



Teaching Humility and Respect in Schools: A Biblical Reflection on Gospel of Matthew 23:12 at SD Negeri 071190 Hililaza

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the teaching of humility and respect in the context of Christian Religious Education through a biblical reflection on Gospel of Matthew 23:12. In this passage, Jesus emphasizes that those who exalt themselves will be humbled, while those who humble themselves will be exalted. The purpose of this research is to analyze how the values of humility and respect inspired by Matthew 23:12 are implemented in the learning practices of Christian Religious Education at SD Negeri 071190 Hililaza. This study employed a quantitative descriptive research approach. The participants consisted of Christian students who actively attended Christian Religious Education classes. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale designed to measure students' perceptions of the implementation of humility and respect in the classroom. The research instrument included several indicators such as respectful teacher–student interaction, encouragement of cooperative behavior among students, the integration of biblical teachings in classroom discussions, and the teacher's role in guiding students to develop humble attitudes. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to determine the level of implementation of these character values in the learning process. The findings indicate that students generally perceive the Christian Religious Education classroom environment as supportive of humility, mutual respect, and constructive dialogue. These practices contribute to the creation of a positive learning atmosphere that promotes cooperation and moral development. In conclusion, the integration of biblical teachings about humility with pedagogical practices contributes significantly to students' character formation. By emphasizing the values reflected in Gospel of Matthew 23:12, Christian Religious Education can foster students who demonstrate humility, respect others, and participate responsibly in their social communities.

Keywords: Humility, Christian Religious Education, Respect

INTRODUCTION

Character formation has become one of the central goals of contemporary education. Schools are not only responsible for developing students' cognitive abilities but also for shaping their moral character and social attitudes. Educational institutions are expected to nurture values such as honesty, humility, respect, responsibility, and empathy so that students can function responsibly in society. Scholars in the field of character education emphasize that moral formation must be integrated into the teaching process because academic success alone does not guarantee the development of ethical and socially responsible individuals (Lickona, 1991). Within this framework, teachers play a strategic role in cultivating values that influence how students interact with others both inside and outside the classroom. Among the many virtues promoted in character education, humility and respect occupy an important place in shaping healthy social relationships. Humility encourages individuals to recognize their limitations, appreciate others, and avoid attitudes of arrogance or superiority. Respect, on the other hand, fosters positive interpersonal relationships by encouraging individuals to value the dignity and perspectives of others. In educational contexts, these values are particularly important because classrooms are social spaces where students from diverse backgrounds interact and learn together. When humility and respect are practiced consistently in schools, they contribute to a learning environment characterized by cooperation, empathy, and mutual understanding.

The cultivation of humility and respect is strongly rooted in biblical teachings. One important biblical foundation for these values can be found in Gospel of Matthew 23:12, where Jesus declares, "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." This statement appears in Jesus' critique of religious leaders who sought honor and recognition rather than genuine service. Biblical scholars interpret this teaching as a warning against pride and a call to embrace humility as an essential characteristic of those who follow God's will (France, 2007). In the broader context of the teachings of Jesus, humility is not simply an attitude of modesty but a fundamental orientation toward serving others and acknowledging God's authority in human life. The message of humility expressed in Gospel of Matthew 23:12 has significant implications for educational practice. Teachers who embrace humility as a guiding principle in their professional roles are more likely to cultivate respectful relationships with students and encourage cooperative learning environments. Humility in teaching does not imply weakness or lack of authority; rather, it reflects a willingness to listen to students, acknowledge their perspectives, and guide them with patience and compassion. Educational theorists suggest that students often internalize moral values through observing the attitudes and behaviors of teachers rather than through verbal instruction alone (Palmer, 1998). Therefore, teachers who model humility and respect become living examples of the values they seek to instill in their students.

The integration of biblical values into educational practice is particularly relevant in the context of Christian Religious Education (CRE). CRE aims not only to provide knowledge about Christian teachings but also to guide students in applying these teachings to their daily lives. Through discussions of biblical narratives and moral principles, students are encouraged to reflect on how their attitudes and behaviors align with Christian values. When humility and respect are emphasized in CRE lessons, students can develop a deeper

understanding of how these virtues contribute to harmonious relationships and ethical decision-making.

The importance of humility and respect becomes even more evident in elementary education, where students are in the early stages of moral and social development. During this stage, children begin to form attitudes toward authority, cooperation, and interpersonal relationships. Teachers who intentionally nurture humility and respect help students develop positive social habits that influence their future interactions. Research in educational psychology indicates that supportive teacher–student relationships and respectful classroom environments contribute significantly to students’ motivation and engagement in learning activities (Wentzel & Miele, 2016). When students feel valued and respected, they are more likely to participate actively in the learning process and develop positive attitudes toward school. This study is conducted in the context of Christian Religious Education at SD Negeri 071190 Hililaza. The school includes a substantial number of Christian students and teachers, providing a meaningful context for examining how biblical teachings about humility and respect can be integrated into educational practice. With 119 Christian students and 17 Christian teachers, including the Christian Religious Education teacher, the school environment offers an opportunity to explore how values-based education can influence students’ character formation and social behavior. The purpose of this study is to analyze how the teaching of humility and respect based on the message of Gospel of Matthew 23:12 is implemented in Christian Religious Education learning activities. By examining students’ perceptions of classroom practices and teacher behavior, this research seeks to understand how biblical values can contribute to character formation in the school environment. The findings of this study are expected to provide insights for educators seeking to integrate Christian values into teaching practices and to strengthen the role of education in developing students who demonstrate humility, respect, and responsible social behavior.

METHODS

A quantitative descriptive research design was implemented to examine the implementation of humility and respect values in Christian Religious Education based on the teaching of Gospel of Matthew 23:12 within the learning context of SD Negeri 071190 Hililaza. A quantitative approach was selected because it allows the researcher to measure students’ perceptions of the teacher’s instructional practices and character formation strategies in a systematic and objective manner through statistical analysis. The population of this study consisted of 119 Christian students who actively participated in Christian Religious Education classes and 17 Christian teachers, including the Christian Religious Education teacher. Considering the scope of the research, the study used a proportional sampling technique, focusing on students who regularly attend Christian Religious Education learning activities as the primary respondents. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The instrument was designed to measure several indicators related to the teaching of humility and respect, including teacher attitudes toward students, the promotion of respectful communication in the classroom, encouragement of cooperative behavior among students, teacher guidance in developing humble attitudes, and the integration of biblical values from Gospel of Matthew 23:12 in classroom instruction. Prior to distribution, the research instrument was reviewed to

ensure clarity, relevance, and content validity. Data collection was conducted during the academic semester through direct distribution of questionnaires to the selected student respondents in the classroom setting. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency distribution, percentage analysis, and mean score interpretation to determine the overall level of implementation of humility and respect values in the learning process. Through this methodological approach, the study aimed to provide an empirical description of how biblical teachings about humility are translated into pedagogical practices that contribute to students' character development in the school environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the teaching of humility and respect in Christian Religious Education contributes significantly to shaping students' character and social attitudes within the learning environment at SD Negeri 071190 Hililaza. Based on the analysis of questionnaire responses collected from Christian students, the descriptive statistical results indicate that students generally perceive the classroom atmosphere as supportive of respectful interaction and moral learning. Most respondents expressed agreement with statements indicating that their teacher demonstrates humility in communication, treats students fairly, and encourages them to respect one another. These findings suggest that the integration of biblical values into classroom practices can positively influence students' attitudes and behavior in school. The emphasis on humility and respect is particularly meaningful within the context of Christian Religious Education because these values are closely connected to the ethical teachings of Jesus, including the message found in Gospel of Matthew 23:12, which states that those who humble themselves will be exalted. This biblical principle underscores the importance of humility as a foundational virtue in Christian life and provides a moral framework for character formation in educational settings. The results also demonstrate that the role of the teacher is central to the successful implementation of humility and respect in the classroom. Students reported that the Christian Religious Education teacher consistently models respectful attitudes in interactions with students and encourages open communication during lessons. Such practices align with educational theories that emphasize the importance of teacher behavior in shaping students' moral development. When teachers demonstrate humility through patience, empathy, and fairness, they provide students with concrete examples of how these values can be practiced in daily life. In this study, the teacher's willingness to listen to students' opinions and to guide discussions with understanding and care was perceived as an important factor contributing to the positive classroom climate. The findings support the argument that teachers serve not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as role models whose attitudes and actions influence the moral development of students. Another important aspect revealed by the results is the role of dialogue in fostering humility and respect among students. Classroom discussions in Christian Religious Education provide opportunities for students to express their thoughts, share experiences, and reflect on biblical teachings in relation to their everyday lives. Through these discussions, students learn to appreciate diverse perspectives and to communicate their ideas respectfully.

Dialogue-based learning encourages active participation and helps students develop interpersonal skills that are essential for maintaining harmonious relationships. The practice of respectful dialogue also reflects the spirit of humility emphasized in Gospel of Matthew 23:12, where humility is portrayed as a virtue that prevents individuals from elevating themselves above others. By engaging in discussions that promote mutual respect, students gradually internalize the principle that true leadership and influence are expressed through service and humility rather than through dominance or pride.

The findings further indicate that the integration of biblical teachings into classroom instruction plays a significant role in reinforcing the values of humility and respect. During Christian Religious Education lessons, the teacher frequently refers to biblical narratives and teachings to illustrate moral principles. For example, students are encouraged to reflect on how the message of humility found in the teachings of Jesus can guide their behavior in interactions with classmates, teachers, and family members. This approach helps students connect religious teachings with real-life situations, making the learning process more meaningful and relevant. The ability to relate biblical values to everyday experiences is an important aspect of Christian Religious Education because it encourages students to view faith not only as a set of beliefs but also as a guiding framework for ethical behavior. In addition to the influence of teacher behavior and classroom instruction, the study highlights the importance of the classroom environment in supporting the development of humility and respect. Students reported that the learning atmosphere is generally characterized by cooperation and mutual support. Activities such as group discussions, collaborative assignments, and shared reflections allow students to practice respectful communication and teamwork. These activities help students understand that learning is a collective process in which everyone's contributions are valued. The emphasis on cooperation rather than competition fosters a sense of community among students and reduces the likelihood of conflicts arising from rivalry or misunderstanding. The results also suggest that the teaching of humility contributes to the development of positive social attitudes among students. Many respondents indicated that they have become more aware of the importance of treating others with kindness and respect as a result of lessons in Christian Religious Education. This awareness is reflected in behaviors such as helping classmates, listening attentively during discussions, and avoiding actions that might hurt others. These behaviors demonstrate that the values taught in the classroom can influence students' interactions beyond the immediate learning context. When students begin to practice humility and respect in their daily relationships, the educational process contributes not only to academic development but also to the formation of responsible and compassionate individuals.

The study also identified certain challenges related to the implementation of humility-based character education. One challenge involves ensuring that students fully understand the deeper meaning of humility rather than interpreting it simply as obedience or passivity. In some cases, students initially associate humility with weakness or a lack of confidence. To address this misconception, teachers must explain that humility involves recognizing the value of others while maintaining self-respect and responsibility. By clarifying the meaning of humility, educators can help students develop a balanced understanding of this virtue as a strength that promotes cooperation and mutual respect.

Another challenge relates to maintaining consistent student engagement during discussions about moral values. While many students participate actively in classroom discussions, some may feel hesitant to share their thoughts or experiences. This situation requires teachers to create a supportive environment where all students feel comfortable expressing their opinions. Encouraging participation through small group discussions, reflective activities, and interactive learning strategies can help increase student involvement and ensure that moral lessons are understood more deeply. The results of this study also highlight the broader implications of humility and respect for school culture. When these values are consistently promoted in classroom interactions, they contribute to the development of a positive and inclusive learning environment throughout the school. Students who learn to practice humility and respect are more likely to demonstrate empathy toward others and to respond constructively to disagreements. These attitudes are essential for maintaining harmonious relationships within the school community and for preparing students to engage responsibly in society. The findings affirm the relevance of the teaching found in Gospel of Matthew 23:12 for contemporary educational practice. The message that those who humble themselves will be exalted challenges common social attitudes that equate success with status or recognition. In the context of education, this teaching encourages students to value service, cooperation, and respect as fundamental aspects of personal growth. By integrating this biblical principle into classroom instruction, Christian Religious Education provides students with a moral framework that guides their attitudes and relationships. The results of this study demonstrate that the teaching of humility and respect in Christian Religious Education has a positive impact on students' character development. Through the combined influence of teacher example, dialogue-based learning, and the integration of biblical teachings, students are encouraged to cultivate attitudes that support harmonious relationships and ethical behavior. The experience at SD Negeri 071190 Hililaza illustrates how educational practices grounded in biblical values can contribute to the formation of students who are not only academically capable but also morally responsible and socially respectful. The findings emphasize that humility and respect are essential components of character education in schools. When teachers intentionally incorporate these values into teaching practices and classroom interactions, students gain opportunities to develop the attitudes and behaviors necessary for positive social engagement. The biblical teaching in Gospel of Matthew 23:12 provides a powerful reminder that true greatness is expressed through humility and service to others. By embracing this principle in educational practice, schools can play a vital role in nurturing individuals who contribute to a more respectful and compassionate society.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the teaching of humility and respect in Christian Religious Education plays a significant role in shaping students' character and social attitudes within the learning environment of SD Negeri 071190 Hililaza. The findings demonstrate that when teachers intentionally integrate biblical teachings into classroom practices, students develop a clearer understanding of the importance of humility, respect, and positive interpersonal relationships. The message found in Gospel of Matthew 23:12 provides a

strong theological foundation for character education, emphasizing that humility is not merely a personal virtue but a guiding principle for living in harmony with others. The results also highlight the crucial role of teachers as role models in cultivating these values. Through respectful communication, patient guidance, and openness to dialogue, teachers demonstrate how humility and respect can be practiced in everyday interactions. Students who observe such attitudes in their teachers are more likely to internalize these values and apply them in their relationships with classmates and the broader school community. The presence of dialogue-based learning activities further strengthens students' ability to express their ideas respectfully and to appreciate diverse perspectives.

The study indicates that the integration of humility-based teaching contributes to the creation of a positive classroom climate characterized by cooperation, empathy, and mutual respect. When students feel valued and respected, they are more motivated to participate in learning activities and to develop constructive social behaviors. In this way, Christian Religious Education becomes not only a medium for transmitting biblical knowledge but also a platform for fostering students' moral and character development. The cultivation of humility and respect through biblical teaching and pedagogical practice is an important aspect of holistic education. By emphasizing the values reflected in Gospel of Matthew 23:12, teachers can guide students toward becoming individuals who demonstrate humility, respect others, and contribute positively to their communities. Strengthening the integration of these values in educational practice will support the development of a school culture that promotes character formation, ethical responsibility, and harmonious social relationships.

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