



Modeling Obedience through the Spiritual Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers Inspired by Genesis 22:18 at SMA Negeri 2 Panai Hilir

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ABSTRACT

Spiritual competence is an essential dimension in the professional and moral identity of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers. Beyond delivering doctrinal knowledge, CRE teachers are expected to embody biblical values and serve as living examples for students. This study aims to examine how obedience, inspired by the biblical narrative of Genesis 22:18, can be modeled through the spiritual competence of Christian Religious Education teachers, particularly within the educational context of SMA Negeri 2 Panai Hilir. The research employed a library research method, drawing on scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and theological commentaries related to spiritual competence, teacher modeling, biblical obedience, and Christian pedagogy. The findings indicate that spiritual competence enables teachers to integrate faith, character, and pedagogy in a way that supports holistic student formation. Teachers who demonstrate obedience to God through integrity, discipline, and faithfulness provide students with practical examples of Christian living. The biblical narrative of Abraham's obedience in Genesis 22:18 highlights that faithful obedience has transformative influence not only on individuals but also on future generations. Within the classroom, the modeling of obedience strengthens the credibility of religious instruction and encourages students to internalize Christian values in their daily lives. The integration of spiritual competence and biblical obedience contributes significantly to the effectiveness of Christian Religious Education. By modeling obedience in their professional and spiritual lives, CRE teachers can foster meaningful faith formation and inspire students to live according to Christian principles in contemporary society.

Keywords: *Spiritual competence, Christian Religious Education, teachers, obedience, Genesis 22:18*

INTRODUCTION

Education within the Christian perspective is fundamentally concerned not only with intellectual development but also with the holistic formation of faith, character, and moral integrity. Christian Religious Education (CRE) therefore carries a distinctive mission:

guiding learners to develop a personal relationship with God while cultivating attitudes and behaviors that reflect biblical values in everyday life. Within this framework, the role of the teacher becomes central, because the teacher does not merely transmit religious knowledge but also serves as a living example of Christian character. Effective CRE teaching requires educators who embody spiritual authenticity, demonstrating through their actions the principles they teach. In this sense, the spiritual competence of teachers becomes a decisive factor in shaping the spiritual and moral development of students in the educational environment (Jacob, 2024). In contemporary educational discourse, competence in teaching is generally understood as a combination of pedagogical ability, professional knowledge, social interaction, personal integrity, and spiritual maturity. In Christian education, however, spiritual competence occupies a unique and foundational position because it connects the teacher's professional vocation with a deeper theological calling. A spiritually competent teacher is not only skilled in instructional methods but also grounded in faith, devotion, and moral consistency. Such competence enables teachers to interpret biblical teachings responsibly, integrate them into the learning process, and model Christian virtues in their daily interactions with students. Research on Christian education emphasizes that the integration of pedagogical competence with spiritual formation enables teachers to foster authentic faith development among students rather than merely transmitting doctrinal information (Chrismastianto et al., 2022).

One essential virtue that emerges from biblical teaching and plays a central role in Christian spiritual formation is obedience to God. In Christian theology, obedience is understood not simply as external compliance but as a faithful response to God's will grounded in trust, humility, and devotion. The concept of obedience is prominently illustrated throughout the Scriptures, particularly in the narratives of the patriarchs in the Book of Genesis. These narratives provide profound theological insights into how faith is expressed through action. Obedience in the biblical sense reflects a dynamic relationship between human faith and divine guidance, where believers willingly align their lives with God's purposes. Within Christian education, this principle becomes an important value to be taught and modeled so that students learn to live according to biblical ethics in their personal and social lives (Pakpahan & Simbolon, 2024). The narrative of Genesis 22 represents one of the most powerful biblical accounts illustrating obedience and faith. In this passage, Abraham demonstrates unwavering obedience to God despite facing a deeply challenging command. Genesis 22:18 emphasizes the theological consequence of Abraham's obedience: through his faithfulness, blessings extend not only to his descendants but also to all nations. This narrative highlights that obedience to God is not merely a personal spiritual act but also a transformative example that influences future generations. From a pedagogical perspective, this biblical account provides a meaningful foundation for understanding how obedience can be modeled and transmitted through spiritual leadership. Teachers who internalize this biblical principle are more likely to inspire students to develop faith-based values in their lives. In Christian educational settings, biblical narratives such as Genesis 22 serve as powerful pedagogical resources for shaping moral and spiritual character among learners (Capah, 2025). The significance of modeling obedience in Christian education also lies in the relational nature of teaching. Students often learn values not only through formal instruction but also through observation and imitation of their teachers' attitudes and behaviors. Educational research consistently highlights that teacher modeling plays a critical role in moral and character

formation. When teachers demonstrate integrity, humility, and obedience to God in their professional lives, students are more likely to internalize these virtues as part of their own moral framework. In the context of Christian Religious Education, such modeling becomes a form of spiritual mentorship in which teachers guide students toward a deeper understanding of faith through lived example. Studies on Christian pedagogical practice show that spiritual authenticity and relational engagement significantly influence students' spiritual growth and commitment to Christian values (Jacob, 2024). Despite the recognized importance of spiritual competence in Christian teaching, various challenges continue to affect the implementation of spiritually grounded education in schools. In many cases, religious instruction tends to emphasize cognitive understanding of biblical teachings while giving less attention to the experiential and transformational aspects of faith formation. This imbalance may result in a gap between knowledge and practice, where students understand religious concepts theoretically but struggle to apply them in real-life situations. Therefore, Christian educators are increasingly encouraged to integrate biblical theology, spiritual formation, and pedagogical practice in a holistic approach to teaching. Such integration allows the classroom to become not only a place for learning religious knowledge but also a space for cultivating faith, character, and spiritual maturity (Chrismastianto et al., 2022). Within the Indonesian educational context, Christian Religious Education teachers often serve in pluralistic school environments where students come from diverse cultural and social backgrounds. This situation requires teachers to demonstrate strong spiritual identity and professional integrity in order to communicate Christian values effectively and respectfully. The teacher's spiritual competence becomes particularly important in such contexts because it influences the credibility and authenticity of the educational process. When teachers embody the virtues they teach, students perceive Christian teachings not merely as abstract doctrines but as living values that shape everyday life. Consequently, the spiritual competence of CRE teachers contributes significantly to the formation of students' moral awareness, faith commitment, and ethical behavior in society (Boangmanalu & Simorangkir, 2025). Considering these perspectives, examining the spiritual competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in modeling obedience becomes an important area of study. The integration of biblical reflection with educational practice provides valuable insights into how faith-based values can be effectively transmitted within the classroom. By reflecting on the theological message of Genesis 22:18, this study seeks to explore how obedience to God can serve as a guiding principle for the professional and spiritual identity of CRE teachers. Specifically, this research focuses on the context of SMA Negeri 2 Panai Hilir, where Christian Religious Education teachers play a strategic role in nurturing students' spiritual formation within a public school environment. Through this exploration, the study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on Christian pedagogy by highlighting how spiritual competence and biblical obedience can shape meaningful and transformative educational practices.

METHODS

This study employed a library research method or literature study approach to explore the concept of modeling obedience through the spiritual competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers inspired by Genesis 22:18. Library research focuses on

collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing relevant scholarly sources to develop a comprehensive understanding of a particular research problem. Through this method, the researcher examined various academic publications such as books, peer-reviewed journal articles, theological commentaries, and educational research reports that discuss spiritual competence, teacher modeling, biblical obedience, and Christian pedagogy. The purpose of using a literature study approach was to construct a theoretical framework that integrates biblical theology with educational practice in the context of Christian Religious Education (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research process began with identifying and collecting relevant literature from reputable academic databases and digital libraries, including Google Scholar, ERIC, and other theological and educational journal repositories. The selected sources primarily consisted of publications from the last ten years to ensure that the study relied on recent and relevant scholarly discussions. However, several foundational works in educational research and theology were also included to provide theoretical grounding for the analysis. Sources were selected based on their relevance to three main themes: spiritual competence of teachers, biblical perspectives on obedience, and the role of modeling in Christian education. The use of credible and peer-reviewed sources was essential to ensure the reliability and validity of the theoretical insights generated in this study (Snyder, 2019). After collecting the literature, the researcher conducted a systematic reading and critical evaluation of the sources. This stage involved identifying key concepts, arguments, and findings related to the research focus. The researcher categorized the literature into thematic groups such as spiritual formation in education, teacher competence and character, biblical teachings on obedience, and pedagogical implications for Christian Religious Education. Through this process, similarities and differences among the scholarly perspectives were examined in order to develop a deeper understanding of how spiritual competence and obedience can be integrated within educational practice. Literature analysis in this study followed a qualitative interpretative approach, allowing the researcher to synthesize ideas and develop conceptual insights relevant to the research topic (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2021). This research also incorporated biblical-theological reflection, particularly focusing on Genesis 22:18 as the primary scriptural reference. The interpretation of the biblical text was supported by scholarly theological commentaries and academic discussions related to the narrative of Abraham's obedience. This approach enabled the researcher to connect biblical principles with the pedagogical responsibilities of CRE teachers. By examining both theological and educational literature, the study sought to construct an integrated understanding of how biblical obedience can inspire the development of spiritual competence among teachers and influence their role as models of faith in the classroom. The synthesized findings from the literature were interpreted within the context of Christian Religious Education at SMA Negeri 2 Panai Hilir. Although this research did not involve field data collection, the contextual reflection allowed the researcher to relate theoretical insights to practical educational settings. Through this method, the study provides conceptual contributions regarding how CRE teachers can model obedience through their spiritual competence and thereby support the spiritual and moral formation of students. The use of a literature study approach thus enabled a comprehensive exploration of the topic by integrating insights from theology, education, and character formation research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that spiritual competence plays a fundamental role in shaping the character and pedagogical approach of Christian Religious Education teachers. Spiritual competence is not merely related to doctrinal knowledge or the ability to explain biblical texts, but it encompasses the inner transformation of the teacher's life, which is reflected in attitudes, values, and daily practices. Within the framework of Christian education, spiritual competence is understood as the capacity of teachers to live out their faith authentically while guiding students toward a deeper understanding of God's will. Teachers who possess strong spiritual competence tend to demonstrate consistency between what they teach and how they live, thereby becoming credible models of Christian character for their students. Educational scholars emphasize that effective teachers in faith-based education are those who integrate spiritual maturity with pedagogical professionalism so that learning becomes a transformative experience rather than simply the transmission of knowledge (Groome, 2019). The analysis of the literature further reveals that modeling is one of the most effective ways through which spiritual values can be transmitted within the educational environment. In Christian Religious Education, students often observe their teachers closely, interpreting their actions, attitudes, and interpersonal relationships as practical expressions of faith. This means that the teacher's life becomes an implicit curriculum that communicates moral and spiritual messages beyond the formal lesson content. When teachers demonstrate humility, patience, and obedience to God, students begin to perceive Christian teachings as living realities rather than abstract principles. Conversely, if teachers fail to embody the values they teach, the credibility of religious instruction may diminish in the eyes of learners. Scholars in religious education highlight that modeling is particularly influential during adolescence, a developmental stage in which students actively seek role models who can guide their moral and spiritual identity formation (Estep, Anthony, & Allison, 2022). The biblical narrative of Genesis 22 provides a powerful theological foundation for understanding obedience as a central element of spiritual competence. In this passage, Abraham is portrayed as a figure whose faith is expressed through radical obedience to God's command. Although the command appears difficult and paradoxical, Abraham responds with trust and submission to God's authority. The narrative emphasizes that obedience arises not merely from duty but from a deep relational commitment between the believer and God. In Genesis 22:18, God declares that through Abraham's obedience, all nations of the earth will be blessed. This statement reveals that obedience has a communal and generational dimension, extending its influence beyond the individual who practices it. Theological interpretations of this passage often highlight that Abraham's obedience demonstrates a faith that acts, showing that genuine faith is inseparable from faithful response to God's will (Walton, 2021). When this biblical principle is applied to the context of Christian Religious Education, it becomes evident that teachers are called not only to teach obedience but also to model it through their professional and spiritual lives. A teacher who lives in obedience to God reflects an attitude of humility, discipline, and faithfulness in fulfilling educational responsibilities. Such obedience may be expressed in various ways, including commitment to ethical behavior, dedication to teaching with integrity, and sincere care for the spiritual

development of students. In practical terms, obedience to God also involves aligning educational practices with biblical values, ensuring that the teaching process reflects principles such as love, justice, compassion, and service. Research on Christian pedagogy suggests that when teachers intentionally integrate biblical values into their daily interactions with students, the classroom becomes a space where spiritual formation can occur naturally (Knight, 2018).

Another important finding from the literature analysis concerns the relationship between spiritual competence and character formation among students. Christian education aims not only to develop intellectual understanding but also to cultivate moral and spiritual maturity. Teachers who demonstrate obedience to God create an environment in which students are encouraged to reflect on their own faith and moral choices. Through consistent modeling, teachers influence students' perceptions of what it means to live as faithful believers in a modern and complex society. Character education studies emphasize that students tend to internalize values more effectively when they see those values embodied by respected figures in their lives, particularly teachers who interact with them regularly in the school environment (Lickona, 2021). In the specific context of Indonesian education, the role of Christian Religious Education teachers carries additional significance because they often serve within pluralistic and multicultural school environments. Such contexts require teachers to demonstrate both strong spiritual identity and respectful engagement with diversity. Spiritual competence therefore includes the ability to articulate Christian values while maintaining attitudes of tolerance, empathy, and dialogue with others. Teachers who possess these qualities are better equipped to guide students toward understanding the relevance of Christian teachings in a diverse society. Educational research in Indonesia highlights that religious education can contribute positively to social harmony when teachers emphasize ethical values such as compassion, integrity, and mutual respect in their teaching practices (Sihotang, 2023).

The narrative of Abraham's obedience also offers important insights into the nature of faith-based leadership in educational settings. Abraham's response to God's command illustrates a leadership model grounded in trust, surrender, and faithfulness. When Christian Religious Education teachers adopt similar attitudes, they demonstrate spiritual leadership that inspires students to pursue a deeper relationship with God. Spiritual leadership in education does not rely primarily on authority or institutional power but on moral influence and personal example. Teachers who practice spiritual leadership create learning environments characterized by authenticity, encouragement, and moral accountability. In such environments, students feel motivated not only to learn academic content but also to grow spiritually and ethically (Palmer, 2017). The literature also indicates that spiritual competence develops through continuous spiritual formation rather than emerging automatically from professional training. Teachers need intentional practices such as prayer, biblical reflection, fellowship, and personal discipline to nurture their spiritual growth. These practices help teachers maintain a close relationship with God, which in turn strengthens their ability to model obedience and integrity. Without ongoing spiritual formation, teachers may struggle to maintain consistency between their professional responsibilities and personal faith commitments. Scholars of Christian education therefore emphasize the importance of integrating spiritual development programs within teacher training and professional development initiatives so that educators can sustain their spiritual competence over time (Banks & Ledbetter, 2020).

In relation to the educational context of SMA Negeri 2 Panai Hilir, the concept of modeling obedience through spiritual competence becomes particularly relevant. As a public educational institution, the school provides a formal setting in which Christian Religious Education teachers play a crucial role in guiding students' spiritual understanding. Although students receive biblical instruction through the curriculum, the influence of teachers' personal example often determines how effectively these teachings are internalized. When teachers demonstrate obedience to God through integrity, discipline, and compassion, students observe a practical expression of faith that complements the theoretical content of the lessons. Such experiences can shape students' perspectives about the relevance of Christian teachings in everyday life. The discussion of spiritual competence highlights the importance of relational engagement between teachers and students. Christian education emphasizes the relational nature of learning, where knowledge is transmitted through dialogue, mentorship, and shared experiences. Teachers who approach students with empathy and genuine care are more likely to establish meaningful connections that support spiritual growth. Through these relationships, teachers can guide students to reflect on biblical teachings and apply them to personal challenges, ethical decisions, and social interactions. Educational scholars argue that relational pedagogy is particularly effective in faith-based education because it mirrors the relational character of Christian spirituality itself (Balswick, King, & Reimer, 2016). Another dimension of obedience that emerges from the analysis is the connection between obedience and trust in God's promises. Abraham's story demonstrates that obedience often requires faith in circumstances that may not be fully understood. In the educational context, teachers may encounter challenges such as limited resources, diverse student backgrounds, and institutional constraints. Nevertheless, teachers who remain faithful to their calling and rely on God's guidance demonstrate a form of obedience that inspires perseverance and dedication. This perspective encourages Christian educators to view their professional vocation as a form of ministry through which they participate in God's work of shaping future generations.

The integration of biblical theology with educational practice also highlights the transformative potential of Christian Religious Education. When teachers embody spiritual competence and obedience, the classroom becomes more than an academic space; it becomes a community of faith learning. In such a community, students are invited to explore the meaning of faith, develop moral discernment, and cultivate spiritual disciplines that guide their lives beyond the school environment. Scholars of Christian pedagogy emphasize that this holistic approach to education reflects the biblical vision of formation, where knowledge, character, and spirituality are developed simultaneously (Van Brummelen, 2017). The analysis demonstrates that modeling obedience through spiritual competence represents a crucial dimension of effective Christian Religious Education. The example of Abraham in Genesis 22:18 illustrates that obedience rooted in faith has the power to influence not only individuals but also communities and future generations. When Christian Religious Education teachers embody this principle in their professional lives, they become living testimonies of the faith they teach. Their example encourages students to view Christian teachings not merely as religious knowledge but as guiding principles for life. Through consistent modeling, relational engagement, and spiritual authenticity, teachers contribute to the formation of students who are capable of living out their faith with integrity and responsibility in society. The discussion highlights

that the integration of spiritual competence, biblical obedience, and pedagogical practice forms the foundation of transformative Christian education. Teachers who cultivate deep spiritual lives are better prepared to guide students toward meaningful faith development and moral maturity. By drawing inspiration from the narrative of Genesis 22:18, Christian Religious Education teachers can reaffirm their vocation as educators who not only teach about faith but also embody it through their daily lives. Such modeling ultimately strengthens the impact of Christian education in shaping students who are committed to living according to God's will in their personal, social, and spiritual journeys.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significance of spiritual competence in shaping the role of Christian Religious Education teachers as models of obedience within the educational environment. Through a literature-based analysis supported by biblical reflection on Genesis 22:18, it becomes evident that spiritual competence is not limited to theological knowledge or professional qualifications, but encompasses the inner life of faith, integrity, and commitment to God that is expressed in daily actions. Teachers who possess strong spiritual competence demonstrate consistency between belief and practice, allowing them to become credible examples for students who are in the process of forming their moral and spiritual identities. The narrative of Abraham's obedience in Genesis 22 provides a powerful theological framework for understanding the importance of faithful response to God's will. Abraham's willingness to obey God, even in difficult circumstances, illustrates that obedience is rooted in trust, faith, and relational commitment. This biblical example offers a meaningful model for Christian educators, reminding them that obedience to God is not merely a theological concept to be explained in the classroom, but a spiritual principle that must be lived out in everyday life. When Christian Religious Education teachers internalize this value, they can guide students toward understanding obedience as a dynamic expression of faith that shapes attitudes, decisions, and behaviors. The findings of this study also emphasize the importance of teacher modeling in the process of character and spiritual formation among students. In many cases, students learn values more effectively through observation and interaction than through theoretical instruction alone. Therefore, the teacher's life becomes an influential medium through which biblical values are communicated. Teachers who demonstrate humility, faithfulness, discipline, and obedience to God provide students with tangible examples of how Christian teachings can be applied in real life. Such modeling contributes to the development of a learning environment where faith, character, and knowledge are integrated into a holistic educational experience. In the context of Christian Religious Education at SMA Negeri 2 Panai Hilir, the role of teachers as spiritual models is particularly important. As educators serving within a formal school system, they are entrusted not only with delivering curriculum content but also with guiding students toward moral maturity and spiritual awareness. By embodying obedience and spiritual integrity in their professional practice, teachers can inspire students to develop a deeper commitment to Christian values and to live responsibly within their communities. The integration of spiritual competence and pedagogical responsibility therefore becomes a key element in fostering meaningful and transformative Christian education. Modeling obedience through spiritual competence represents an essential dimension of effective Christian Religious Education. Teachers

who nurture their spiritual lives and faithfully live according to biblical principles become instruments through which students encounter authentic expressions of faith. Inspired by the example found in Genesis 22:18, Christian Religious Education teachers are encouraged to cultivate lives of obedience that reflect trust in God and commitment to their educational vocation. Through such authentic modeling, Christian education can contribute significantly to the formation of students who are not only knowledgeable about faith but also prepared to live out their beliefs with integrity, responsibility, and devotion to God in their daily lives.

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