



## Humility Spirituality of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Ministry: Insights from Genesis 24:40 at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam

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### ABSTRACT

*The spiritual quality of teachers plays a decisive role in shaping students' faith formation and moral development, particularly within Christian Religious Education (CRE). This study investigates the humility spirituality of a CRE teacher in ministry at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam through the theological lens of Genesis 24:40. A quantitative descriptive survey design was employed to measure students' perceptions of the teacher's humility-oriented spirituality as reflected in classroom practice. The population consisted of 273 Christian students, all of whom were included using a total sampling technique. Data were collected through a structured Likert-scale questionnaire covering five dimensions: spiritual dependence on God, servant-hearted attitude, respectful and non-boastful communication, relational warmth and approachability, and modeling of humility in classroom interactions. The instrument demonstrated acceptable reliability (Cronbach's alpha > 0.70). Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that the overall level of teacher humility spirituality was in the high category, indicating that students consistently perceive the CRE teacher as embodying Christlike humility in ministry. Among the measured dimensions, relational warmth and servant-hearted attitude received particularly strong ratings, suggesting that humility is experienced not only cognitively but relationally. The findings affirm that humility spirituality functions as a significant pedagogical asset that strengthens classroom trust, student engagement, and the credibility of religious instruction. Although minor areas for enhancement were identified, especially in explicit theological verbalization and dialogical openness, the overall pattern demonstrates strong alignment with the humility paradigm reflected in Genesis 24:40. This study contributes empirical evidence to Indonesian CRE scholarship by showing that embodied teacher spirituality is observable, measurable, and educationally influential in contemporary school contexts.*

**Keywords:** Humility Spirituality, Christian Religious Education, Ministry

## INTRODUCTION

The spiritual quality of the teacher is increasingly recognized as a decisive factor in shaping students' faith formation and moral development. Beyond cognitive mastery of biblical content, Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers are expected to embody the virtues they teach, especially humility in ministry. In many school contexts, students encounter Christian values not primarily through formal doctrine but through the lived example of their teachers. This reality makes the exploration of teachers' humility spirituality both pedagogically and theologically significant. Within the Indonesian educational landscape, where character education is strongly emphasized, the personal spirituality of teachers becomes an integral component of effective religious instruction. Humility occupies a central place in biblical spirituality and Christian ministry. In Genesis 24:40, Abraham's servant attributes the success of his mission not to personal capability but to the guidance of the Lord. This posture reflects a theological pattern in which faithful service is inseparable from dependence on God. Old Testament scholarship highlights that the servant's response demonstrates covenantal trust and vocational obedience rather than self-promotion (Wenham, 1994). For Christian educators, this narrative provides a powerful paradigm: effective ministry flows from spiritual surrender and faithful stewardship rather than personal prestige. Educational research similarly underscores the importance of teacher disposition in shaping learning environments. Studies in character and moral education consistently show that students are highly sensitive to the congruence between what teachers say and how they behave (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). When teachers model humility, respect, and service, students are more likely to internalize these values as authentic and attainable. Conversely, when there is dissonance between instruction and behavior, moral messages tend to lose credibility. In faith-based education, this congruence becomes even more critical because spiritual formation depends heavily on relational trust and moral exemplarity. Within Christian pedagogy, humility is not merely a personal virtue but a pedagogical posture. Palmer (2007) argues that teaching emerges from the "identity and integrity of the teacher," meaning that who the teacher is shapes how teaching is experienced. A humble teacher creates space for dialogue, encourages student participation, and acknowledges dependence on divine guidance. Such an environment aligns closely with constructivist and relational learning theories, which emphasize mutual respect and learner engagement. Therefore, examining humility spirituality among CRE teachers is not only theologically relevant but also educationally strategic. National educational discourse increasingly stresses character formation, religious moderation, and holistic student development. In Christian schools and public schools with Christian populations, CRE teachers often serve as primary spiritual mentors. At SDS Generasi Harapan Batam, where there are 273 Christian students and 10 Christian teachers (including the CRE teacher), the scale of influence is substantial. The teacher's spirituality potentially shapes a large community of learners across developmental stages. Yet empirical studies focusing specifically on humility spirituality in Indonesian CRE practice remain relatively limited. Ministry-oriented humility has practical implications for classroom climate and student motivation. Research in educational psychology indicates that teachers who demonstrate relational humility tend to foster higher student trust, engagement, and emotional safety (Owens & Hekman, 2012). In faith education settings, this relational climate can significantly

enhance students' openness to spiritual reflection and moral growth. However, the extent to which CRE teachers operationalize humility in daily instructional practice requires closer contextual investigation. This study therefore seeks to examine the humility spirituality of the Christian Religious Education teacher in ministry at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam through the theological lens of Genesis 24:40. By focusing on observable teaching behavior, teacher self-understanding, and student perceptions, the research aims to provide a grounded portrait of how biblical humility is embodied in contemporary CRE practice. The findings are expected to contribute both to the development of spiritually grounded teacher professionalism and to the strengthening of character-based Christian education in Indonesian school contexts. Ultimately, understanding humility spirituality in CRE teaching is not merely an academic exercise but a formative concern. When teachers serve with the posture reflected in Genesis 24:40, dependent on God and oriented toward faithful service, they become living curricula of the faith they teach. This study proceeds from the conviction that such embodied spirituality remains essential for the future of meaningful and transformative Christian Religious Education.

## METHODS

A quantitative research design was used to examine the humility spirituality of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in ministry at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam, particularly as reflected in Genesis 24:40. A quantitative approach was selected to enable systematic measurement of students' perceptions regarding the teacher's humility-oriented spirituality and its observable impact in classroom practice. Quantitative designs are widely used in educational research to identify patterns, tendencies, and levels of agreement across a defined population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The study used a descriptive survey model. This design is appropriate for portraying the current condition of teacher personality and spirituality as perceived by students without manipulating variables. The focus was to obtain empirical data regarding how students experience and evaluate the humility spirituality demonstrated by the CRE teacher during instructional and relational interactions. The population of the study consisted of 273 Christian students enrolled at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam. Because the population size was manageable and to increase statistical accuracy, the study employed a total sampling technique (census approach), in which all 273 Christian students were invited to participate as respondents. This approach minimizes sampling bias and provides a more comprehensive representation of student perceptions within the school context. In addition to the student respondents, contextual data regarding the number of Christian teachers (10 teachers, including the CRE teacher) were used to describe the educational environment but were not included as quantitative respondents.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on the conceptual indicators of humility spirituality in Christian ministry and the theological reflection of Genesis 24:40. The instrument employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire measured several key dimensions: Spiritual dependence on God (e.g., teacher acknowledges God's role in success), Servant-hearted attitude (e.g., teacher shows willingness to serve students), Respectful and non-

boastful communication, Relational warmth and approachability, Modeling of humility in classroom interactions. Prior to distribution, the instrument underwent expert judgment review to ensure content validity and theological alignment. A pilot test was conducted with a small group of students outside the research site to examine item clarity and internal consistency. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha produced a coefficient above 0.70, indicating acceptable internal reliability for educational research (Field, 2013). Data collection was conducted during the second semester of the academic year. Questionnaires were administered in printed form during school hours under the supervision of the researcher and classroom teachers. Students were given clear instructions and assurance of anonymity to encourage honest responses. Participation was voluntary, and responses were collected immediately after completion to ensure data integrity. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including mean scores, standard deviations, and percentage distributions. The analysis aimed to determine the overall level of perceived humility spirituality demonstrated by the CRE teacher. Interpretation followed a five-level categorization (very low, low, moderate, high, very high) based on mean score intervals.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 273 Christian students at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam who provided perceptions regarding the humility spirituality demonstrated by the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher. All returned questionnaires were complete and valid for analysis, indicating a 100% usable response rate. The reliability of the instrument had previously met the acceptable threshold ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ), allowing the data to be interpreted with confidence. Descriptive statistical analysis shows that the overall mean score for teacher humility spirituality was in the high category, indicating that students generally perceive the CRE teacher as consistently embodying humility in ministry and instructional practice. The relatively moderate standard deviation suggests that student perceptions were fairly homogeneous, meaning that the teacher's humility was not only visible to certain groups but broadly experienced across the student population. This finding is significant within the Indonesian CRE context, where the credibility of religious instruction is strongly linked to the teacher's personal witness. The data confirm that humility spirituality is not merely a theological ideal but is observable in classroom reality at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam. To obtain a more nuanced understanding, the analysis was conducted across five measured dimensions: spiritual dependence on God, servant-hearted attitude, respectful and non-boastful communication, relational warmth and approachability, and modeling of humility in classroom interactions.

The first dimension, spiritual dependence on God, received a high mean score, indicating that students clearly recognize the teacher's orientation toward divine reliance. Items in this dimension measured behaviors such as acknowledging God's role in success, expressing gratitude in teaching moments, and demonstrating prayerful attitudes. This result resonates strongly with the theological framework drawn from Genesis 24:40. In the biblical narrative, Abraham's servant attributes mission success to the Lord's guidance rather than personal competence. The CRE teacher at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam appears to reflect a similar posture, which students are able to perceive. From a

pedagogical standpoint, visible dependence on God functions as a form of implicit spiritual modeling. Students in faith-based learning environments often learn theological dispositions through observation rather than direct instruction. When teachers openly demonstrate reliance on God, they normalize spiritual humility as part of Christian identity formation. Educational research supports this interpretation. Teacher authenticity and congruence significantly influence student moral internalization (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). In this study, the high score suggests that the CRE teacher's spirituality is not hidden but pedagogically embodied. The data also show slight variation among items within this dimension. Some students reported only moderate agreement regarding the teacher's explicit verbal acknowledgment of God during classroom success moments. This suggests that while the teacher's spiritual posture is generally visible, intentional verbalization of theological dependence could be further strengthened to enhance explicit spiritual formation. The second dimension, servant-hearted attitude, also fell within the high category, and in several items approached the very high range. Students strongly agreed that the teacher demonstrates willingness to help, patience in guiding learners, and readiness to prioritize student needs. This dimension is central to the theology of ministry humility. Genesis 24 portrays Abraham's servant as mission-focused rather than status-oriented. Similarly, CRE pedagogy grounded in Christlike service emphasizes teaching as diakonia (service), not domination. The strong student agreement indicates that the CRE teacher has successfully cultivated a service-oriented classroom ethos. This was reflected in behaviors such as: providing additional explanation when students struggle, responding calmly to mistakes, offering personal encouragement, and showing fairness in treatment. Servant leadership in teachers is closely linked to increased student trust and emotional safety (Owens & Hekman, 2012). The findings of this study align with that theoretical expectation. Students who perceive their teacher as genuinely serving them are more likely to engage affectively and cognitively. Within the Indonesian context, where teacher authority traditionally carries hierarchical weight, the presence of a servant-hearted CRE teacher is particularly meaningful. It signals a shift from authority-centered religiosity toward relational spirituality. Qualitative interpretation of the frequency distribution indicates that a small minority of students selected neutral responses. This suggests that servant posture, while generally strong, may not yet be consistently experienced in every interaction or by every learner group. Differentiated attention to quieter or less visible students may further strengthen this dimension. Respectful and non-boastful communication, produced a high mean score with relatively tight dispersion. Students largely agreed that the teacher communicates politely, avoids self-praise, and corrects students without humiliation. This finding is pedagogically important because communication style is often the most immediately experienced expression of teacher character. Humility becomes visible not only through grand spiritual statements but through everyday verbal interactions. The data suggest that the CRE teacher demonstrates verbal humility, which includes: using affirming language, avoiding comparison among students, giving correction constructively, and maintaining respectful tone. These behaviors align with Palmer's (2007) argument that the integrity of the teacher shapes the learning climate. When communication reflects humility, the classroom becomes dialogical rather than authoritarian. This dimension reflects the ethos of Genesis 24:40 in a contemporary pedagogical form. Abraham's servant speaks with deference and attributes success to divine guidance. Similarly, the teacher's avoidance of

boastful self-reference reinforces a God-centered rather than ego-centered ministry model.

An interesting micro-pattern emerged in the item-level analysis: students showed particularly strong agreement regarding the teacher's politeness but slightly lower (though still high) agreement regarding the teacher's openness to student disagreement. This suggests an area for professional growth, cultivating even more dialogical humility where students feel fully safe to express alternative views. Relational warmth and approachability yielded one of the highest mean scores in the study. Students overwhelmingly perceived the CRE teacher as friendly, approachable, and emotionally supportive. This is a crucial finding because relational climate is a key mediator between teacher spirituality and student formation. In faith education, students often internalize values through trusted relationships rather than formal doctrinal delivery. The strong performance in this dimension indicates that humility spirituality at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam is relationally embodied, not merely cognitively professed. Observable indicators included: the teacher being easy to talk to, willingness to listen to student concerns, showing empathy, and maintaining a welcoming classroom atmosphere. This aligns closely with relational learning theory and supports prior findings that emotionally safe classrooms enhance moral receptivity. Relational warmth reflects incarnational pedagogy-teaching that mirrors Christ's approachable presence. When humility is expressed relationally, students experience faith not as abstraction but as lived community reality. The relatively low standard deviation in this dimension indicates strong consistency across respondents. This suggests that the teacher's relational humility is not situational but habitual. The high score indicates that the CRE teacher at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam functions as what may be termed a "living curriculum." Students are not merely taught about humility; they observe it enacted. Compared to relational warmth, this dimension showed slightly wider variability. A small subset of students reported only moderate agreement on items related to teacher self-correction. This suggests that while humility modeling is strong overall, moments of visible self-reflection by the teacher could be further amplified for pedagogical impact. When the five dimensions are viewed holistically, a coherent pattern emerges: the CRE teacher demonstrates a theologically aligned humility spirituality that is both perceived and experienced by students. Genesis 24:40 presents a model of ministry characterized by: dependence on God, faithful service, mission orientation, and absence of self-glorification. The empirical findings of this study show strong correspondence with these biblical markers. The teacher's high scores across spiritual dependence, servant posture, and non-boastful communication indicate that the Genesis paradigm is not merely theoretical but pedagogically operationalized. This is an important contribution to Indonesian CRE research, which has often emphasized doctrinal mastery more than spiritual embodiment. The data suggest that embodied spirituality is measurable and observable within school contexts. Humility spirituality functions as a pedagogical asset. The high student perceptions across dimensions suggest that humility contributes positively to classroom climate, trust formation, and student engagement. This supports Owens and Hekman's (2012) argument regarding the relational power of humble leadership. Teacher spirituality and pedagogical effectiveness are deeply intertwined. The data reinforce Palmer's (2007) thesis that teaching flows from the teacher's identity and

integrity. At SDS Generasi Harapan Batam, humility is not merely a personal virtue but an instructional resource. Explicit theological verbalization could be strengthened. While dependence on God is perceived, some items indicate room for more intentional articulation of divine reliance in classroom discourse. Dialogical humility can be further developed. Encouraging more structured opportunities for student voice and respectful disagreement may deepen the humility culture already present. The findings affirm the strategic role of CRE teachers as spiritual mentors within Indonesian schools. With 273 Christian students under their influence, the impact of one teacher's spirituality is institutionally significant. Given the relative scarcity of quantitative studies on teacher spirituality in Indonesia, these findings offer an important empirical foundation for future research and professional development in CRE. Longitudinal studies would be valuable to examine whether sustained exposure to humble CRE teachers produces measurable changes in student character and faith development.

The findings of this study strongly indicate that humility spirituality, when authentically embodied by CRE teachers, becomes pedagogically powerful. At SDS Generasi Harapan Batam, students do not merely receive doctrinal instruction; they encounter a lived example of ministry shaped by dependence on God and servant-hearted teaching. In light of Genesis 24:40, the CRE teacher's practice reflects a ministry posture that is theologically faithful and educationally effective. The teacher's humility is visible, relational, and formative. While areas for refinement remain, particularly in explicit theological articulation and dialogical openness, the overall pattern is robust. For Indonesian Christian education, this study reinforces a crucial insight: the future of transformative CRE depends not only on what teachers teach, but on who teachers are in Christlike humility.

## CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the humility spirituality of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher in ministry at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam through the theological lens of Genesis 24:40. Using a quantitative descriptive survey involving 273 Christian students, the research sought to determine how humility is perceived, experienced, and embodied within contemporary CRE classroom practice. The findings provide strong empirical evidence that the teacher's humility spirituality is present at a high level across all measured dimensions, indicating a meaningful alignment between theological ideals and pedagogical reality. The dimension of spiritual dependence on God was perceived positively by students, suggesting that the CRE teacher demonstrates a God-oriented posture consistent with the biblical model of Abraham's servant in Genesis 24:40. Students recognize that the teacher does not center success on personal ability but reflects an attitude of reliance on divine guidance. This finding is significant because visible dependence on God functions as implicit spiritual formation, allowing students to internalize humility as an authentic Christian disposition rather than merely a doctrinal concept. The servant-hearted attitude of the teacher emerged as one of the strongest aspects of humility spirituality. Students consistently reported that the teacher shows willingness to help, patience in guiding learners, and genuine concern for student needs. This confirms that humility in CRE ministry is not abstract but expressed through concrete

acts of service. Within the Indonesian educational context, where hierarchical teacher authority can still be prominent, such servant leadership represents an important shift toward relational and Christ-centered pedagogy. The teacher demonstrated respectful and non-boastful communication, reinforcing the credibility of moral and spiritual instruction. Students perceived that correction was delivered constructively and that the teacher avoided self-promotion. This communicative humility strengthens the moral authority of the teacher and supports the formation of a dialogical learning environment. The findings affirm that everyday verbal interactions are a primary arena in which humility becomes pedagogically visible. The study found very strong evidence of relational warmth and approachability. Students overwhelmingly experienced the CRE teacher as friendly, empathetic, and accessible. This relational climate is particularly important in faith-based education because spiritual formation is deeply mediated through trust. The data indicate that humility spirituality at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam is relationally embodied, enabling students to experience Christian values through lived interaction rather than mere instruction. The modeling of humility in classroom interactions was also rated highly, confirming that students observe behavioral congruence between what the teacher teaches and what the teacher practices. Acts such as admitting mistakes, treating students fairly, and demonstrating teachability reinforce the teacher's role as a "living curriculum." This finding supports the broader educational literature emphasizing that character transmission occurs most powerfully through modeling. Taken together, these results demonstrate that the CRE teacher at SDS Generasi Harapan Batam embodies a form of ministry that is theologically grounded, pedagogically effective, and relationally credible. The pattern closely reflects the humility paradigm found in Genesis 24:40, namely dependence on God, faithful service, and the absence of self-glorification. The study therefore contributes empirical support to the claim that biblical humility can be operationalized and observed within contemporary Christian education practice. The findings also point to several areas for continued professional growth. Although overall perceptions were high, some item-level variations suggest the need for more explicit verbal articulation of dependence on God during instructional moments and greater encouragement of dialogical openness where students feel fully safe to express differing views. Strengthening these aspects may further deepen the culture of humility already present. This study contributes to Indonesian CRE scholarship by providing a measurable framework for humility spirituality, demonstrating the value of student perception data in evaluating teacher character, and empirically linking Old Testament theology with modern classroom practice. Given the limited quantitative research on teacher spirituality in Indonesia, the findings offer an important baseline for future studies. Future research is recommended to expand the methodological scope through mixed-method approaches, multi-school comparisons, and longitudinal designs that examine the long-term impact of humble teaching on student faith and character development. Incorporating classroom observations and teacher self-reflection would also enrich understanding of how humility spirituality is formed and sustained. Humility spirituality is not merely a private virtue but a strategic pedagogical force in Christian Religious Education. When CRE teachers minister with the posture reflected in Genesis 24:40, dependent on God and oriented toward faithful service, they cultivate classrooms marked by trust, respect, and spiritual receptivity. The evidence from SDS Generasi Harapan

Batam affirms that embodied humility remains a vital foundation for meaningful and transformative Christian education in Indonesia.

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