, the t-test was applied as a robust approach based on the central limit theorem. The complete result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of the Independent Samples T-Test

Group	N	Mean Gain	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental	27	28.59	10.15	10.160	0.000
Control	29	6.90	5.23		

Source: Data analysis results, 2026

Students Responses to the KMSE Method

The questionnaire data show that more than 83% of students gave a positive response to every stage of the KMSE method. The highest response was given to the Know stage (93.3%), followed by the Meet stage (90.0%), the Share stage (86.7%), and the Express stage, which received the lowest yet still positive response (83.3%). In their open responses, students suggested more varied media, more opportunities for small-group discussion, closer links to real-life situations, a comfortable and non-judgmental classroom atmosphere, and simple concrete service actions to strengthen the Express stage.

DISCUSSION

The higher and more evenly distributed gain in the experimental group is consistent with Pranyoto (2024), who found that praxis- and experience-based catechetical methods rooted in the Shared Christian Praxis model produced contextual and meaningful gains in Catholic youth formation.

This result can be understood through the theoretical framework underpinning the study. The Know stage operationalizes Bloom cognitive taxonomy from remembering to analyzing; the Meet stage provides an affective context that strengthens cognitive retention, consistent with Fowler (1981), who affirmed that faith development cannot be separated from the affective and relational dimensions; the Share stage applies Vygotsky Zone of Proximal Development, in which faith knowledge is socially constructed through dialogue in a learning community; and the Express stage drives students toward the highest cognitive levels of evaluation and creation. The finding reinforces Berangka and Devonsa (2025), who found a very significant effect of the Shared Christian Praxis model, and Sianipar (2019), who showed that integrating life experience with the Christian tradition through the SCP approach produces faith knowledge that is more active, reflective, and applicable.

These positive responses indicate that the method is not only statistically effective but also received positively as a meaningful learning experience, consistent with Groome (1980). The strong appreciation for the Know stage shows that students valued the systematic approach to introducing faith content, which suits the cognitive needs of high school adolescents at the formal operational stage described by Piaget (1972). The comparatively lower response to the Express stage is understandable because expressing faith creatively in public requires courage and confidence that must be built through habituation.

Overall, the findings show that the KMSE method significantly improves students Catholic faith knowledge while offering an active, meaningful, and transformative learning experience. By integrating the intellectual, spiritual, communal, and expressive dimensions of faith within one coherent flow, the method operationalizes the Shared Christian Praxis framework of Groome and the social constructivism of Vygotsky in a concrete classroom instrument. A limitation of this study is that it was confined to grade X students at one school during a single semester and focused on the cognitive dimension, so the findings cannot be directly generalized; future research is encouraged to extend the method to other levels and to examine its affective and behavioral impact over a longer period.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results, three conclusions can be drawn in answer to the research questions. First, the level of grade X students Catholic faith knowledge before the application of the KMSE method was in the low category, marked by mean pretest scores of 49.48 for the experimental group and 49.93 for the control group, reflecting the gap in faith formation experienced at the previous educational level; after the treatment, the experimental group rose significantly to a mean posttest score of 78.07, far surpassing the control group at 56.83.

Second, the application of the KMSE method proceeded organically and in a structured way through sessions that each contained the four complementary stages of Know, Meet, Share, and Express, covering the Foundations of the Catholic Faith, the Church and Sacraments, and Living the Faith in Daily Life; students responded very positively, with more than 83% affirming that each stage helped them understand, internalize, and apply Catholic teaching. Third, the independent samples t-test proved a significant effect of the KMSE method, with $t = 10.160$ and a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), and a far higher experimental gain score (28.59) than the control gain score (6.90), so that the null hypothesis was rejected. The study recommends that Catholic schools adopt and develop the KMSE method as a contextual catechetical instrument, and that future research examine its affective and behavioral impact through longer and broader studies.

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