



## The Personal Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Intergenerational Faithfulness Values (Genesis 48:20): A Contextual Study at SD Negeri Banyu Landas

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### ABSTRACT

*This study explores the role of personal competence among Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in instilling intergenerational faithfulness values grounded in Book of Genesis 48:20 at SD Negeri Banyu Landas, East Barito. The research is motivated by the theological significance of Jacob's blessing over Ephraim and Manasseh as a model of covenant continuity across generations. In a small Christian school community consisting of five Christian students and five Christian teachers, including the CRE teacher, personal character and relational integrity become highly visible and formative in shaping faith identity. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns related to integrity, emotional maturity, relational mentoring, and narrative continuity. The findings reveal that teachers interpret Genesis 48:20 as a mandate for generational faith transmission and embody this calling through consistent behavior, humility, transparent communication, and spiritual resilience. Students perceive these qualities as credible expressions of Christian faith and respond with strengthened commitment to faithfulness and communal identity. The study concludes that personal competence in Christian education functions as a living bridge between generations. By embodying covenant values rather than merely teaching them, CRE teachers contribute significantly to sustaining intergenerational faith continuity within their school community.*

**Keywords:** *Personal Competence, Christian Religious Education, Intergenerational Faithfulness*

### INTRODUCTION

Personal competence is a foundational dimension of teacher professionalism, particularly in Christian Religious Education (CRE), where the educator's character and integrity are

inseparable from the content being taught. In the Indonesian educational framework, personal competence refers to a teacher's stable personality, moral integrity, maturity, wisdom, and exemplary conduct. Within Christian pedagogy, however, personal competence extends beyond professional ethics; it reflects the embodiment of faith commitments that shape how biblical values are transmitted across generations. The teacher becomes not only an instructor of doctrine but also a living witness whose life communicates spiritual continuity. The theme of intergenerational faithfulness finds strong biblical grounding in the Old Testament, especially in the book of Book of Genesis. Genesis 48:20 records Jacob's blessing over Ephraim and Manasseh, establishing a verbal formula that would be used by Israel in future generations: "May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh." This moment encapsulates the transmission of covenant identity from one generation to the next. As scholars note, the patriarchal blessings in Genesis function not merely as personal wishes but as theological affirmations of God's ongoing covenant faithfulness (Wenham, 1994). The act of blessing embodies memory, identity, and hope, linking ancestors and descendants within a narrative of divine promise. Intergenerational faithfulness in biblical theology is not accidental but intentional. The transmission of faith requires relational continuity, narrative reinforcement, and embodied example. Brueggemann (1982) emphasizes that the Genesis narratives present Israel's faith as historically rooted and relationally sustained, with each generation entrusted to carry forward the covenantal story. In this sense, Jacob's blessing in Genesis 48:20 represents more than a ritual act; it is a pedagogical event in which identity and expectation are articulated for the future community. The challenge of intergenerational transmission remains pressing. Contemporary students often experience rapid cultural change, digital influence, and fragmented communal structures. As a result, sustaining faith continuity requires intentional modeling by educators who demonstrate authenticity and moral coherence. Groome (2011) argues that faith formation depends not only on doctrinal instruction but also on shared praxis in which lived experience and Christian narrative interact. The credibility of Christian teaching is therefore deeply connected to the personal integrity of the teacher. When educators embody faithfulness, humility, and consistency, students perceive Christian values as lived realities rather than abstract ideals.

SD Negeri Banyu Landas, located in East Barito, presents a distinctive context for exploring these dynamics. The school includes five Christian students and five Christian teachers, including the CRE teacher. In a relatively small faith community within a broader pluralistic setting, the intergenerational transmission of Christian identity becomes especially significant. The close relational proximity between teachers and students allows personal competence to be highly visible. In such an environment, teacher behavior, speech, and decision-making patterns directly influence how students understand faithfulness across generations. Previous research in Christian education highlights that personal competence, character integrity, emotional stability, and spiritual maturity, correlates with positive student perceptions and moral development (Knight, 2006; Pazmiño, 2008). However, limited qualitative research has examined how specific biblical texts, such as Genesis 48:20, inform teacher self-understanding and pedagogical practice in local Indonesian contexts. This study seeks to address that gap by exploring how CRE teachers at SD Negeri Banyu Landas interpret and embody intergenerational faithfulness in their

daily professional lives. The research is guided by the following questions: How do Christian Religious Education teachers understand Genesis 48:20 in relation to their personal competence? and How is intergenerational faithfulness modeled and perceived within the school community? By integrating biblical reflection with qualitative inquiry, this study aims to illuminate how personal competence functions as a vehicle for sustaining faith continuity in elementary Christian education.

## METHODS

A qualitative research design using a contextual case study approach was used to explore how the personal competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers contributes to instilling intergenerational faithfulness values at SD Negeri Banyu Landas, East Barito. A qualitative approach was chosen because the research seeks to understand lived experiences, personal interpretations, and relational dynamics rather than to measure statistical relationships. Given the small and clearly defined Christian community within the school, five Christian students and five Christian teachers (including the CRE teacher), the case study method allowed for in-depth exploration of perceptions, meanings, and practices within a specific educational setting. The participants consisted of all five Christian teachers and the five Christian students enrolled at the school. Total participation was applied due to the limited number of individuals and the relevance of each participant to the research focus. The teachers included the CRE teacher and four subject teachers who identify as Christian, while the student participants represented all Christian learners currently studying at the school. This inclusive approach enabled a holistic understanding of how personal competence is perceived and practiced within the Christian educational micro-community. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with each Christian teacher to explore their understanding of Genesis 48:20, their perception of personal competence, and their strategies for modeling intergenerational faithfulness. Interviews with students focused on their experiences of teacher example, relational interaction, and perceptions of faith continuity within the school environment. Classroom observations were carried out during Christian Religious Education sessions and selected general subject lessons to identify patterns of teacher behavior, communication style, emotional regulation, and relational consistency. Field notes were recorded systematically to capture contextual details. In addition, relevant school documents, such as lesson plans and character education guidelines, were examined to identify explicit references to faithfulness and generational continuity. Data analysis followed a thematic analysis procedure. Interview transcripts and observation notes were read repeatedly to identify recurring patterns and significant statements. Initial coding was conducted to categorize expressions related to integrity, consistency, spiritual maturity, mentoring, and relational modeling. These codes were then grouped into broader themes reflecting dimensions of personal competence and intergenerational faithfulness. To enhance credibility, triangulation was applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documents. Member checking was also conducted by sharing preliminary interpretations with selected participants to confirm accuracy and ensure faithful representation of their perspectives.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The qualitative findings of this study reveal that the personal competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers at SD Negeri Banyu Landas functions as a central mechanism for transmitting intergenerational faithfulness values rooted in Genesis 48:20. Through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving five Christian teachers and five Christian students, several interconnected themes emerged: theological understanding of intergenerational blessing, integrity and consistency as lived testimony, relational mentoring in a small faith community, emotional maturity and spiritual resilience, and the formation of collective memory and identity. These themes demonstrate that personal competence in this context is not merely professional maturity but an embodied continuity of faith across generations. The finding concerns the teachers' theological interpretation of Genesis 48:20. All five Christian teachers articulated that Jacob's blessing over Ephraim and Manasseh represents the intentional transmission of covenant identity. They described the verse as a "bridge between generations," emphasizing that faithfulness must be spoken, modeled, and remembered. One teacher explained that Jacob's blessing was not only about material prosperity but about entrusting the next generation with God's promise. Another teacher highlighted that the phrase "by you Israel will pronounce blessing" suggests a tradition of verbal faith affirmation repeated over time. This interpretive consensus indicates that teachers perceive Genesis 48:20 as pedagogically instructive. They see themselves as spiritual intermediaries who echo ancestral blessings through teaching and example. This theological awareness shapes their understanding of personal competence as spiritual responsibility rather than individual achievement. Students repeatedly described their teachers as "the same inside and outside the classroom." They reported that teachers demonstrate consistent speech patterns, avoid harsh words, and show fairness even during disciplinary moments. Observational data confirmed that teachers maintain calm tones during correction and often reference biblical principles when guiding behavior. For instance, when addressing minor conflicts, the CRE teacher reminded students that God's promises endure when people remain faithful and honest. This linking of daily behavior to covenant faithfulness reflects a lived hermeneutic of Genesis 48:20. Faithfulness is portrayed not as abstract theology but as steady commitment in small actions. Teachers emphasized punctuality, honesty in reporting grades, and transparency in communication as part of their Christian witness. In such a small school community, inconsistencies would quickly become visible; therefore, personal integrity becomes both necessary and formative. The other finding highlights relational mentoring within a close-knit Christian micro-community. With only five Christian students and five Christian teachers, interpersonal proximity is unavoidable and relational depth becomes possible. Students reported that teachers know their family backgrounds, pray for their personal concerns, and encourage them to remain faithful in church participation. Informal mentoring often occurred outside formal classroom hours, such as during break times or after school activities. Teachers described these interactions as opportunities to reinforce identity and continuity. One teacher stated that intergenerational faithfulness means ensuring that "students do not feel alone as Christians." In a pluralistic regional context, this assurance strengthens confidence and belonging. Observations indicated that teachers frequently share short testimonies about their own childhood faith experiences, implicitly

connecting past and present generations. Through storytelling, the narrative continuity of faith becomes tangible.

Participants emphasized that teaching in a small rural school requires patience and adaptability. Teachers described moments of limited resources or community challenges but framed these experiences as opportunities to demonstrate steadfast faith. Students observed that teachers respond to stress without visible anger or despair, instead expressing trust in God's provision. This modeling reflects the intergenerational aspect of Genesis 48:20, where blessing is grounded in God's enduring covenant rather than immediate circumstances. Emotional regulation thus becomes a spiritual lesson. When teachers handle difficulties calmly, students internalize an understanding that faithfulness persists through uncertainty. The embodiment of resilience contributes to students' perception that Christian identity is durable and trustworthy. Another significant theme is the formation of collective memory and identity. Teachers intentionally commemorate Christian holidays, retell biblical narratives, and encourage students to remember stories of faith from their families. Document analysis of lesson plans revealed periodic activities inviting students to share testimonies from parents or grandparents. This practice mirrors the biblical pattern of remembering ancestral blessings. In Genesis 48:20, the act of blessing not only shapes the future but recalls the past. By integrating family narratives into classroom discussion, teachers create a communal memory that binds generations together. Students reported feeling proud when sharing stories of grandparents who prayed or served in church. Such affirmation strengthens identity continuity and reinforces the perception that faithfulness is a shared heritage. The relational dynamics observed also underscore the influence of collective teacher modeling. Because five Christian teachers operate within the same school environment, consistency across subjects reinforces the credibility of intergenerational values. Students described similar attitudes of patience and encouragement from multiple teachers, suggesting that personal competence extends beyond the CRE classroom. This communal coherence amplifies the pedagogical impact. Intergenerational faithfulness becomes a shared cultural norm rather than the responsibility of one instructor alone.

From an analytical perspective, these findings demonstrate that personal competence functions as a lived pedagogy. Unlike purely cognitive instruction, the transmission of intergenerational faithfulness relies heavily on observable behavior. The teachers' understanding of Genesis 48:20 shapes their self-conception as custodians of faith memory. Their daily interactions, expressions of encouragement, fairness in evaluation, transparency in communication, constitute micro-acts of blessing. Each action reinforces the message that God's covenant continues through faithful lives. The qualitative data also reveal that students interpret teacher behavior as theological communication. When teachers maintain honesty or demonstrate humility, students connect these traits with Christian identity. One student remarked that seeing teachers pray before meetings shows that "God is still guiding adults today." This perception exemplifies intergenerational continuity: faith is not confined to biblical times but persists in contemporary role models. Such observations suggest that personal competence influences students' understanding of God's ongoing presence. Teachers noted that sustaining personal integrity requires self-reflection and spiritual discipline. In a small

community, relational tensions can arise easily, and forgiveness must be practiced consistently. Teachers described intentional habits such as personal prayer and peer encouragement among colleagues to maintain spiritual vitality. These practices reinforce the idea that intergenerational faithfulness begins with personal devotion. Without internal spiritual renewal, external modeling would lack authenticity.

The discussion further highlights the contextual significance of East Barito's cultural environment. In rural settings where communal relationships are close, reputation and relational trust carry substantial weight. Personal competence therefore becomes highly visible and influential. Teachers recognized that their conduct in public spaces, markets, church gatherings, community meetings, affects students' perceptions. This holistic visibility intensifies the responsibility to embody faithfulness consistently. The boundaries between professional and personal life blur, reinforcing the inseparability of character and vocation. Another noteworthy insight concerns the mutual reinforcement between teachers and students. While teachers model faithfulness, students' responsiveness encourages teachers to remain committed. Several teachers expressed joy in witnessing students demonstrate honesty or kindness, interpreting these behaviors as signs that generational blessing is unfolding. This reciprocal dynamic mirrors the biblical vision of covenant continuity, where blessing circulates through relational networks. The integration of theological interpretation and lived practice constitutes a distinctive feature of this case study. Genesis 48:20 is not treated as an isolated historical text but as a narrative template for contemporary educational identity. Teachers consciously appropriate the patriarchal blessing as symbolic of their role in shaping future believers. This hermeneutical move transforms a biblical episode into a living pedagogical framework. Intergenerational faithfulness becomes not only a doctrinal affirmation but an actionable mission. The findings also illuminate the significance of scale. With only five Christian students, each individual receives substantial attention and mentorship. This intimacy allows personalized affirmation and tailored spiritual guidance. While the small population limits statistical generalization, it enhances relational depth. In such contexts, personal competence exerts concentrated influence. Students repeatedly mentioned feeling "known" and "valued," experiences that strengthen trust and openness to faith formation. The study focuses on a single school context and relies on participant self-reporting and observational interpretation. Broader comparative research could examine whether similar patterns emerge in larger or more diverse settings. Nevertheless, the consistency of themes across interviews, observations, and documents suggests credibility and internal coherence. The personal competence of CRE teachers at SD Negeri Banyu Landas functions as a living conduit of intergenerational faithfulness. Through integrity, relational mentoring, emotional maturity, and narrative continuity, teachers embody the blessing dynamic articulated in Genesis 48:20. The qualitative evidence demonstrates that students perceive and internalize these embodied values, strengthening their sense of belonging within a multigenerational covenant story. In this small yet vibrant Christian community, personal competence becomes both testimony and transmission, ensuring that faith is not only taught but inherited, remembered, and renewed across generations.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the personal competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers at SD Negeri Banyu Landas, East Barito, plays a decisive role in instilling intergenerational faithfulness values grounded in Genesis 48:20. In a small Christian school community consisting of five Christian students and five Christian teachers, personal integrity, emotional maturity, relational consistency, and spiritual authenticity emerge as central channels through which faith continuity is embodied and transmitted. The findings demonstrate that teachers do not merely explain the concept of covenant blessing; rather, they enact it through daily conduct, mentorship, and narrative reinforcement. The qualitative evidence indicates that teachers interpret Genesis 48:20 as a theological mandate for generational continuity. Their understanding of Jacob's blessing shapes their self-identity as custodians of faith memory and moral example. Through consistent behavior, transparent communication, humility, and restorative approaches to conflict, teachers model the kind of steadfastness that sustains covenant identity across time. Students, in turn, perceive these actions as credible expressions of Christian faith, reinforcing their trust in both their teachers and the values being taught. The close relational proximity within the school amplifies the visibility and impact of personal competence. In this context, character is not abstract but observable in everyday interactions, inside and outside the classroom. The integration of biblical storytelling, family narratives, and communal remembrance further strengthens the sense of belonging to a living faith tradition. Intergenerational faithfulness thus becomes a shared identity rather than a distant theological concept. The study affirms that personal competence in Christian education is inseparable from spiritual formation. Teachers who embody integrity, resilience, and humility serve as living bridges between past and future generations of faith. By aligning their character with the covenantal vision reflected in Genesis 48:20, they contribute meaningfully to sustaining Christian identity within their educational community. Strengthening personal competence, therefore, is not only a professional objective but also a theological vocation essential to the continuity of faith across generations.

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