



The Personality of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Modeling Social Integrity: A Study of Genesis 23:16 at SD Negeri 067689

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ABSTRACT

Teacher personality plays a critical role in shaping students' moral and social development, particularly within faith-based educational contexts. This study examines the personality of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in modeling social integrity through the theological lens of Genesis 23:16, conducted at SD Negeri 067689 Medan, Indonesia. The research is situated in a public elementary school with 36 Christian students and five Christian teachers, including a CRE teacher, offering a unique context for exploring integrity-based character formation in a pluralistic environment. Employing a qualitative research design, this study integrates a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with simple semi-structured interviews. The SLR draws on peer-reviewed international literature from reputable academic publishers, including Taylor & Francis, Elsevier (ScienceDirect), Wiley Online Library, and SpringerLink, to establish a theoretical framework on teacher personality, integrity, and moral modeling. Complementing this, interviews were conducted with five Christian teachers to capture contextual insights into how social integrity is understood and practiced in daily educational interactions. The findings reveal that teacher personality significantly contributes to modeling social integrity through moral consistency, relational ethics, and personal authenticity. This study concludes that the personality of CRE teachers is central to character education, positioning integrity as a lived value rather than a theoretical concept. The integration of biblical ethics and contemporary educational theory provides valuable implications for teacher education and Christian pedagogy, emphasizing the importance of ethical exemplarity in nurturing socially responsible learners.

Keywords: *Personality, Christian Religious Education, Social Integrity*

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary educational discourse, the role of teachers is no longer limited to delivering subject matter but increasingly encompasses moral and social formation. Education is widely understood as a holistic process that integrates cognitive, affective, and ethical dimensions. Within this framework, teachers function as moral agents whose personality, attitudes, and daily conduct significantly influence students' character

development. Research in educational psychology and moral education consistently affirms that students tend to internalize values not primarily through formal instruction, but through observing and imitating the behavior of significant adults, particularly teachers (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2016; Campbell, 2017). Consequently, teacher personality becomes a crucial element in shaping students' moral awareness and social responsibility (Arthur et al., 2015). In Christian Religious Education (CRE), the moral dimension of teaching is even more pronounced. CRE teachers are entrusted not only with transmitting biblical knowledge but also with embodying Christian ethical values in their personal and professional lives. Integrity stands at the heart of Christian moral teaching, emphasizing consistency between belief, speech, and action. Integrity is not merely an individual virtue but also a social one, manifested in honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability in interpersonal relationships (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Studies in faith-based education highlight that when teachers demonstrate integrity in their interactions with students, colleagues, and the wider school community, they create a learning environment that nurtures trust and ethical awareness (Carr, 2018; Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2013).

The biblical narrative of Genesis 23:16 offers a compelling theological foundation for understanding social integrity. In this passage, Abraham conducts a transparent and honorable transaction when purchasing the burial place for Sarah. He pays the full price publicly, without manipulation or exploitation, even though he is offered the land freely. This narrative reflects integrity as social accountability, ethical behavior exercised within a communal context and witnessed by others. Biblical scholars emphasize that Abraham's conduct exemplifies righteousness not only as personal piety but as ethical responsibility in social relationships (Waltke, 2012). For Christian educators, this narrative provides a concrete model of integrity that can be contextualized within educational practice, especially in shaping students' understanding of honesty and fairness in everyday interactions. At SD Negeri 067689 Medan, where there are 36 Christian students and 5 Christian teachers, including CRE teachers, the school environment offers a unique context for examining how teacher personality contributes to modeling social integrity. In a public-school setting marked by diversity, CRE teachers are required to express their faith values in ways that are respectful, inclusive, and socially responsible. Teacher personality, comprising moral consistency, emotional maturity, relational sensitivity, and ethical commitment, plays a decisive role in translating Christian values into observable behavior (Day et al., 2006). When students observe integrity being practiced consistently, moral values are no longer perceived as abstract ideals but as lived realities. Empirical studies in international educational literature reinforce the connection between teacher personality and students' moral development. Research published in leading journals indicates that teachers who demonstrate ethical consistency and authenticity significantly influence students' moral reasoning, social behavior, and attitudes toward honesty and justice (Nucci et al., 2018; Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013). Furthermore, character education research underscores that moral modeling by teachers is one of the most effective strategies for cultivating integrity, particularly at the primary education level where students are highly receptive to behavioral examples (Berkowitz & Bier, 2014). Most existing studies address integrity from psychological or pedagogical perspectives without grounding them in theological texts that are central to Christian education. This gap highlights the need for research that bridges biblical ethics and educational practice,

particularly in contexts where CRE teachers operate within pluralistic educational environments. This study seeks to explore the personality of Christian Religious Education teachers in modeling social integrity, using Genesis 23:16 as a theological and ethical lens, with a specific focus on SD Negeri 067689 Medan. By examining how teacher personality reflects social integrity in practice, this research aims to contribute to the discourse on character education, Christian pedagogy, and the role of integrity in shaping students' moral and social development.

METHODS

The integration of Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and simple semi-structured interviews methods aimed to provide both theoretical grounding and contextual empirical insights regarding the personality of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in modeling social integrity. The SLR served to establish a conceptual and analytical framework derived from reputable international scholarship, while the interviews enabled the exploration of how social integrity is practically embodied and perceived within a specific educational setting. The SLR was conducted following established guidelines for qualitative evidence synthesis in educational research. The review process consisted of four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and synthesis. Academic articles were retrieved from internationally recognized databases and publishers. The literature search focused on peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2010 and 2024 to ensure relevance to contemporary educational contexts. The selected studies were analyzed thematically. Key concepts, findings, and theoretical insights related to teacher personality and social integrity were extracted and synthesized to form an analytical framework. This framework was later used to interpret the interview data and align empirical findings with both educational theory and biblical ethics derived from Genesis 23:16. To complement the SLR, simple semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain contextual data from the research site. The participants consisted of five Christian teachers, including one Christian Religious Education teacher, at SD Negeri 067689 Medan. The selection of participants followed a purposive sampling technique, based on their direct involvement in Christian education and their role in interacting with Christian students at the school. The interviews aimed to explore participants' perceptions and experiences related to teacher personality and the modeling of social integrity. Guiding questions focused on: teachers' understanding of social integrity in educational practice, ways in which integrity is demonstrated in daily interactions with students, the influence of biblical values, particularly Genesis 23:16, on teachers' attitudes and behavior, and perceived impacts of teacher personality on students' moral and social development. Interviews were conducted in a relaxed and conversational manner to encourage openness and honest reflection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents an integrated analysis of the findings derived from the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and simple semi-structured interviews conducted with Christian teachers at SD Negeri 067689 Medan. The discussion is organized thematically, aligning empirical observations with theoretical insights and biblical ethics grounded in Genesis

23:16. This integration allows for a holistic understanding of how the personality of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers contributes to modeling social integrity in a public elementary school context. One of the findings emerging from both the literature review and interview data is the centrality of moral consistency as a defining feature of teacher personality in modeling social integrity. Participants consistently emphasized that integrity is demonstrated when teachers' words, decisions, and actions align in everyday interactions with students. Teachers described integrity not as a formal teaching topic, but as a daily practice reflected in honesty, fairness, and responsibility, particularly in classroom management and student assessment. This finding resonates strongly with international research emphasizing that teacher personality influences students primarily through behavioral consistency rather than explicit moral instruction (Arthur et al., 2015; Carr, 2018). Studies published in Taylor & Francis and SpringerLink highlight that students are more likely to internalize ethical values when teachers demonstrate coherence between professed values and observable behavior (Campbell, 2017). In this study, interview participants noted that even small actions, such as admitting mistakes, treating students equally, and fulfilling promises, were perceived by students as meaningful expressions of integrity. From a biblical perspective, Genesis 23:16 presents integrity as transparent and accountable action within a social context. Abraham's willingness to pay the full price for the land, despite being offered it freely, illustrates ethical consistency and respect for communal norms. This narrative parallels the teachers' understanding of integrity as faithfulness in ordinary responsibilities. Thus, both empirical data and theological reflection affirm that teacher personality grounded in moral consistency serves as a powerful model for students' social learning.

Social integrity as relational ethics emphasizing respectful and fair relationships between teachers and students. Interview findings revealed that teachers viewed integrity not merely as personal honesty but as ethical responsibility in relationships. Teachers highlighted practices such as listening to students, avoiding favoritism, resolving conflicts fairly, and maintaining respectful communication as core expressions of integrity. This relational understanding aligns with educational research emphasizing the social dimension of moral development. Studies in ScienceDirect and Wiley Online Library indicate that ethical teacher-student relationships significantly influence students' moral sensitivity and social behavior (Nucci et al., 2018; Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013). Integrity, in this sense, becomes a lived social value that shapes classroom culture and interpersonal trust. Genesis 23:16 reinforces this relational dimension by portraying Abraham's integrity as publicly accountable and socially respectful. His transaction occurs "in the hearing of the sons of Heth," underscoring integrity as a communal act rather than a private virtue. In the school context, teachers' ethical behavior is similarly observed by students and peers, making integrity a visible and influential force in shaping social norms. The integration of biblical ethics and educational theory in this study demonstrates that social integrity is best understood as relational faithfulness, an insight that enriches character education discourse within Christian pedagogy. Interview participants repeatedly emphasized the importance of being "the same person inside and outside the classroom." Teachers acknowledged that students quickly recognize inconsistencies between instruction and behavior, which can undermine moral credibility. This finding is strongly supported by SLR results. International studies consistently highlight authenticity as a key dimension of

ethical teaching, particularly in faith-based education (Day et al., 2006; Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2013). Research published in SpringerLink suggests that authentic teachers foster moral trust, which enhances students' openness to ethical learning and character formation. Within the biblical framework, Abraham's integrity is portrayed as authentic obedience to God that manifests in ethical social conduct. His actions are not strategic or performative but rooted in deeply held values. Similarly, CRE teachers in this study understood integrity as an outflow of personal faith rather than institutional obligation. This alignment between internal conviction and external behavior reinforces the role of teacher personality as a moral exemplar.

Although this study did not directly assess students' moral outcomes quantitatively, interview data indicate perceived impacts on students' moral awareness and behavior. Teachers observed that students tended to imitate attitudes of fairness, honesty, and responsibility when these were consistently demonstrated by teachers. Teachers noted that students were more likely to admit mistakes, respect rules, and show consideration for peers when integrity was modeled rather than merely instructed. These observations align with character education research emphasizing modeling as a primary mechanism for moral learning, particularly at the elementary level (Berkowitz & Bier, 2014). Studies in Wiley and ScienceDirect further support the view that teacher behavior significantly shapes students' moral habits through social learning processes. In the context of SD Negeri 067689 Medan, where Christian students constitute a minority within a public-school setting, the modeling of social integrity by CRE teachers gains additional significance. Integrity expressed through respect, fairness, and inclusivity contributes not only to individual character formation but also to harmonious social interaction within a diverse environment. A key contribution of this study lies in its integration of biblical ethics with contemporary educational theory. While many studies address integrity from psychological or pedagogical perspectives, fewer explicitly ground their analysis in biblical narratives. By using Genesis 23:16 as an ethical lens, this research demonstrates how scriptural values can inform and enrich educational practice without compromising academic rigor. The findings suggest that biblical narratives function effectively as moral frameworks when translated into observable behaviors and relational practices. Teacher personality serves as the mediating factor that bridges theological values and educational realities. This integration supports calls within Christian education scholarship for pedagogical approaches that are both theologically grounded and contextually relevant (Carr, 2018).

The integrated findings of this study have several implications for Christian Religious Education. They underscore the importance of teacher personality development in CRE teacher training programs. Integrity should be cultivated not only as a professional ethic but as a spiritual and relational discipline. The findings highlight the need for reflective practice among CRE teachers, encouraging self-awareness regarding how personal behavior influences students' moral learning. Finally, this study suggests that biblical narratives such as Genesis 23:16 can serve as effective ethical resources when embodied through teacher personality rather than confined to textual instruction. The integration of SLR findings and interview data reveals that the personality of CRE teachers plays a decisive role in modeling social integrity. Moral consistency, relational ethics,

authenticity, and ethical role modeling emerge as key dimensions through which integrity is communicated and internalized. Grounded in both biblical ethics and contemporary educational research, this study affirms that teacher personality is not peripheral but central to character education within Christian Religious Education.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the personality of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in modeling social integrity through the theological lens of Genesis 23:16, situated within the context of SD Negeri 067689 Medan. By integrating a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with simple semi-structured interviews, the research provides both theoretical and contextual insights into how teacher personality functions as a central mechanism in character and moral formation within a public elementary school environment. The findings demonstrate that teacher personality plays a decisive role in modeling social integrity, particularly through moral consistency, relational ethics, and personal authenticity. Integrity was not understood merely as adherence to moral rules but as the alignment between values, words, and actions manifested in everyday interactions. Teachers who consistently demonstrated honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect were perceived as credible moral models, reinforcing the notion that ethical values are most effectively transmitted through lived example rather than verbal instruction alone. Grounded in Genesis 23:16, this study highlights integrity as a socially accountable virtue. Abraham's transparent and ethical conduct in a public transaction offers a biblical paradigm for understanding integrity as relational and communal. When applied to educational practice, this paradigm underscores that teachers' ethical behavior is continually observed and internalized by students. The integration of biblical ethics with contemporary educational theory enriches the discourse on Christian pedagogy, demonstrating that scriptural narratives can meaningfully inform educational practice without diminishing scholarly rigor.

The context of SD Negeri 067689 Medan further emphasizes the significance of this study. In a public-school setting characterized by diversity, CRE teachers serve as representatives of Christian values within a broader social framework. Their ability to model social integrity contributes not only to the moral development of Christian students but also to the cultivation of respectful and harmonious relationships within the school community. This finding underscores the relevance of integrity as a universal ethical value that transcends religious boundaries while remaining rooted in Christian faith. This study also offers practical implications for Christian Religious Education. Teacher education and professional development programs should prioritize personality formation alongside pedagogical competence, emphasizing integrity as a core professional and spiritual attribute. Reflective practices that encourage teachers to examine the congruence between belief and behavior may further strengthen their role as ethical role models. This study is limited by its small sample size and reliance on qualitative perceptions rather than direct measurement of student outcomes. Future research may expand this inquiry through mixed-method approaches, longitudinal designs, or comparative studies across different educational contexts to further examine the impact of teacher personality on students' moral development. This research affirms that the personality of Christian

Religious Education teachers is central to modeling social integrity. By embodying ethical values grounded in biblical teachings and expressed through consistent and authentic behavior, CRE teachers play a vital role in shaping students' moral awareness and social responsibility. Integrity, when lived and modeled, becomes not only a lesson taught but a value formed, contributing to the holistic mission of Christian education in contemporary society.

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