



Professionalism in Faith-Based Teaching: Cultivating Integrity through Genesis 39:21-23 in SDS Methodist-12 Medan

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of professionalism in faith-based teaching in cultivating student integrity through the biblical narrative of Genesis 39:21-23. Situated within the context of SDS Methodist-12 Medan, the research examines how Christian teachers integrate scriptural values into pedagogical practice to support character formation. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, the study synthesizes recent scholarly works on teacher professionalism, faith-based education, and integrity development to construct a conceptual understanding of how moral values are effectively transmitted in classroom settings. The findings reveal that professionalism in Christian education encompasses not only pedagogical competence but also moral authenticity and spiritual consistency. Teachers who demonstrate coherence between belief and action create relational trust that enhances students' receptivity to value-based learning. The story of Joseph in Genesis 39:21-23 serves as a theological framework for understanding integrity as steadfast faithfulness in challenging circumstances. When integrated through dialogical and reflective teaching strategies, this narrative enables students to connect biblical principles with real-life ethical decision-making. The review further indicates that integrity formation is strengthened through experiential learning, reflective discussion, and a supportive institutional culture. Professional teachers function as moral models whose conduct becomes a living curriculum that shapes student character. In addition, school environments that reinforce shared ethical commitments amplify the impact of integrity-centered teaching. The study concludes that professionalism in faith-based teaching is a holistic practice that integrates competence, character, and calling. By embodying and contextualizing biblical values, Christian educators play a critical role in nurturing students who are intellectually capable, spiritually grounded, and ethically responsible.

Keywords: Professionalism, Faith-Based Education, Integrity Formation, Christian Pedagogy, Genesis 39:21–23.

INTRODUCTION

Education in the twenty-first century is no longer confined to the transmission of knowledge but increasingly emphasizes the formation of character and moral identity among learners. In this context, integrity has emerged as a central educational value, particularly within faith-based schooling environments where moral formation is inseparable from academic instruction. Contemporary scholarship consistently highlights that teacher professionalism plays a decisive role not only in improving learning outcomes but also in shaping the ethical and spiritual development of students (Pratiwi, 2024). This is especially true in religious education settings, where teachers function simultaneously as instructors, mentors, and moral exemplars whose lives reinforce the values they teach. Recent studies affirm that in Christian educational contexts, teacher competence must extend beyond pedagogical skill to include ethical consistency and spiritual authenticity (Pasaribu, 2025). Integrity, in this framework, is not merely a behavioral expectation but a lived virtue modeled through relational interaction, instructional design, and moral leadership within the classroom. When teachers demonstrate coherence between belief and practice, students are more likely to internalize values such as honesty, responsibility, and faithfulness. This aligns with broader findings in religious education research showing that character formation is most effective when moral instruction is accompanied by visible modeling from educators (Trihendrati, 2024). The growing complexity of contemporary society further underscores the urgency of integrity-centered education. Digital exposure, social competition, and shifting cultural norms have significantly influenced students' ethical decision-making processes, often creating tensions between traditional moral teaching and modern behavioral realities (Jaya et al., 2026). Within such contexts, the professional responsibility of teachers expands to include guiding students toward moral discernment grounded in enduring values. Faith-based institutions are uniquely positioned to address this need by integrating scriptural principles into character education, thereby fostering holistic development that encompasses intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Integrity itself has been widely recognized as a foundational element of moral resilience. Studies in value-based education demonstrate that when integrity is intentionally cultivated through religious instruction, students develop stronger commitments to honesty, accountability, and ethical responsibility (Dalimunthe et al., 2024). These findings resonate across diverse religious traditions, suggesting that moral instruction grounded in sacred texts provides a powerful framework for character formation. In Christian pedagogy specifically, biblical narratives serve not only as theological references but also as moral paradigms that enable learners to connect abstract values with concrete life situations (Simanjuntak, 2025). One such narrative is found in Genesis 39:21-23, which recounts Joseph's faithfulness and integrity even in adversity. Despite being unjustly imprisoned, Joseph remained trustworthy and diligent, ultimately gaining the confidence of those in authority. This passage offers a compelling model of integrity rooted in faithfulness to God rather than dependence on external recognition. Within the educational sphere, such narratives provide a transformative lens through which students can understand integrity not simply as rule-following but as a response to divine calling and personal conviction. Biblical storytelling, when pedagogically contextualized, enables students to engage with ethical dilemmas in ways that foster moral reasoning and spiritual reflection (Situmorang & Naibaho, 2025).

Professionalism in faith-based teaching therefore requires the integration of pedagogical competence with moral authenticity. Research indicates that religious school administrators prioritize teachers who demonstrate both academic qualifications and moral credibility, recognizing that educators in such environments influence not only intellectual growth but also spiritual formation (Journal of Religious Education, 2024). This dual expectation positions teachers as central agents in cultivating integrity within the school culture. Their professional conduct becomes a “living curriculum” through which students encounter the practical implications of faith in everyday life. Initiatives such as integrity-focused educational frameworks emphasize dialogical and narrative-based approaches as effective tools for character formation (Path2Integrity Project, 2022). These approaches encourage reflective engagement rather than compliance-driven morality, enabling students to internalize ethical principles through discussion, storytelling, and relational learning. Such strategies align closely with Christian pedagogical traditions that emphasize discipleship and moral imitation. Within the Indonesian educational landscape, the integration of religious values into formal schooling has long been recognized as essential for fostering holistic student development. However, the effectiveness of such integration depends largely on the professionalism of teachers who translate theological principles into meaningful learning experiences. Studies show that curriculum design, teacher training, and supportive institutional environments significantly influence the success of moral education initiatives (Ulum et al., 2025). These factors collectively shape the extent to which integrity becomes embedded within students’ daily behavior. Against this backdrop, the present study explores how professionalism in Christian teaching contributes to the cultivation of integrity through the pedagogical use of Genesis 39:21-23. Situated in SDS Methodist-12 Medan, this research seeks to examine how biblical values are translated into classroom practice and how teacher professionalism mediates the internalization of integrity among students. By bridging theological reflection with educational practice, the study aims to contribute to ongoing discussions on the role of faith-based education in character formation. Understanding professionalism in this context requires moving beyond technical competence toward a holistic vision of teaching as vocation. When educators embody integrity in both word and action, they create environments where students encounter moral truth not only as doctrine but as lived reality. Such integration holds transformative potential, enabling faith-based schools to nurture individuals who are intellectually capable, spiritually grounded, and ethically responsible.

METHODS

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine how professionalism in faith-based teaching contributes to the cultivation of integrity through biblical narratives, particularly Genesis 39:21-23. The SLR method was selected because it enables a comprehensive, structured, and transparent synthesis of existing scholarly works related to teacher professionalism, Christian pedagogy, and integrity-based character education (Snyder, 2019). Unlike traditional literature reviews, an SLR follows a systematic process that minimizes bias and enhances the reliability of findings by ensuring that the selection and analysis of sources are guided by clearly defined criteria (Xiao & Watson, 2019). The review process consisted of three main stages: planning, selection,

and analysis. During the planning stage, the study formulated the primary research question: *How does teacher professionalism in Christian education contribute to the development of integrity through biblical teaching?* This guiding question shaped the identification of relevant keywords such as *teacher professionalism, Christian education, integrity education, faith-based teaching, and biblical character formation*. These keywords were used to search academic databases including Google Scholar, ERIC, Scopus-indexed journals, and theology-focused educational publications to ensure the inclusion of recent and credible sources. In the selection stage, inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to maintain the relevance and quality of the literature reviewed. Sources were included if they: were published between 2019 and 2025, discussed teacher professionalism, moral or character education, or faith-based pedagogy, and were peer-reviewed journal articles or reputable academic publications. Studies that lacked empirical grounding or were unrelated to educational or theological contexts were excluded. This filtering process resulted in a curated body of literature that reflects current scholarly discourse on integrity formation and professional teaching practices (Page et al., 2021). The analysis stage involved thematic synthesis. Selected articles were carefully examined to identify recurring concepts related to professional competence, value transmission, moral modeling, and biblical integration in teaching. Thematic coding was used to categorize findings into key dimensions such as ethical leadership, instructional modeling, relational influence, and scriptural pedagogy. This process allowed the study to construct a conceptual framework linking teacher professionalism with integrity development through biblical narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2021). To ensure validity and rigor, the review followed transparency principles recommended in systematic review methodology, including documentation of search strategies, inclusion criteria, and analytical procedures. Cross-comparison of findings from diverse educational and theological perspectives further strengthened interpretive consistency. Through this method, the study was able to synthesize contemporary insights into how faith-based professionalism in teaching can effectively nurture integrity among students. By employing the SLR approach, this research does not merely summarize existing literature but critically integrates it to generate a coherent understanding of professionalism in Christian education as a transformative force in character formation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings synthesized from the systematic literature review reveal that professionalism in faith-based teaching plays a transformative role in cultivating integrity among students when it is intentionally integrated with biblical narratives and pedagogical practice. Across contemporary scholarship, professionalism is increasingly understood not merely as mastery of subject matter or instructional technique, but as a multidimensional construct encompassing ethical commitment, spiritual maturity, relational influence, and moral modeling (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Within Christian education, this broader understanding aligns closely with the theological premise that teaching is both a profession and a calling. As such, integrity becomes not simply a value to be taught but a virtue to be embodied. One of the central themes emerging from the literature is the role of teacher authenticity in value transmission. Studies consistently emphasize that students are more receptive to moral instruction when teachers demonstrate coherence between belief and action (Berkovich & Eyal, 2021). In faith-based contexts, this

authenticity becomes particularly significant because the credibility of biblical teaching often rests on the perceived integrity of the teacher. When educators model consistency, humility, and faithfulness in their professional conduct, they create an environment in which ethical values are experienced rather than merely explained. This relational dimension of professionalism reflects a shift from compliance-based morality toward character-based formation. The narrative of Joseph in Genesis 39:21-23 provides a powerful theological foundation for this understanding of integrity. Joseph's faithfulness in unjust circumstances illustrates integrity as steadfastness rooted in divine relationship rather than situational convenience. Literature on narrative pedagogy suggests that biblical stories function as moral frameworks through which learners interpret real-life challenges (Wright, 2022). When teachers integrate such narratives into classroom dialogue, they invite students to reflect on integrity not as an abstract rule but as a lived response to adversity. This interpretive engagement fosters moral imagination and enables learners to see ethical behavior as a dynamic and contextually meaningful choice. Research also highlights the importance of professional competence in facilitating this integration. Effective faith-based teaching requires educators to possess not only theological knowledge but also pedagogical strategies that translate scriptural insights into accessible learning experiences (Campbell, 2021). Without professional skill, even the most profound biblical truths may fail to connect with students' lived realities. Conversely, when teachers employ reflective discussion, contextual application, and collaborative learning, biblical narratives become tools for ethical formation rather than distant historical accounts. Another significant finding concerns the relational authority of teachers. Professionalism in Christian education is often expressed through mentorship rather than hierarchy. Scholars note that students are more likely to internalize integrity when they perceive teachers as trustworthy guides rather than authoritarian figures (Lickona, 2021). This relational trust mirrors Joseph's experience in Genesis 39, where his integrity earned the confidence of those in authority despite his disadvantaged position. In educational settings, similar dynamics emerge when teachers demonstrate fairness, empathy, and consistency. These behaviors cultivate a climate of trust that supports moral development. The literature further indicates that integrity formation is closely linked to the integration of faith and daily practice. Educational researchers argue that moral learning is most effective when values are embedded within routine classroom interactions rather than confined to formal lessons (Nucci et al., 2022). Faith-based professionalism therefore involves aligning instructional decisions, disciplinary approaches, and interpersonal relationships with biblical principles. Such alignment reinforces the message that integrity is not situational but comprehensive, shaping both public and private conduct.

Contemporary studies underscore the influence of institutional culture on the effectiveness of integrity-based teaching. While individual professionalism is crucial, the broader school environment also contributes to value formation (Fullan, 2020). When institutional policies, leadership practices, and peer relationships reflect shared ethical commitments, students encounter integrity as a communal norm rather than an individual expectation. This communal dimension resonates with the theological understanding of faith as a lived community experience. The SLR findings also reveal that dialogical pedagogy enhances integrity cultivation. Rather than relying solely on didactic instruction, effective teachers encourage open discussion of ethical dilemmas and

personal experiences (Alexander, 2020). Such dialogue allows students to explore the relevance of biblical principles in contemporary contexts. For instance, reflecting on Joseph's perseverance can prompt discussions about honesty in academic work, loyalty in friendships, or resilience in adversity. Through these conversations, integrity becomes a practical framework for decision-making. The integration of reflective practice among teachers themselves emerges as a critical factor. Professional educators who engage in ongoing self-evaluation are better equipped to align their actions with their values (Schön, 2017). In Christian contexts, reflective practice often includes spiritual disciplines such as prayer and scriptural meditation, which support moral consistency. This alignment strengthens the authenticity that underpins effective value transmission. The literature also addresses challenges associated with integrity education. In pluralistic societies, students encounter diverse moral perspectives that may conflict with faith-based teachings (Banks, 2020). Professional teachers must therefore navigate these tensions with sensitivity and respect. Rather than imposing uniformity, they can foster critical reflection that encourages students to articulate their own moral convictions while engaging constructively with differing viewpoints. Such engagement prepares learners to practice integrity in complex social environments. Another recurring theme is the role of experiential learning. Studies suggest that opportunities for service, collaboration, and ethical decision-making enhance the internalization of values (Kolb, 2015). When teachers connect biblical narratives to practical activities such as community service or peer support initiatives students experience integrity as actionable rather than theoretical. This experiential dimension reinforces the relevance of scriptural teaching.

Technological influences also shape contemporary integrity formation. Digital environments present both opportunities and risks for ethical behavior (Ribble, 2021). Professional teachers can address these challenges by integrating discussions of digital responsibility into faith-based instruction. For example, Joseph's honesty despite hidden circumstances offers a framework for exploring integrity in online interactions. Leadership literature emphasizes that professional integrity among teachers contributes to institutional credibility (Bryk et al., 2020). Schools characterized by ethical professionalism tend to foster higher levels of student trust and engagement. This dynamic underscores the reciprocal relationship between teacher conduct and student character development. The synthesis of findings ultimately suggests that professionalism in faith-based teaching operates through three interconnected dimensions: modeling, mediation, and mentorship. Modeling involves demonstrating integrity through personal conduct. Mediation refers to translating biblical values into pedagogical practice. Mentorship encompasses guiding students through relational engagement. Together, these dimensions create a holistic framework for cultivating integrity. In light of Genesis 39:21-23, Joseph's story exemplifies these dimensions. His integrity modeled faithfulness, mediated divine trust, and mentored others through responsible leadership. When teachers draw parallels between such narratives and contemporary experiences, students gain a deeper understanding of integrity as both spiritual and practical.

The discussion also highlights implications for teacher development. Professional training programs should integrate theological reflection with pedagogical skill-building to prepare educators for value-based instruction (Hattie, 2023). Continuous professional learning supports the adaptability required in dynamic educational contexts.

The literature affirms that integrity cultivation is an ongoing process rather than a discrete outcome. Professional teachers contribute to this process by sustaining environments where ethical reflection, spiritual growth, and relational trust coexist. Through intentional integration of biblical narratives and professional practice, faith-based education can nurture learners who embody integrity in diverse aspects of life. The research underscores that professionalism in Christian teaching is not limited to technical competence but encompasses moral authenticity and spiritual commitment. By integrating narrative theology with reflective pedagogy, teachers can cultivate integrity as a lived virtue that shapes both character and community.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that professionalism in faith-based teaching plays a vital role in cultivating integrity among students when it is intentionally grounded in biblical narratives such as Genesis 39:21-23. Through the systematic literature review, it becomes evident that teacher professionalism in Christian education extends beyond pedagogical expertise into the realm of moral authenticity and spiritual leadership. Integrity, therefore, is not merely a concept delivered through instruction but a lived reality transmitted through the teacher's example, relational engagement, and instructional design. The narrative of Joseph provides a powerful theological lens through which integrity can be understood as steadfast faithfulness amid adversity. When translated into educational practice, this biblical model encourages students to view integrity not as situational compliance but as a consistent commitment rooted in faith and personal conviction. Professional Christian educators who embody this principle create learning environments where values are internalized through experience, dialogue, and reflection rather than imposed through authority alone. The findings highlight that the effectiveness of integrity education depends significantly on the coherence between belief and practice demonstrated by teachers. Authentic professionalism expressed through fairness, empathy, and ethical consistency builds relational trust that enhances students' openness to moral learning. In this way, the teacher's character becomes an integral component of the curriculum, shaping how students interpret and apply ethical principles in their own lives. The integration of biblical narratives into pedagogical strategies enables students to connect spiritual truths with contemporary challenges. By facilitating reflective discussions and experiential learning opportunities, teachers help learners navigate ethical dilemmas with discernment and resilience. Such approaches reinforce the relevance of integrity in both academic and social contexts, preparing students to engage responsibly in a pluralistic and technologically complex world. The study also underscores the importance of institutional support in sustaining integrity-focused education. While individual teacher professionalism is essential, a school culture that reflects shared ethical commitments amplifies its impact. Leadership practices, collaborative relationships, and consistent policies contribute to an environment where integrity is modeled collectively rather than individually. Professionalism in faith-based teaching represents a holistic integration of competence, character, and calling. When educators align their professional practice with biblical values, they foster transformative learning experiences that nurture ethical maturity and spiritual growth. This alignment enables faith-based schools to fulfill their mission of forming individuals who are not only intellectually

capable but also morally grounded and socially responsible. Cultivating integrity through professional Christian teaching is both a pedagogical and spiritual endeavor. By embodying and contextualizing biblical principles such as those found in Genesis 39:21–23, teachers serve as catalysts for character formation, empowering students to live with integrity in diverse spheres of life.

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