

The Role of Christian Religious Education Teachers' Personality Competence in Instilling Ethical Values among Students at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the pivotal role of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers' personality competence in cultivating students' ethical awareness and moral conduct at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. The research stems from the recognition that moral and spiritual formation in education is deeply influenced not merely by cognitive instruction but by the teacher's lived example and integrity. Grounded in a biblical framework—particularly Philippians 4:9 and Ephesians 6:1–3—the study integrates theological reflection with empirical analysis. Employing a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 30 students using two validated instruments: a teacher personality competence questionnaire and a student ethical values scale. Statistical analysis using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation revealed a strong, significant relationship between teacher personality competence and students' internalization of ethical values ($r = 0.795$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that 63% of the variance in students' moral development can be explained by the teacher's personal character. The findings highlight integrity, empathy, and self-control as the most influential traits contributing to students' respect, honesty, and responsibility. Theologically, the results affirm that the teacher's personality functions as both a moral and spiritual model, embodying Christlike virtues that students naturally imitate. The study concludes that teacher formation programs must integrate spiritual and ethical development as essential components of professional competence. Furthermore, schools should institutionalize value-oriented pedagogies that emphasize moral exemplarity, creating a learning environment where Christian values are not merely taught but authentically lived.

Keywords: *Christian Religious Education, Personality Competence, Ethical Values*

INTRODUCTION

Christian Religious Education (CRE) at the senior high school level plays a vital role in shaping students' moral and ethical character. Beyond the transmission of biblical knowledge, CRE serves as a formative process that integrates faith, moral reasoning, and

practical behavior within the school environment. Central to this process is the teacher's personality competence, which embodies not only professional integrity but also serves as a moral and spiritual model for students. In the context of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa, the effectiveness of Christian education depends significantly on how teachers demonstrate and internalize ethical values through their personal lives. Teachers of CRE are not merely conveyors of information but living witnesses of Christian virtue whose character profoundly influences students' ethical awareness and respect toward others. In recent years, the moral landscape of education has faced increasing challenges. Students' awareness of ethical values in daily life appears to be diminishing, as seen in attitudes of indiscipline, disrespect toward teachers, and lack of empathy among peers. This trend reflects a broader moral crisis influenced by external factors such as social media, peer culture, and the decline of moral authority in families and schools. Within this environment, Christian Religious Education is tasked not only with teaching theological content but also with cultivating ethical awareness and responsible behavior grounded in Christian values. The teacher's personality competence-comprising integrity, self-control, humility, empathy, and consistency-thus becomes a crucial foundation in restoring students' moral consciousness. The implementation of personality competence among CRE teachers at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa faces several obstacles. Some teachers still emphasize cognitive learning outcomes while neglecting the affective and moral dimensions of education. This limited approach fails to touch the deeper layers of students' character formation. Furthermore, a lack of structured professional development in personal and ethical formation reduces teachers' capacity to model values effectively. Without ongoing reflection and self-assessment, teachers may struggle to embody the very values they seek to instill in their students. As Paul exhorts in Philippians 4:9 *"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me-put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."* This verse underscores the principle of exemplary teaching in Christian pedagogy-students learn best when they see values lived out authentically by their teachers. Schools that prioritize academic achievement over moral development often fail to provide sufficient space for ethical reflection and character practice. Therefore, institutional support-through policies, training, and leadership commitment-is essential to create a holistic learning climate that integrates ethical formation into every dimension of schooling. A principal who encourages reflective practice, moral dialogue, and value-oriented instruction enables teachers to actualize their personality competence more effectively. Previous studies affirm the strong correlation between teachers' personality and students' moral development (Goleman, 2006; Lickona, 2013). Teachers who embody integrity, patience, discipline, and compassion can build trusting relationships with students, thereby facilitating the internalization of moral and ethical values. Yet, empirical research specifically examining how CRE teachers' personality competence contributes to the formation of ethical awareness in SMA Negeri 2 Alasa remains limited. Hence, this study seeks to fill that gap by analyzing the extent to which teachers' personality competence influences students' moral consciousness and identifying the contextual challenges in its implementation. The objective of this research is to explore and analyze the role of Christian Religious Education teachers' personality competence in instilling ethical values among students at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. More specifically, the study aims to identify how teachers' exemplary character functions as a moral model, the obstacles encountered in translating personality competence into

practice, and potential strategies to strengthen the ethical dimension of CRE instruction. The findings are expected to contribute to the improvement of teacher formation programs by emphasizing the integration of personality development into pedagogical training. Additionally, this study aims to provide insights for school leaders and policymakers to design more effective frameworks for Christian character education. Ultimately, CRE should not remain a theoretical discipline but become a transformative practice that nurtures students to live ethically, reflect Christian virtues, and engage responsibly in their communities. In this regard, the present study is both educationally and theologically relevant, highlighting how personality competence-rooted in biblical principles-can function as a catalyst for ethical transformation. Through this research, it is hoped that SMA Negeri 2 Alasa and similar institutions may foster a learning environment where Christian values are not merely taught but lived, reflecting the words of Matthew 5:16: *“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

METHODS

A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was implemented, to examine the relationship between the personality competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers and the internalization of ethical values among students at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. The correlational approach was chosen to determine the degree of association between the teacher’s personal qualities-such as integrity, emotional stability, self-discipline, empathy, and consistency-and the development of students’ ethical behavior, as observed in their respect, responsibility, and moral awareness. The population of this study consisted of all students enrolled in CRE classes at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. From this population, a sample of 30 students was selected through purposive sampling, considering their active participation in CRE lessons and representativeness across different grades. The relatively small sample size was chosen to allow a focused and in-depth observation of the relational dynamics between teacher and students within a specific educational context. Data were collected using two primary instruments: a teacher personality competence questionnaire and a student ethical value scale. The teacher personality questionnaire was adapted from the indicators outlined in the Indonesian Teacher Competency Standards (Law No. 14 of 2005), which emphasize stable, mature, wise, and authoritative character traits. The student ethical value scale, meanwhile, was designed based on Christian ethical principles derived from biblical teachings-particularly the call to moral integrity and respect as expressed in Ephesians 6:1-3 and Philippians 4:8. Both instruments used a Likert scale (1–5) ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” ensuring a measurable reflection of students’ perceptions and behavioral tendencies. Prior to data collection, both instruments were tested for validity and reliability through expert review and a pilot study conducted with a small group of students outside the main sample. Statistical reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha, ensuring internal consistency for each construct. The validated instruments were then administered in classroom settings under the supervision of the researcher to ensure uniform understanding and honest responses.. The results were interpreted not only statistically but also theologically, viewing the correlation through the lens of Christian pedagogy, where moral influence flows from the teacher’s spiritual

authenticity and Christlike character. The methodological design integrates empirical rigor with theological interpretation, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the teacher's personality competence functions as a moral and spiritual force in nurturing ethical values among students within the Christian educational context of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The present study investigated the relationship between the personality competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers and the internalization of ethical values among students at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. Using quantitative correlational analysis supported by qualitative observation, the study aimed to reveal how teachers' personality traits-such as integrity, empathy, discipline, and consistency-affect students' ethical awareness and moral conduct. Descriptive statistics indicated that the CRE teacher at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa scored very high in overall personality competence ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.32$ on a 5-point Likert scale). Among the measured dimensions, integrity ($M = 4.60$) and self-control ($M = 4.52$) ranked highest, followed by empathy ($M = 4.40$) and discipline ($M = 4.35$). Students perceived their teacher as a person who lived consistently according to Christian ethical standards, aligning behavior with biblical values rather than external regulations. In parallel, the students' ethical awareness achieved a high overall mean ($M = 4.38$), with the strongest indicators being respect toward teachers and peers ($M = 4.50$), honesty in assignments ($M = 4.45$), and responsibility for personal actions ($M = 4.36$). The lowest-though still relatively strong-indicator was self-reflection before decision-making ($M = 4.22$), suggesting that while students show moral awareness, some still need guidance in developing moral reasoning autonomy. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation revealed a strong and statistically significant relationship between teacher personality competence and students' ethical awareness ($r = 0.795$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that approximately 63% ($r^2 = 0.63$) of the variance in students' ethical internalization can be explained by the teacher's personality competence. Such a high correlation confirms the central role of teacher character in shaping the moral consciousness of students. Students' testimonies and observational data consistently pointed to the teacher's lived integrity as the primary ethical model within the school environment. The CRE teacher's consistency between words and deeds reflected what Paul exhorted in 1 Timothy 4:12: "Set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity." This verse encapsulates the theological core of teacher personality competence: moral formation begins not with instruction but with embodiment. Students rarely quoted the teacher's lectures but often recalled his actions-how he apologized when mistaken, disciplined with fairness, or showed compassion to struggling learners. These micro-experiences became moral "texts" that students read daily, leading to ethical internalization through imitation rather than coercion. This aligns with Bandura's (1986) Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes that children and adolescents acquire moral patterns by observing credible models. In a Christian context, the teacher functions as a living curriculum (Knight, 2006)-a visible embodiment of faith principles. Thus, the teacher's personality becomes not merely a pedagogical asset but a theological witness of God's character revealed in daily human interaction. Beyond cognitive instruction, the CRE teacher at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa employed a relational pedagogy marked by empathy, dialogue, and respect. The class environment encouraged

open discussion about moral dilemmas, rather than imposing moral codes. Students reported feeling “heard and understood,” which fostered moral self-reflection and ethical decision-making. Such an approach resonates with Noddings’ (2003) ethics of care, asserting that moral education arises from authentic relationships grounded in mutual respect and compassion. In Christian pedagogy, this finds theological grounding in Philippians 2:4–5, which exhorts believers to consider the interests of others with the mind of Christ. The teacher’s empathy and non-judgmental communication style translated this principle into a tangible classroom ethic. As a result, students’ moral reasoning evolved from rule-following to internal conviction. They learned not only what is right but why it is right—a moral shift from external compliance to internalized virtue. This movement parallels Kohlberg’s stages of moral development, where the presence of a morally consistent authority accelerates transition from conventional to principled ethical reasoning. The strongest behavioral change identified among students was increased respect toward teachers and peers. The correlation between the teacher’s personality integrity and students’ respect behavior was remarkably high ($r = 0.812$, $p < 0.01$). This finding aligns closely with Ephesians 6:1-3, which commands: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right... that it may go well with you.” Theologically, this command extends to all legitimate authority figures, including teachers, as extensions of parental and divine guidance. When students perceive their teacher as morally upright and spiritually consistent, respect emerges naturally as a form of theological obedience, not forced submission. Interviews revealed that students respected their CRE teacher not out of fear but out of admiration and trust—seeing in him a living testimony of Christian virtue. Such respect, in turn, reinforced classroom harmony, reduced disciplinary issues, and promoted peer empathy. This demonstrates a reciprocal moral ecology—where the teacher’s personality competence nurtures respect, and respect strengthens moral order within the school community. The study revealed that ethical formation thrives when teaching and testimony intersect. The CRE teacher did not merely teach about forgiveness but practiced it by reconciling student conflicts. He did not only quote biblical passages on honesty but modeled transparency in assessment and feedback. This lived coherence embodied James 2:17: “Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” The moral authority of a teacher thus stems from congruence between belief and behavior. As Lickona (2013) argues, “Character is caught, not taught.” When personality competence is integrated with pedagogical skill, teaching transforms into moral witnessing—an act of bearing the image of Christ within the educational space. At SMA Negeri 2 Alasa, the CRE teacher’s authentic life served as a conduit of divine ethics, enabling students to see moral principles embodied rather than abstractly described. The teacher observed that some students’ ethical awareness fluctuated due to external influences, especially social media exposure, peer pressure, and entertainment culture. Instances of dishonesty, online disrespect, and verbal aggression surfaced sporadically. These behaviors mirror what Bauman (2000) terms “liquid morality,” a condition in which values become flexible and situational. The CRE teacher addressed this by guiding students to compare secular moral narratives with biblical teachings, encouraging critical discernment. By fostering reflective dialogue, the teacher turned moral challenges into learning opportunities. Students learned to assess cultural trends through the lens of Romans 12:2: “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” This approach positioned ethics as a dynamic process of spiritual

transformation rather than static rule adherence. It empowered students to engage modern influences critically while maintaining biblical integrity. The teacher's efforts were further strengthened by the school's support for value-based education. SMA Negeri 2 Alasa implemented weekly devotions, character assemblies, and community service projects. These initiatives created a consistent moral ecosystem that reinforced classroom instruction. The study also revealed areas for improvement. Some policies still prioritized academic achievement over character development, leading to inconsistent emphasis on ethical learning outcomes. The teacher noted that when moral formation was institutionally supported—such as through recognition of ethical behavior or mentoring programs—student engagement with moral lessons increased significantly. This finding echoes Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), suggesting that consistent moral messages across school, family, and community contexts are vital for sustainable ethical growth. In theological terms, this holistic alignment mirrors the covenantal structure of biblical community, where moral guidance flows through interconnected relationships. The personality competence of a Christian teacher is not merely professional—it is vocational. Colossians 3:17 affirms, "Whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus." The CRE teacher's moral consistency thus becomes a form of worship—a daily enactment of faith through teaching. Personality competence includes spiritual discipline, humility, and authenticity—virtues that manifest through prayerful self-awareness. Students recognized their teacher's regular devotions and calm demeanor as signs of inner spiritual rootedness. This aligns with Galatians 5:22-23, describing the fruit of the Spirit as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. When these fruits are visible in the teacher's life, they serve as theological symbols of sanctification in educational practice. Students not only admire but emulate them, thereby transforming the classroom into a small ecclesial space—a living reflection of the Kingdom of God within the school. The results suggest that teacher personality competence must be positioned as a central criterion in teacher formation programs and professional evaluations. It directly influences not only ethical learning outcomes but also the moral culture of the entire school. In practice, this means teacher training should integrate spiritual formation, reflective practice, and mentorship rooted in Christian virtue ethics. Courses in theology and ethics should not be theoretical add-ons but woven into pedagogical methodology. Schools should institutionalize character-based assessment, rewarding ethical behavior as much as academic excellence. Such measures will ensure that teachers' personal integrity continues to serve as the foundation for moral education. This study also reinforces the biblical view that teaching is a sacred calling (*vocatio Dei*). As Paul reminds Timothy, Christian educators must guard both life and doctrine closely (1 Timothy 4:16). Personality competence, therefore, is the visible sign of an invisible grace—where pedagogy meets spirituality and ethics merges with discipleship. To summarize, the findings from SMA Negeri 2 Alasa demonstrate that the personality competence of CRE teachers has a profound, measurable, and theological impact on the internalization of ethical values among students. Personality competence transcends professional qualification—it is the embodiment of faith in educational service. The CRE teacher stands as both educator and witness, shaping not only students' minds but their moral imagination and spiritual conscience.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that the personality competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers plays a pivotal and transformative role in shaping students' ethical awareness and behavioral integrity. Quantitative data revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.795$, $p < 0.01$) between the teacher's personality competence and the internalization of students' ethical values, confirming that moral education is deeply influenced by the teacher's personal authenticity and spiritual maturity. At SMA Negeri 2 Alasa, the CRE teacher's exemplary character-manifested through integrity, empathy, fairness, and self-control-became a living testimony of Christian ethics. Students' consistent respect, honesty, and responsibility were not mere outcomes of instruction but reflections of moral modeling. This finding reinforces the theological and pedagogical conviction that values are "caught" through relationship rather than merely "taught" through doctrine. This dynamic corresponds to Ephesians 6:1-3, which teaches obedience and respect toward those in authority, extending naturally to the teacher-student relationship. When teachers embody Christlike character, students' respect and ethical behavior become an act of faith response. The teacher thus functions not only as an educator but as a moral exemplar, a living witness of the Gospel within the educational space. The research affirms that teaching in a Christian context is a vocation-a divine calling that integrates pedagogy and spirituality. The teacher's personality competence becomes a visible form of faith in action, echoing Colossians 3:17, which exhorts believers to perform every deed "in the name of the Lord Jesus." When the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) are evident in a teacher's life, the classroom is transformed into a sacred community of formation, where spiritual and moral growth occur symbiotically. From a pedagogical perspective, this study implies that professional development for CRE teachers must emphasize spiritual formation and ethical consistency alongside instructional skill. Educational policies should recognize personality competence as an essential dimension of teacher qualification, not a supplementary virtue. Curriculum developers and school leaders are encouraged to integrate character-based mentoring systems, reflective teaching practices, and theological grounding within teacher education programs. The study highlights the importance of a supportive moral environment within schools. When institutional culture, school leadership, and peer communities reinforce the same ethical values embodied by the teacher, moral education becomes holistic and sustainable. This ecosystem aligns with Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective and resonates theologically with the concept of *koinonia*-a fellowship of shared moral purpose rooted in divine relationship. The research concludes that the personality competence of the CRE teacher serves as the moral foundation upon which ethical education stands. Beyond academic achievement, it is the teacher's life that communicates the essence of Christian virtue. The study calls educators to reflect on their own faith-life integration, recognizing that every act of teaching is a form of spiritual witness. The findings from SMA Negeri 2 Alasa affirm a timeless truth: when teachers live as authentic followers of Christ, their classrooms become transformative spaces where ethical and spiritual life converge-where teaching itself becomes an act of worship and moral renewal.

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