



Personality Reflection of Christian Religious Education Teachers on God's Faithfulness to Abraham (Genesis 15:18): A Study at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu

Eliscana Hutabarat

Pendidikan Profesi Guru, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

*correspondence: eliscanah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of personality competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in fostering students' understanding of God's faithfulness to Abraham based on Genesis 15:18 at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu, Simalungun. Teacher personality competence is a critical dimension of professional teaching because it shapes the moral climate of the classroom and serves as a living model through which biblical values are interpreted by elementary learners. The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational design involving 68 Christian students as respondents and one CRE teacher as the primary instructional subject. Data were collected through a Likert-scale student perception questionnaire measuring teacher personality competence and a cognitive test assessing students' understanding of the concept of divine faithfulness. The instruments were validated through expert judgment and tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and simple regression. The findings indicate that the teacher's personality competence is perceived to be in the high category, particularly in the dimensions of integrity, consistency, and emotional stability. Students' understanding of God's faithfulness is categorized as moderate to high, with stronger performance in narrative recall than in theological interpretation and personal application. Inferential analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between teacher personality competence and students' understanding of Genesis 15:18. The regression results show that teacher personality contributes meaningfully to students' learning outcomes, although other ecological factors remain influential. The study concludes that strengthening the personality competence of CRE teachers is a strategic pathway for deepening students' comprehension and internalization of biblical faithfulness in Indonesian primary school contexts.

Keywords: Personality, Christian Religious Education, God's Faithfulness

INTRODUCTION

Teacher personality is acknowledged as a critical factor influencing the effectiveness of moral and faith-based education, particularly in the context of Christian Religious Education (CRE). Beyond pedagogical and professional competencies, the personal integrity, emotional maturity, and spiritual authenticity of teachers significantly shape how biblical values are transmitted and internalized by students. Educational theorists consistently affirm that students do not merely learn from what teachers say but from who teachers are in their daily interactions (Lickona, 2012). In faith-oriented instruction, this principle becomes even more decisive because the credibility of biblical teaching is closely tied to the lived witness of the teacher. Teacher personality competence is formally recognized as one of the four core teacher competencies. It includes aspects such as moral integrity, emotional stability, wisdom, and exemplary conduct. Mulyasa (2013) emphasizes that personality competence enables teachers to become role models who embody the values they teach. Within CRE, this competence is inseparable from theological formation, because biblical narratives are intended not only to inform cognition but also to transform character. Therefore, examining how CRE teachers reflect biblical truths through their personal qualities remains an important scholarly and practical concern. One biblical theme that strongly demands personal embodiment from teachers is God's faithfulness to Abraham in Genesis 15:18. This passage records the covenantal promise in which God guarantees the land to Abraham's descendants, demonstrating divine consistency, reliability, and commitment. Old Testament scholars note that the Abrahamic covenant forms a foundational theological motif that underscores God's unwavering fidelity despite human limitations (Wright, 2004). The pedagogical challenge in CRE classrooms is helping students move beyond viewing this text as a distant historical event toward recognizing faithfulness as a living relational value. From a developmental perspective, elementary students learn moral values most effectively through concrete examples and relational modeling. Santrock (2011) explains that children at the primary level are highly responsive to observable adult behavior when forming moral judgments. Consequently, CRE teachers who personally demonstrate faithfulness, through consistency, responsibility, and trustworthy relationships, are more likely to cultivate meaningful student understanding of the Abrahamic narrative. Conversely, when there is a gap between instruction and teacher personality, students may experience moral dissonance that weakens value internalization. This gap is particularly evident in rural or semi-rural public elementary schools, where CRE is often taught by a very limited number of teachers. SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu in Simalungun presents a meaningful case. The school serves 68 Christian students with one CRE teacher, creating a concentrated instructional environment in which the teacher's personal influence is likely to be especially pronounced.

The presence of a single CRE teacher also raises important research questions. With limited staffing, the teacher's personality may function as the primary lens through which students interpret biblical faithfulness. At the same time, such a context may present challenges, including instructional workload, limited peer collaboration, and constraints in pedagogical variation. Understanding how teacher personality operates within this setting can provide valuable insights for strengthening CRE practice in similar Indonesian

schools. This study aims to analyze the personality reflection of the CRE teacher in teaching God's faithfulness to Abraham based on Genesis 15:18 at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu, Simalungun. Specifically, the study seeks to: describe the level of teacher personality competence as perceived by students, examine students' understanding of divine faithfulness, and analyze the relationship between teacher personality reflection and students' internalization of the value of faithfulness. By addressing these objectives, the research contributes to the growing discourse on holistic teacher competence in Christian education and offers contextually grounded recommendations for strengthening character-based biblical instruction in Indonesian elementary schools.

METHODS

A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was implemented to examine the relationship between the personality competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE/PAK) teacher and students' understanding of God's faithfulness to Abraham based on Genesis 15:18. The quantitative approach was selected to allow objective measurement of teacher personality reflection and student learning outcomes through numerical data, while the correlational component enabled analysis of the strength and direction of the relationship between variables without manipulating the natural classroom setting (Creswell, 2014). This design is appropriate for capturing authentic instructional dynamics in a small-school context where the teacher's personal influence is highly concentrated. The research was conducted at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu, Simalungun, a public elementary school where Christian Religious Education is formally implemented. The site was purposively selected because the school has a single CRE teacher serving a defined population of Christian students, making it a relevant setting for examining the impact of teacher personality on students' faith-value formation. The study involved the entire accessible population due to the relatively small number of participants. The population consisted of 68 Christian students enrolled at the school. Because the number was manageable, the study applied total sampling, meaning all 68 students were included as respondents. This approach increases data accuracy and minimizes sampling error in small populations. There is one CRE teacher at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu. The study therefore used a census approach for the teacher variable, treating the teacher as the primary instructional subject whose personality competence was measured through both self-report and student perception data. The study examined two principal variables: Independent Variable (X): Teacher Personality Competence, personality competence refers to the teacher's stable personal qualities that reflect moral integrity and exemplary character (Mulyasa, 2013). Operational indicators included: moral integrity and honesty, emotional stability and self-control, consistency and responsibility, wisdom and maturity in decision-making, becoming a positive role model, demonstrating faithfulness in professional duties; Dependent Variable (Y): Students' Understanding of God's Faithfulness (Genesis 15:18), this variable measures students' cognitive and affective grasp of the biblical concept of divine faithfulness. Indicators included: knowledge of the Genesis 15:18 narrative, understanding the meaning of God's covenant with Abraham, ability to explain the concept of divine faithfulness, personal appreciation of faithfulness as a Christian value, willingness to practice faithful and responsible behavior. All instruments underwent expert judgment validation involving

specialists in Christian Religious Education and educational measurement to ensure content relevance and theological accuracy. Instrument reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum acceptable coefficient of 0.70 indicating satisfactory internal consistency (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Items failing to meet validity or reliability standards were revised prior to field administration. All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of 0.05. Through this methodological framework, the study aims to generate empirically grounded insights into how CRE teacher personality reflection contributes to students' understanding of God's faithfulness in the elementary school context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide a comprehensive picture of how the personality competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu, Simalungun, functions in relation to students' understanding of God's faithfulness to Abraham as presented in Genesis 15:18. Because the school context involves a relatively small but fully accessible population, 68 Christian students taught by a single CRE teacher, the findings offer a particularly focused lens on the relational and character-forming dynamics of faith-based instruction in Indonesian public elementary education. The descriptive statistical analysis indicates that the teacher's personality competence is generally perceived by students to be in the high category. Across the measured indicators, moral integrity, emotional stability, consistency, wisdom, exemplary behavior, and demonstrated faithfulness in professional duties, the mean scores consistently fall within the upper range of the Likert scale. Students most strongly affirmed the teacher's consistency and responsibility in fulfilling instructional duties, followed closely by perceptions of honesty and fairness in classroom interactions. Slightly lower, though still positive, scores appeared in the dimension of emotional expressiveness and reflective dialogue, suggesting room for further relational deepening even within an overall strong personality profile. These descriptive findings are pedagogically significant. In elementary education, particularly within CRE contexts, teacher personality functions not merely as a background variable but as an active instructional medium. The strong student perception of teacher consistency appears to align closely with the theological theme of Genesis 15:18, which emphasizes God's unwavering covenant commitment to Abraham. When teachers demonstrate reliability, such as punctuality, follow-through on promises, and fair enforcement of classroom rules, students are exposed to lived analogies of faithfulness that make the biblical narrative more concrete. This supports the theoretical position that moral and spiritual learning in children is heavily mediated through modeled behavior rather than abstract explanation alone (Lickona, 2012).

Turning to the dependent variable, the descriptive results for students' understanding of God's faithfulness also fall within the moderate-to-high category. Cognitive test scores indicate that most students can accurately recount the basic narrative elements of Genesis 15:18, including God's covenant promise to Abraham and the symbolic significance of the land promise. Performance is strongest in factual recall and narrative sequencing, where a large majority of students demonstrate correct responses. However, scores are comparatively lower, though still satisfactory, in items requiring theological

interpretation and personal application. For example, while many students can state that God is faithful, fewer can articulate how divine faithfulness should influence their own daily behavior, such as keeping promises, completing responsibilities, or remaining loyal to commitments. This pattern reflects a common developmental trajectory in elementary religious education, where cognitive recognition often precedes deeper moral internalization (Santrock, 2011). The student perception questionnaire further enriches this picture. Most students report that the CRE teacher frequently connects biblical stories to real-life situations and models faithful behavior in classroom routines. High percentages of agreement appear in items related to teacher trustworthiness, fairness in grading, and consistency in discipline. Notably, students who rated the teacher highly on these relational dimensions also tended to achieve higher scores on the faithfulness understanding test. This pattern is statistically confirmed through the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis, which reveals a significant positive relationship between teacher personality competence and students' understanding of God's faithfulness ($p < .05$). The strength of the correlation falls within the moderate-to-strong range, indicating that while teacher personality is not the sole determinant of student learning, it constitutes a meaningful contributing factor.

The regression analysis provides further insight into the predictive power of teacher personality. The results indicate that teacher personality competence explains a substantial proportion of the variance in students' faithfulness understanding scores. In practical terms, this means that improvements in observable teacher personality traits, such as consistency, emotional maturity, and moral modeling, are likely to be accompanied by measurable gains in students' grasp of biblical faithfulness. However, the regression model also shows that a significant portion of variance remains unexplained, pointing to the influence of additional factors such as family religious environment, peer culture, student developmental differences, and instructional time allocation. This finding is consistent with broader educational research emphasizing the multifactorial nature of character formation. One of the most noteworthy findings of this study is the particularly strong association between teacher consistency and student moral interpretation. Among the personality indicators, consistency in behavior and responsibility shows the highest correlation with students' ability to explain the meaning of God's covenant faithfulness. This suggests that for elementary learners, reliability may serve as the most cognitively accessible bridge between human experience and theological abstraction. When students repeatedly observe their teacher keeping commitments, arriving on time, returning graded work as promised, and applying rules fairly, they appear better able to grasp the biblical portrayal of God as one who keeps His covenant. This aligns with Wright's (2004) argument that Old Testament covenant theology becomes pedagogically powerful when linked to lived relational patterns rather than treated solely as doctrinal content. Another important dimension emerging from the data concerns emotional stability and classroom climate. Students generally perceive the teacher as patient and self-controlled, which contributes to a classroom atmosphere characterized by psychological safety and trust. Such an environment is especially important for moral and spiritual discussion, where students must feel secure enough to reflect on personal responsibility and honesty. Although the emotional stability indicator scores high overall, qualitative patterns within the questionnaire responses suggest that interactive reflective dialogue could still be

strengthened. Some students indicate that while the teacher is kind and fair, opportunities for deeper personal sharing about faithfulness are somewhat limited by time constraints and structured lesson formats. This points to a pedagogical opportunity: enhancing dialogical space may help move students from cognitive recognition of faithfulness toward more personal moral ownership. The small-school context of SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu also plays a significant interpretive role in these findings. With only one CRE teacher serving the entire Christian student population, the teacher's personality influence is unusually concentrated. Unlike larger schools where multiple teachers and varied instructional styles diffuse relational impact, this setting creates a high-dependency instructional ecology. On the positive side, this concentration allows for strong relational continuity; students experience a consistent moral voice across grade levels. The high ratings of teacher trustworthiness likely reflect this sustained relational exposure. However, the same concentration also presents structural risks. Any limitations in instructional variation, reflective pedagogy, or emotional engagement may be amplified because students have fewer alternative relational models within the CRE program. Therefore, the generally positive findings should be interpreted alongside the need for ongoing professional support to prevent pedagogical stagnation. The findings affirm that teaching Genesis 15:18 in elementary contexts is most effective when covenant theology is embodied through teacher character. Students in this study show the strongest understanding where the narrative of divine faithfulness is explicitly linked to observable teacher behavior. This supports Van Brummelen's (2009) view that Christian teaching is inherently incarnational; biblical truth is mediated through the lived witness of the educator. The CRE teacher in this setting appears to function not only as an information transmitter but also as a relational signpost pointing students toward the meaning of faithfulness. The data also reveal a developmental ceiling that warrants attention. While students demonstrate solid narrative comprehension, the transition from knowing that "God is faithful" to personally practicing faithfulness remains incomplete for a portion of the sample. This gap suggests that personality modeling, while necessary, is not sufficient by itself. More structured reflective strategies, such as guided moral dilemmas, journaling about keeping promises, and role-playing covenant scenarios, may help deepen internalization. Additionally, collaboration with parents and the wider school culture could reinforce the value across contexts, addressing the unexplained variance noted in the regression results.

The results of this study confirm that the personality competence of the CRE teacher at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu plays a significant and constructive role in shaping students' understanding of God's faithfulness in Genesis 15:18. High levels of perceived teacher integrity, consistency, and emotional stability correspond with moderately high levels of student cognitive and affective grasp of faithfulness. The statistically significant correlation and meaningful regression contribution underscore the importance of personality as a pedagogical asset in Christian education. At the same time, the findings highlight the need for deeper reflective pedagogy and broader ecological support to move students from narrative familiarity toward fully internalized faithful living. These insights contribute to the growing body of research emphasizing that in elementary CRE settings, who the teacher is remains inseparable from what the teacher teaches.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the personality competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE/PAK) teacher in relation to students' understanding of God's faithfulness to Abraham based on Genesis 15:18 at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu, Simalungun. Drawing on quantitative data from 68 Christian students and supported by focused teacher analysis, the findings yield several important conclusions for the development of faith-based instruction in Indonesian primary schools. The overall personality competence of the CRE teacher is perceived to be in the high category. The teacher demonstrates strong moral integrity, behavioral consistency, emotional stability, responsibility, and exemplary conduct in classroom practice. These qualities reflect the expected standards of teacher personality competence within Indonesian professional frameworks and affirm the teacher's role as a credible moral and spiritual model for elementary learners. The consistency of positive student perceptions suggests that the teacher's character is not only formally adequate but also relationally visible and meaningful to students in daily learning interactions. Students' understanding of God's faithfulness to Abraham (Genesis 15:18) is generally categorized as moderate to high. Most students are able to recall the biblical narrative accurately and recognize the central theme of divine promise and faithfulness. However, their ability to interpret the deeper theological meaning of covenant faithfulness and to translate this value into personal behavioral commitments remains comparatively less developed. This finding confirms that while narrative transmission in CRE is functioning effectively, the movement from cognitive recognition to internalized moral application still requires pedagogical strengthening. The study demonstrates a statistically significant and positive relationship between the teacher's personality competence and students' understanding of biblical faithfulness. The correlation and regression analyses indicate that teacher personality contributes meaningfully to students' moral and theological learning outcomes. In particular, the dimensions of consistency, integrity, and responsible behavior appear to serve as the most powerful mediating bridges between the abstract concept of God's covenant faithfulness and students' concrete learning experiences. These findings reinforce the theoretical perspective that in Christian education, teacher character functions as a living curriculum through which biblical truths are interpreted by young learners. Although the influence of teacher personality is substantial, it does not operate in isolation. A considerable portion of variance in students' understanding remains explained by other ecological factors, including family religious formation, peer environment, developmental readiness, and instructional time. This highlights the importance of viewing Christian Religious Education within a broader formative ecosystem rather than attributing student outcomes solely to classroom variables. The small-school context, with only one CRE teacher, further underscores the need for sustained professional support to maintain and enhance instructional quality. Based on these findings, several implications emerge. CRE teachers are encouraged to continue strengthening reflective and dialogical pedagogies that help students move beyond narrative recall toward personal appropriation of faithfulness values. Schools should support ongoing professional development focused on personality formation, relational pedagogy, and meaning-centered biblical teaching. Future research is recommended to employ mixed-method or longitudinal approaches to capture more fully the ecological dynamics influencing students' spiritual learning. This

study affirms that the personality competence of the CRE teacher at SDN 091628 Bandar Buntu is a significant and constructive predictor of students' understanding of God's faithfulness in Genesis 15:18. Strengthening teacher personality alongside pedagogical depth represents a strategic pathway for enhancing both the academic quality and the spiritual formation impact of Christian Religious Education in Indonesian elementary schools.

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