



ACSI Working Paper No. 2023-04

Spiritual Development as the Purpose of Christian Education and the Role of Christian University: Evidence from Indonesia?

Rian R. Djita

University of Arkansas

Oh Yen Nie

Universitas Pelita Harapan

Studies on the role of Christian postsecondary institutions in sustaining students' spiritual development in Christian schools mostly come from more developed western Christian countries. This study seeks to provide more insight into why. We found consistent results among administrators, teachers, and parents in Christian schools who agreed that spiritual development is their highest goal. In addition, we also found that there are statistically significant differences between Christian university graduates and non-Christian university graduates in their views of what the highest goal of education is. Implications of the results are discussed.

**Spiritual development as the purpose of Christian education and the role of Christian
university: Evidence from Indonesia**

Rian R. Djita

University of Arkansas, USA

ACSI Headquarters Office, Colorado Springs, USA

Oh Yen Nie

Universitas Pelita Harapan, Indonesia

Author Note

*Corresponding author.

Email: rian_djita@acsi.org

Address: Graduate Education Building, 201,
751 W Maple St, Fayetteville, AR
72701

Abstract

Studies on the role of Christian postsecondary institutions in sustaining students' spiritual development in Christian schools mostly come from more developed western Christian countries. This study seeks to provide more insight into why. We found consistent results among administrators, teachers, and parents in Christian schools who agreed that spiritual development is their highest goal. In addition, we also found that there are statistically significant differences between Christian university graduates and non-Christian university graduates in their views of what the highest goal of education is. Implications of the results are discussed.

Keyword: Spiritual development; Christian education; Christian university; Education goals; Mission alignment

Spiritual development as the purpose of Christian education and the role of Christian university: Evidence from Indonesia

Indonesia's Educational Context

Like many other developing countries, Indonesia has a centralized education system. As one of the fastest-improving education systems in the world based on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2015, studies have argued that it is significant for Indonesia to undergo educational reformation, especially since it has over 40 million students in its K-12 system (Afandi, 2017; Djita, 2019; OECD, 2016). Under President Jokowi's leadership (2014-2024), an emphasis on character education became a priority of Indonesia's education development, reflected in one of its strategic programs, the *Nawa Cita* – the nine educational aspirations (Ferary, 2021). According to *Nawa Cita*, academic excellence alone is no longer sufficient for shaping students' whole beings because there is also a need for character formation. Education should be an intentional effort to liberate humans from physical and inner poverty and to nourish their dignity, minds, and characters (Pangestu & Rochmat, 2021; Sugiarta et al., 2019). In short, the *Nawa Cita* attempts holistically to reform Indonesia's education to focus on academic excellence, character formation, and spiritual formation.

This situation provides an excellent opportunity for Christian schooling in Indonesia to flourish because although there is no clear-cut ranking of schools, there is conventional wisdom that Catholic and Protestant schools are considered the best school types because they consistently have the highest academic outcomes across all school types (Bedi & Garg, 2000). Forty percent of the students in Indonesia are enrolled in private schools, which illustrates this fact. That percentage is more than the average of the OECD countries or even of neighboring countries such as Singapore. This figure is still increasing throughout religious private schools, including

Protestant and other Christian denominational schools (OECD, 2016). For the remainder of this paper, we will use “Christian education” to refer to these religious schools.

In order to help Christian schools in Indonesia flourish, there should be an alignment between the mission/goals that the schools aim to achieve with their daily practices, especially among critical constituents in Christian schools (Lyon, 2020; Swaner et al., 2021) if students' spiritual development is the distinctive goal of Christian education (e.g. (Horan, 2017; Mulholland & Barton, 2016; Willard, 2002). Key constituents in Christian schools should be in accordance sharing the same values and beliefs, to support students' spiritual development (Banke et al., 2012). With Christian colleges and universities' familiarity with Christian values, missions, and practices, literature has pointed out that these institutions may help Christian schools maintain the alignment between their missions and practices that may help students' spiritual development (Finn et al., 2010; Cooling et al., 2016; Eckert, 2014). Although there is a growing number of enrollment in the students in Christian schools in Indonesia, there are virtually no current studies that explore this important topic on the role of Christian postsecondary institutions in sustaining students' spiritual development. This study seeks to bridge the gap in the literature.

Educational Goals in Christian Schools

Educational goals are most effectively realized when all stakeholders, parents, teachers, school administrators, and government officials collaborate to achieve shared objectives (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988). To achieve this end, it is paramount that educational institutions establish a clear identity and goals that define what counts toward being successful, thereby guiding all the stakeholders to tackle challenges, formulate robust policies, and make well-informed decisions regarding academic development, including faculty recruitment and budgeting allocation (Lyon,

2020). A lack of clear, meaningful educational goals can lead to a loss of direction within schools.

Especially within the context of Christian schools, where diverse values and interpretations of success coexist, the absence of clear and shared goals can create conflicts among stakeholders (Young, 2007). Christian schools must, therefore, be resolute in articulating and implementing their missions and educational goals, ensuring that they are more than statements. These goals should serve as inspiration, addressing the needs of society and offering hope (Woodrow, 2006). This idea means that those invited to become part of the school community, whether teachers, staff, or families, must understand and agree with the institution's beliefs, values, and educational aspirations. Research further affirms that parents are more inclined to enroll their children in schools that align with their religious background, emphasizing the significance of shared values and objectives (Cheng et al., 2016).

Shared values and goals serve as potent motivators, providing a boost to all school stakeholders with a clear direction to achieve them and empowering all to carry out daily activities with more profound meaning (Kouzes & Posner, 2004). Unfortunately, research exploring the mission and goals of Christian schools is limited in the Indonesian context. Therefore, similar research is needed in literature, especially from global contexts, beyond the borders of the United States. This study endeavors to bridge the gap in the literature.

Spiritual Formation and Christian Schools

One distinctive aspect of a Christian school's mission is students' spiritual formation; thus, it should be the focus of Christian school activities (Cheng et al., 2016; Horan, 2017; Smith et al., 2021). While the description of Christian school goals might be varied, the primary intention should be students' spiritual transformation since it is the essence of God's redemptive purpose

(Steibel, 2010). The formation of students' spirituality should be the ultimate goal of Christian schools to facilitate their students in developing their faith, identity, worldview, and moral character to be more Christ-like through the work of the Holy Spirit (Horan, 2017; Mulholland & Barton, 2016; Willard, 2002). It is a lifelong transformational journey starting with the transformation of the heart, changing minds and behaviors, then maturing in character and influence on the surrounding community. Further, spiritual formation generally occurs in and through relationships with others in the community context (Drexler & Bagby, 2021). Personal relationships and mentoring are more effective in influencing students than traditional programs such as chapel or Bible classes, especially for millennials (Horan, 2017). Therefore, it must be the priority of Christian Schools to develop a learning community and environment for spiritual formation, thus hiring teachers who can be serving as role models and developing authentic relationships with the students.

Christian schools have a strategic role in shaping students' spiritual formation as functional communities, as described by James Coleman (1990). A community that shares the same values and beliefs becomes the context to support students' holistic development. The primary purpose is intertwined with academic and skills development, empowering them to use their God-given talents and character and solidifying their identity as God's people to contribute to the greater good of their communities (Banke et al., 2012). Christian schools could employ diverse strategies and approaches to foster spiritual formation while delivering academic programs in holistic, contextual, and transformative ways (Steibel, 2010), which means living out these values by the whole school community.

Smith et al. (2021) suggested that in Christian schools, faith development must be rooted in students' vocations and what they do in schools to align school practices and faith

development. Therefore, spiritual formation should be an integral part of all educational and assessment practices to sustain the focus of Christian schools. This argument aligns with Hunter Olson's (2019) theory of moral ecologies that when an institution's ideals, values, and goals coalesce into a Christian practice, they will not only shape the individuals within the ecosystem but will also empower individuals to put into action their values and convictions (Cheng & Djita, 2021; Cheng and Sikkink, 2019; Hill and den Dulk, 2013).

Challenges in Christian Schools

Hull (2003) argued that even though Christian schools have a solid vision of education, often, their daily practices may still be influenced by government regulations, public school norms, and cultural values. In Hull's words, "education is education," suggesting that while Christian schools may begin and end their days with prayers, the essence of what is happening in between may not be fundamentally different from other schools. Christian schools grapple with preserving their unique identity in the face of globalization, secularism, technological advancement, and declining religious adherence (Neidhart & Carlin, 2011; Pike, 2004). Pursuing academic excellence, competitive advantage, and influence within their communities may distract Christian schools from upholding their original vision for Christian education (Cairney, 2022; Rooney, 2009). Consequently, Christian schools may adopt best practices from their surroundings, potentially diluting their distinctive mission.

To address these challenges, Christian schools must prioritize the development of a curriculum rooted in Biblical perspectives. Aligning faith and pedagogy is vital for creating a more cohesive and impactful educational experience (Cairney, 2022; Rooney, 2009). It is equally essential for Christian schools to remain vigilant, guarding against external disruptions and pressure that could divert them from their founding goals. In their recent work, Smith et al.

(2021) advocate for a practice-based approach to assess faith formation within Christian schools, underscoring the significance of connecting students' current vocations with learning practices based on Christian principles. This approach not only enhances the intentionality of faith formation but also reinforces it in the context of Christian education.

This issue resonates with the beliefs and practices inconsistencies which Graham (2009), who distinguishes between “controlling beliefs” and “professed beliefs,” outlines. While Christian schools may profess their primary goal to be the spiritual formation of their students, their control beliefs in practice may not consistently and cohesively direct them toward that goal. Controlling beliefs are principles accepted as truth that control our choices and behaviors, and we may be unable to explain the reason behind those behaviors. At the same time, those professed beliefs are what we say about our beliefs or those taught through formal instruction. In Christian education, the schools may have “professed beliefs” written in their mission statement, merely stating that the primary goal of their education is all students' spiritual formation. However, their control beliefs may not consistently and cohesively direct them toward achieving the Christian education goal. Christian schools must continuously review their current practices to be more consistent with their beliefs and goals.

Smith et al. (2021) further argue that all teaching and learning processes have formational forces. To ensure that spiritual formation is woven into all aspects of Christian school programs, an authentic and intentional effort must be embedded in learning practices. These practices are not confined solely to concrete actions; they are also shaped by narratives, commitments, intentionality, and socially established frameworks of meaning lived out by the teachers and the whole school community. Moreover, content and pedagogical practices must be purposefully guided by Christian principles and practices to enhance the learning experience and contribute to

students' spiritual formation (Dykstra, 2005; Smith et al., 2021). Christian schools must intentionally assess and align their primary goals of education with the learning practices that their students encounter.

Amidst all the challenges, the role of teachers who design, deliver, and engage with students is paramount for students' spiritual formation. One compelling factor contributing to the decline of Christian schools in Indonesia is the perceived inadequacy in the quality of teachers (IT MPK, 2023; Juntak & Setyanti, 2022). Christian teachers play a pivotal role in students' spiritual formation as they experience a holistic and relational learning environment (Horan, 2017; Munthe et al., 2023; Wrigley-Carr, 2022). In this context, teachers play a significant role as mentors, role models, and faith integrators in nurturing students spiritually. Christian teachers are responsible for more than just transmitting content and delivering effective teaching strategies; they need to act as a shepherd, modeling spiritual vitality and creating an environment conducive to spiritual formation (Banke et al., 2005; Triposa et al., 2021; Wrigley-Carr, 2022). Considering these challenges, the commitment and ability of Christian education sustainability in Indonesia becomes clear.

The Role of Christian Colleges and Universities

A growing body of literature has documented how parents, teachers, and school leaders have a direct impact on shaping students' spiritual development in Christian schools. For instance, teachers are the constituent groups with whom students spend most of their time. Therefore, aside from parents, teachers are arguably prominent figures with one of the most critical roles in shaping students' spiritual development (Holloway et al., 2019). Teachers can achieve this role through their caring relationship (Call, 2011; Cardus, 2019a; Smith, 2011;), prayer (Smith, 2011), or through their teaching practices that integrate faith in a learning content (Smith &

Smith, 2011). These studies affirm that Christian teachers are important in nurturing students' spiritual formation. Therefore, it is not surprising if Christian schools tend to favor teachers who graduated from Christian colleges or universities over secular institutions (Johnson et al., 2023).

In the context of teachers' preparation in Australia, Buchanan proposes a closer collaboration between higher education institutions and Christian schools to equip prospective Christian teachers better (Buchanan, 2020). The learning approaches during teacher preparation should not only focus on knowledge transfer but prioritize a relational approach within the learning community and provide opportunities for students to reflect critically on their faith. Teacher preparation programs that align with the core values and principles of Christian education have a distinct advantage in preparing educators who can seamlessly integrate Christian values and beliefs into their training (Beech, 2015). Teachers from Christian universities are well-trained to constantly be reflective in examining their theological assumptions to establish connections between their faith and teaching and learning, which helps students develop their spiritual formation (Cooling & Green, 2015). Thus, it is easier for Christian teachers to teach from a Biblical Christian worldview and shepherd the students than teachers who graduated from a secular teaching preparation program (Prior, 2021). Eckert argues that Christian liberal arts teacher preparation has provided more holistic formation, preparing teachers to view their work as a calling from God to serve others, but also equipping them with intellectual and moral virtues, with a deep understanding of the nature and purpose of education (Eckert, 2014). Their experiences with faith communities during teacher preparation can shape their identity and practices as Christian teachers, which is what students need to develop their spiritual formation. A few studies also demonstrate that the narratives, traditions, habits, beliefs, and values lived out in Christian classrooms have a profound impact on students' lives as they

are prepared to become Christian teachers (DeYoung, 2011; Nainggolan & Ma, 2022). Such experiences contribute to their formation of spiritual growth, which, in turn, equips them to effectively do the same when they are teaching in Christian schools. As a result, Christian schools should prioritize recruiting teachers from Christian Teachers College to effectively achieve their educational goals since they are more aligned with Christian school values and practices.

Similarly to teachers who graduated from Christian colleges or universities, school leaders who graduated from Christian postsecondary institutions are also able to help integrate a Biblical worldview into the school's everyday practices, which has a direct impact on students' spiritual formation (Swaner et al., 2021). This goal is attainable because leaders influence the creation of a learning environment with constant alignment among Christian faith and values, school missions, and school cultures (e.g., Pennings & Wiens, 2011; Lee et al., 2021). Christian school leaders can influence students' faith through their lived experience (Beckman et al., 2012). Protestant school leaders are more likely to see themselves as spiritual leaders than their Catholic school leaders (Sikkink, 2012). These findings are also consistent in higher education settings (Burch et al., 2015).

Lastly, unsurprisingly, the idea that parents as the primary educators of their students also influences students' faith formation (Yust, 2012; Van Meter, 2009). The more coherent the relationship between schools and families, the more apparent a Christian worldview is observed among students (Uecker, 2008). This concept is understandable because schools may be able to reemphasize some mechanisms that families implemented in cultivating their children's faith development, i.e., spiritual practices and disciplines, religious attendance, and service. Therefore, schools and families need to have the same emphasis on the importance of the spiritual

development of their students but also work hand in hand with the education and discipleship of their children.

All of these studies not only signal the importance of coherent beliefs and views about the importance of spiritual development as the primary goal of education among teachers, parents, and school leaders, but these studies also prompt the role of Christian postsecondary institutions in sustaining students' spiritual development in Christian schools. However, these studies mostly come from more developed western Christian countries. Therefore, there is a need for similar studies from various backgrounds. Since the literature on spiritual formation in Indonesia is still relatively limited - most studies focus on spiritual formation within the context of churches, parachurch organizations, and other religious institutions (Nainggolan & Ma, 2022), this study seeks to bridge this gap in the literature by exploring the alignment of the views about spiritual development as the primary goal of Christian education among teachers, parents and principals and how Christian college and universities might play a role in sustaining it.

Data and sample

The data for this study are from an online survey about Christian education in Indonesia that we distributed to more than 50 Christian schools across different parts of the country. We used established connections with Christian school networks in Indonesia to distribute the survey link to administrators, teachers, and parents in Christian schools from January 2023 to March 2023. In our survey, we focused on several domains, including the goal of education in Christian schools and the types of religious activities participants engaged in to cultivate their spiritual development. We also asked several different questions regarding their demographic characteristics, including their gender, age, income, educational background, as well as the type of Christian schools that they serve or send their children to.

Through this survey, we aim to understand the goal of Christian education, spiritual development, and spiritual engagement, as well as the role of Christian postsecondary institutions in ensuring mission alignment across different Christian school stakeholders. Our research questions are as follows:

Research Question 1 (RQ1):

What is the highest goal of education in Christian schools? Does it differ among principals, teachers, and parents? Does it differ between Christian and non-Christian university graduates?

Research Question 2 (RQ2):

Is there any relationship between Christian community members' views regarding spiritual development as the highest goal of Christian education and their belief that school programs help students spiritually? Is there any difference between Christian and non-Christian school graduates?

Research Question 3 (RQ3):

Among administrators and teachers, is there any relationship between their views regarding spiritual development as the highest goal of Christian education and their engagement in spiritual development programs? Is there any difference between Christian and non-Christian school graduates?

Our survey was conducted in both English and Bahasa Indonesia, and participants could choose which language they were more comfortable using. Our primary outcome variables are spiritual development programs and spiritual engagement variables. For the spiritual development programs variable, we ask several questions about their engagement in various religious and spiritual development programs, including: *“During the last academic year, have you participated in the following kinds of spiritual development activities? (Retreat, Bible, and*

theological courses, other programs)” or *“In general, do you think that all the spiritual development programs in your school help your students grow in their faith of Christ?”* For the spiritual engagement variable, we sought to understand if administrators and teachers regularly participate in religious and spiritual engagement by asking binary questions: *“How often do you discuss the Christian faith and spiritual development with your teachers? (weekly, monthly, once a semester, annually)* or *“How often do you discuss the Christian faith and spiritual development with your students? (Weekly, monthly, once a semester, annually).”*

We used the highest educational goals ranking variable as our primary independent variable. In this variable, we asked the respondents to rank the goals of Christian education that they think are the most important for their students. We provided 11 goals for the participants to rank, with one as the most important and 11 as the least essential goal in Christian education (see Figures 1-4 for details).

Descriptive statistics

We display descriptive statistics of our sample’s demographics in Table 1. On average, our administrators and teachers consecutively are 36 and 29 years old. Most of our administrators and teachers are female, with total years of experience ranging from 15 years for teachers and 20 years for administrators. The majority of our administrators (60%) and teachers (90%) hold bachelor’s degrees, with more administrators holding more master’s degrees (40%) than teachers (10%). About 9 in 10 administrators and teachers obtained their highest degrees from a Christian university. Since Indonesia has a specialized track where one needs to get a degree in education to teach or to serve in a school’s administrative role, it is understandable that most teachers and administrators in our sample have degrees in education. About 80% and 90% of our

administrators and teachers in the sample graduated from Christian colleges or universities, respectively.

Based on parents' characteristics, on average, parents in our sample are 41 years old, and the majority of those parents who responded to this survey are female. Since Christian schools in Indonesia also serve low-income families, especially in rural areas, about 20% of our parents are categorized as low-income families who make less than \$200-250/ USD/month. This cut-off is based on recommendations from the World Bank (Djita et al., 2022). Half of the parents in our sample have their eldest child attending an elementary Christian school (grades 1-6), while about 30% of their children attend middle school (grades 7-9) and 20% attend high school (grades 10-12). About six in ten parents in our sample hold bachelor's degrees, and only about 10% of them have master's degrees, with the remaining 30% of the parents not holding any college degree. Only 22% of the parents have degrees from Christian colleges or universities. Lastly, about 40% of our responses come from eastern Indonesia. Economically, the eastern region is less developed than the western region, with most Christians in Indonesia living in the eastern part. Regarding the type of Christian schools, we received fewer than 5% of the responses from International Christian schools, 70% from national plus Christian schools, and 30% representing students attending rural Christian schools.

Methodological approach

For RQ1, we inquired about finding the highest ranking of Christian educational goals among parents, teachers, and administrators, so we took a liberal approach by finding the proportion of the category ranked as number one from all 11 categories of education goals that we provided for the whole pool of individuals (parents, teachers, and administrators). We then ran a simple regression model that follows this specification to see the difference in the highest goal of

Christian education between Christian and non-Christian graduates among parents, teachers, and administrators.

RQ1:
$$\text{Highestgoal}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Christiangrad}_i + X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

The outcome variable of *Highestgoal_i* takes a value of 1 for each individual *i*'s the highest education goal category and 0 if otherwise, while the primary explanatory variable of *Christiangrad_i* takes a value of 1 if the individual *i* graduated from a Christian university, and 0 if otherwise. The *X* matrix contains individuals' demographic characteristics, including age, gender, and socioeconomic status, and ε_i represents the error term that the model has not captured. For the remaining research questions, we took a similar econometric approach by using a simple logistical approach that is represented by these models below:

RQ2:
$$\text{SpirdevProg}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Spirdev}_i + \beta_2 \text{Christiangrad}_i + \beta_3 \text{Spirdev}_i \times \text{Christiangrad}_i + X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

For the second research question, we sought to understand if there is a relationship between the belief that spiritual development is the highest goal of education and the belief that school programs help students spiritually. The subscript *i* is individual in our sample (administrators, teachers, or parents). At the same time, *SpirdevProg* is the outcome variable that takes the value 1 if the individual in our sample said "Yes" to the question "*Do spiritual development programs in the school help students spiritually?*" and 0 if otherwise. In addition, our primary explanatory variable, *Spirdev*, takes the value of 1 if individuals in our analyses rank spiritual development as the highest purpose of education and 0 if otherwise. *Christiangrad_i* is a dummy variable that takes value if the individual *i* graduated from a Christian university, and 0 if otherwise. We also included the interaction term *Spirdev_i x Christiangrad_i* to see different estimates across *Spirdev* and *Christiangrad* groups. Lastly, we also control for the same demographic

characteristics for X . The ε_i captures the errors in the model. This empirical testing of the mediating role of Christian schools followed the approach that Cheng & Djita (2021) did, where they tested the role of community service with an emphasis on volunteering and charitable giving among young adults across school sectors in Australia.

RQ3:
$$SpirdevEngagement_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Spirdev_i + X_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (4)$$

For our last research question, we would like to see if there is any relationship between *Spirdev* and administrators and teachers' engagement with spiritual development discussions or programs (*SpirdevEngagement*). We ran a separate regression model to investigate this relationship:

$$SpirdevEngagement_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Spirdev_i + X_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (4)$$

The *SpirdevEngagement_i* is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if individuals responded “weekly” or “Yes,” and 0 if otherwise to the following questions: 1) How often do you discuss with your teachers your faith and spiritual development? (Weekly, monthly, once a semester, annually), 2) How often do you discuss your faith and spiritual development with your students? (Weekly, monthly, once a semester, annually), 3) Have you participated in the following spiritual development activities during the last academic year? Retreat, Bible and theological classes, other programs (Yes/No)”. The remaining parts of the equation follow the same description as in model (1).

Results

The RQ1 seeks to understand what parents, teachers, and administrators think the highest goal of Christian education is. Figures 1-4 show the results of our first research question.

[Figure 1 here]

Figure 1 shows the aggregate results of all our samples. From this figure, we see that more than half of parents, teachers, and administrators believe that spiritual development is the highest

goal in Christian education (56%), followed by shaping students' calling (27%) and developing students' basic skills in education (5%). When we look by role, we find slight differences among parents, teachers, and administrators regarding which goal of Christian education is the most important for students. For instance, from Figures 2-4, we observe that 53% of parents (Figure 2), 61% of administrators (Figure 3), and 64% of teachers (Figure 4) believe that spiritual development is the highest goal. We also observed a similar trend for the shaping-student-calling goal, where 26% of parents, 30% of teachers, and 33% of administrators believe that shaping students' calling is the highest goal. For the third highest goal of education, teachers and administrators believe that preparing students for college is another important goal to achieve in Christian education. However, parents think equipping students with basic skills is more critical for students. Even though it seems different, parents, teachers, and administrators agree that students' spiritual development and calling are the top two highest goals that Christian education needs to achieve for their students.

[Figure 2 here]

[Figure 3 here]

[Figure 4 here]

Furthermore, from our regression model for RQ1 (see Figures 5 and 6), we found statistically significant differences in the highest goal of Christian education between Christians and non-Christian. From Figure 5, we observe that, among parents, teachers, and administrators in Christian schools, those who graduated from a Christian university are more likely to say that spiritual development is the highest goal in Christian education by six percentage points than those who graduated from a non-Christian university, and this estimate is statistically significant at the 99% level of confidence ($p < .0.01$). We also observe similar significant results in shaping students'

calling category as the highest goal of Christian education. On average, compared to non-Christian university graduates, those who graduated from Christian universities are more likely to believe that shaping students' calling is the highest goal of Christian education by five percentage points ($p < .01$). On the contrary, Christian university graduates are less likely than non-Christian graduates to believe that the basic skills and personal growth of students are the highest goals in Christian education by five and two percentage points, respectively ($p < .01$).

[Figure 5 here]

[Figure 6 here]

In Figure 6, we ran the same regression model and included demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and socio-economic status as controls. We mostly find similar trends where Christian university graduates are more likely than non-Christian university graduates to believe that spiritual development and shaping students' calling in life is their top goal in Christian education by about two ($p < .01$) and eight percentage points ($p < .01$) while non-Christian university graduates are more likely than their counterparts to say that equipping students' basic skills as the top priority in Christian education by about five percentage points ($p < .01$).

For the second research question, we would like to see if there is a relationship between the belief that spiritual development is the highest goal in Christian education among the Christian school community (*Spirdev*) and the belief that spiritual development programs help students grow spiritually (*Spirdevprog*). Table 3 provides the results of this relationship. From this table, we found two important results: first, all Christian school community members - administrators, teachers, and parents - who believe that spiritual development is the highest purpose of education are more likely to agree that spiritual development programs in Christian schools help students spiritually by about two percentage point higher even after controlling for demographic

characteristics (see column 3) and it is statistically significant at a 95% level of confidence ($p < .05$). Second, even though there are Christian school community members who do not think that spiritual development is the highest purpose of Christian education, about 90% of them agree that spiritual development programs in schools still help student spiritually. This figure is represented by the constant term in column 3 ($p < .01$).

[Table 3 here]

In column 4, Table 3, we then explore the estimated differences between Christian graduates and non-Christian graduates or among Christian graduates by including interaction term (*Spirdev is the highest goal x Christian graduate*) between Christian graduates and the dummy variable of spiritual development as the highest goal. From column 4, we learn at least two important results. First, among those who graduated from Christian universities, parents, teachers, and administrators who believe that spiritual development is the highest goal of Christian education are more likely to agree that spiritual development programs in their schools help students to grow spiritually by six percentage points. This estimate is jointly significant at a 95% confidence level ($p < .05$) and is obtained by adding the estimates from *Christian graduates*, and *Spirdev is the highest goal*. Second, among those who agree that spiritual development is the highest goal of Christian education, there is a statistically significant difference between Christian university graduates and their counterparts. Precisely, all else being equal, compared to non-Christian university graduates, parents, teachers, and administrators who graduated from Christian universities are more likely by two percentage points to agree that spiritual development programs in their schools help students spiritually. This estimate is statistically significant at a 95% confidence level and is obtained by adding the estimates from the interaction term and the *Christian graduate*.

The results of this third research question can be seen in Tables 4-6. From Table 4, we utilized several specifications as we did in Table 3. In our most preferred specification (Table 4 column 4), we found that on average, all else being equal, among all administrators who believe that spiritual development is the highest goal of education, administrators who graduated from Christian universities are more likely to have weekly spiritual development discussions with their teachers than administrators who graduated from non-Christian universities by about 39 percentage points. This estimate is jointly significant at a 95% level of confidence and is obtained by adding both estimates from the *Christian graduate* and the *interaction term* variables.

[Table 4 here]

We replicated the same analytical strategy in Table 5 among teachers. From column 2, we learned that controlling for demographic characteristics, on average, teachers who believe that spiritual development is the highest goal of Christian education are more likely than their teacher counterparts to engage in weekly spiritual discussions with their students by about 11 percentage points ($p < 0.05$). However, we do not see any statistical difference between teachers who graduated from Christian and non-Christian universities, as in Table 4.

[Table 5 here]

Lastly, in Table 6, when looking at the relationship between spiritual development as the sole purpose of education and spiritual development activities that teachers and administrators engaged in, we found that administrators and teachers who believe that spiritual development is the highest goal in Christian education are more likely to voluntarily take theological courses for their spiritual development than *their counterparts* by about ten percentage points ($p < 0.05$).

However, we do not find any other statistically significant results among other types of spiritual development activities.

[Table 6 here]

Discussion

Reflecting upon the current literature on education goals and spiritual formation in Christian schools, we found several findings that may advance our understanding of this literature.

In similarity to previous literature from developed countries (Horan, 2017; Mulholland & Barton, 2016; Willard, 2002), there is a consistent alignment among administrators, teachers, and parents about what is essential in Christian education in Indonesia in prioritizing spiritual development and formation of the students. This alignment made it easier for these key stakeholders to develop and sustain students' spiritual formation in Christian schools. For instance, we observe that teachers who believe spiritual development is the highest education goal in Christian education are more likely than teachers who think otherwise to have spiritual discussions with their students. This finding is hopeful, given that studies in the past have shown that aside from parents, teachers are one of the most influential figures in shaping students' spiritual development (De Young, 2011; Fyock, 2008; Holloway et al., 2019; Walton & Walters, 2011). Many past studies have recommended some intentional strategies where these administrators, teachers, and parents can work together to cultivate a Christian school environment that prioritizes the development of students' spiritual beings including integrating spiritual development into curriculum (e.g. Beesley, 1993; Meehan, 2002; Smith et al., 2021), creating environments in schools where students feel comfortable sharing their faith and struggles (Petrie et al., 2019) or modeling the faith at schools and home (Schwartz, 2006; Strommen & Hardel, 2000).

Second, despite having coherent alignment among administrators, teachers, and parents about spiritual development as the highest goal of Christian education, we observed that there are statistically significant differences between those who graduated from Christian colleges or universities and secular institutions, with the former emphasized more on the importance of developing students' spiritual formation than the latter. Administrators who graduated from a Christian college or university are more likely than administrators who graduated from secular institutions to engage in weekly spiritual development discussions with their teachers actively. This result aligns with many previous works of literature both in the K-12 or postsecondary settings that show religious schools, including Christian schools, tend to operate under Hunter & Olson's (2019) moral, ecological framework that not only shapes graduates' spiritual formation, but also other outcomes including civic formation (Berner, 2019; Cheng & Sikkink, 2019; Wolf, 2007).

In our analyses, we consistently observe a unique role of Christian postsecondary institutions in shaping students' spiritual development. This finding is true because, like Christian schools, Christian postsecondary institutions have a missional responsibility to create an environment devoted to championing students' spiritual formation (Otto & Harrington, 2016). With the rise of postmodernism within academia – a view that rejects the notion of viewing truth in multiple ways, spiritual development has become the main focus of Christian higher education in the past 100 years (Rhea, 2011). Because of this similar mission between Christian schools and postsecondary institutions, it is then more accessible for Christian school graduates than their counterparts who graduated from secular institutions to implement Christian values and faith in Christian schools (Prior, 2021). Christian teacher preparation programs, for instance, tend to focus more on developing foundational beliefs and teaching and learning practices from a Biblical perspective through class, personal interactions, and classroom practicum than teacher preparation

programs in secular universities (Eckert, 2014; Van Dyke, 2012). This emphasis on Christian values and spiritual development is something that many Christian schools need because graduates from Christian institutions are well-trained in incorporating faith and learning, which is helpful for students' spiritual formation (Cooling & Green, 2015). Therefore, it is understandable that many Christian schools favor recruiting teachers from Christian postsecondary institutions (Johnson, 2023).

Like teachers who graduated from Christian higher education institutions, school leaders and parents who attended Christian higher education embody the same values and understanding about the importance of spiritual formation in students' lives. Therefore, it is easier for them to cultivate spiritual formation among students. Administrators, for instance, may create a school culture that promotes students' spiritual development through its curriculum and other religious activities in schools (chapel, retreat, voluntary activities, and other ministry opportunities), while parents as the primary educators may reinforce children's spiritual formation through a family's spiritual disciplines and religious practices (e.g., Pennings & Wiens, 2011; Lee et al., 2021; Swaner et al., 2021). It would be no surprise if we observed a higher likelihood among administrators, teachers, and parents who graduated from Christian colleges or universities to express that spiritual development is the highest goal of Christian education than their counterparts who graduated from secular institutions in our analyses. Since Christian education aims to help students live out their Christian faith (Rasmussen & Rasmussen, 2005), Christian postsecondary institutions must start building intentional collaboration with Christian schools.

Third, we found that although most administrators and teachers in Christian schools professed that spiritual development is the highest goal in Christian education, we need to observe how this conviction relates to their spiritual engagement. Specifically, among all the spiritual

engagement activities, administrators and teachers who believed in spiritual development as the highest goal in Christian education are more likely to voluntarily take theological courses for their spiritual development than their counterparts who think otherwise (10 pp, $p < .05$) but we do not find any other statistically significant relationships with other spiritual development programs such as Bible study, morning devotion, spiritual development PD, etc. There are several explanations for this result. One, this result aligns with the struggle of aligning the concepts of controlling beliefs vs. professed beliefs in Christian schools (Graham, 2009). Not until Christian school community members fully understand and believe in the importance of spiritual formation for the whole community will this situation always be the "yoke" of struggle that Christian school communities must bear. It is an ongoing, intentional process in which members should collectively integrate these beliefs into their daily practices (Dykstra, 2005; Smith et al., 2021). Two, some studies from the context of Christian schooling both in developed and developing countries have also shown that aside from the administrative burden, administrators in Christian schools still have some additional layers of struggles in aligning their values and beliefs to go hand in hand with their daily practices (Cheng et al., 2022; Sutton & Watson, 1995). We argued that as educators who base their practices, values, and philosophy of education in the Scripture – only by the grace of God that all human efforts will flourish (Psalm 44:2; 52:8; 72:7), Christian education should also take a concerted and systematic effort to address this gap. Swaner et al. (2021) provided the Flourishing School Culture Model (FSCM), a framework for Christian schooling to follow to flourish as a Christian school. One of the most critical domains that this FSCM framework provides is the emphasis of commitment from all Christian school community members to centralize and integrate the purpose of Christian education in all aspects of Christian schooling practices, including spiritual formation. This idea is essential because "just having Biblical language in mission

statements, holding special programs and chapels, and promising moral and spiritual formation is insufficient. Each school should be willing and able to assess efforts regularly" (Drexler and Bagby, 2021: 12).

Lastly, the results here from Indonesia's unique education context provide more nuances to our understanding of the literature about Christian education goals and practices. Studies on this topic mostly come from more developed Western Christian countries. Therefore, with the unique context of Indonesia - a democratic but religious country that encourages spiritual practices and values to be integrated with all aspects of schooling, both in public and private schools, we posit that these results enrich our understanding of the literature on this topic.

Implications for Practice

First, since parents, teachers, and administrators agree that spiritual formation is the highest priority of educational goals in Christian education, some intentional strategies to cultivate and maintain students' spiritual development should be prioritized in school. This strategy could be accomplished through the implementation of a curriculum that highlights spiritual development (e.g., Beesley, 1993; Meehan, 2002; Smith et al., 2021) or opportunities to worship and serve one another or consistent modeling of the Christian faith at school and at home (Schwartz, 2006; Strommen & Hardel, 2000). Second, Christian school principals must be more intentional in their recruiting practices. Given the critical role that Christian postsecondary institutions play, some intentional collaboration between Christian schools and Christian colleges and universities might be another avenue that both entities should maintain.

Lastly, suppose spiritual development is the goal that Christian schools aim to achieve. In that case, Christian school administrators must effectively influence the whole school community with the same shared values and goals (Swaner et al., 2021). Administrators must display a solid

commitment to pursuing the school's priority goals and intentionally manage and invest time and space for Christian school communities to engage in spiritual development programs actively (Smith et al., 2021).

Limitations and Future Study

We acknowledge that our descriptive results from the methodological approaches in this paper preclude us from making any causal claims. Second, although we had responses from both central regions of Indonesia that involve different types of Christian schooling, our sample is not a nationally representative sample, which may provide a comprehensive and representative understanding of Indonesia's Christian education. Future studies should replicate this study by involving a more representative sample of Christian school community members. Future studies should also focus more on the role of Christian higher institutions in preparing teachers for Christian schools and how it influences students' outcomes and Christian schools' community members in general.

References

- Afandi, T. (2017). *Outlook Pembangunan Indonesia 2018: Pemanfaatan Bonus Demografi* (p. 2). Kementerian PPN/Bappenas.
- Banke, S., Maldonado, N., Lacey, C. H., & Thompson, S. (2005). *The Role of Spirituality in Christian School Leadership: A Qualitative Study*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED499121>
- Banke, S., Maldonado, N., & Lacey, Candaceh. (2012). Christian School Leaders and Spirituality. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 21(3), 235–264. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2012.732806>
- Beckman, J. E., Drexler, J. L., & Eames, K. J. (2012). Faithful Presence: The Christian School Head, Personhood, Relationships, and Outcomes. *Journal of School Choice*, 6(1), 104.
- Bedi, A. S., & Garg, A. (2000). The effectiveness of private versus public schools: The case of Indonesia. *Journal of Development Economics*, 61(2), 463–494. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0304-3878\(00\)00065-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0304-3878(00)00065-1)
- Beech, G. (2015). *Christians as Teachers: What Might It Look Like?* (Revised 2nd edition). Wipf and Stock.
- Beesley, M. (1993). Spiritual Education in Schools. *Pastoral Care in Education*, 11(3), 22–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02643949309470843>
- Berner, A. R. (2019). The Case for Educational Pluralism in the U.S. In *Manhattan Institute for Policy Research*. Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.
- Bryk, A. S., & Driscoll, M. E. (1988). *The High School as Community: Contextual Influences and Consequences for Students and Teachers* (p. 64). National Center on Effective Secondary Schools. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED302539>
- Buchanan, M. T. (2020). Teacher education: What Australian Christian schools need and what higher education delivers. *International Journal of Christianity & Education*, 24(1), 96–107. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056997119892642>

- Burch, M., Swails, P., & Mills, R. K. (2015). Perceptions of Administrators' Servant Leadership Qualities at a Christian University: A Descriptive Study. *Education, 135*(4), 399–404.
- Cardus. 2019a. "Cardus Education Survey 2018: Perceptions of High School Experience and Preparedness for Life." Hamilton, ON: Cardus.
<https://www.cardus.ca/research/education/reports/cardus-education-survey-2018-perceptions-of-high-school-experience-and-preparedness-for-life/>.
- Cairney, T. (2022). The challenge of faith in religious institutions. *International Journal of Christianity & Education, 26*(3), 217–220. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20569971221120517>
- Call, C. 2011. "The Rough Trail to Authentic Pedagogy: Incorporating Hospitality, Fellowship, and Testimony into the Classroom." In *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning*, edited by David Smith and James K. A. Smith, 61–79. Grand Rapids, Mich: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.
- Cheng, A., Djita, R., & Hunt, D. (2022). *Many Educational Systems, A Common Good: An International Comparison of American, Canadian, and Australian Graduates from the Cardus Education Survey* (p. 55). Cardus.
- Cheng, A., & Djita, R. R. (2021). Volunteering and Charitable Giving among Australian Young Adults and the Mediating Role of Community Service Emphasis in Secondary Schools. *Education Reform Faculty and Graduate Students Publications*.
- Cheng, A., & Sikkink, D. (2019). *A Longitudinal Analysis of Volunteerism Activities for Individuals Educated in Public and Private Schools* (SSRN Scholarly Paper 3349444). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3349444>
- Cheng, A., Trivitt, J. R., & Wolf, P. J. (2016). School Choice and the Branding of Milwaukee Private Schools. *Social Science Quarterly, 97*(2), 362–375.
- Coleman, J. (1990). *Foundations of Social Theory*. Harvard University Press.
- Cooling, T., Green, B. L., Morris, A. P., & Revell, L. (2016). *Christian Faith in English Church Schools*. <https://doi.org/10.3726/978-3-0353-0819-8>

- Cooling, T., & Green, E. H. (2015). Competing imaginations for teaching and learning: The findings of research into a Christian approach to teaching and learning called What If Learning. *International Journal of Christianity & Education*, 19(2), 96–107. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056997115583432>
- DeYoung, R. K. (2011). Pedagogical Rhythms: Practices and Reflections on Practice. In D. I. Smith & J. K. A. Smith (Eds.), *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning* (pp. 24–42). Eerdmans.
- Djita, R. R. (2019). Looking Through the Implementation of K-13 Through the Lens of AQEE Principle From OECD: *Proceedings of Indonesia Focus*, 1(1), Article 1. <http://50.21.183.69/index.php/PIF/article/view/34>
- Djita, R. R., Tran, B. T. N., Nguyen, N. T. M., & Wibawanta, B. (2022). Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on First-Generation, Low-Income and Rural Students in Indonesia And Vietnam: A Cross-Cultural Comparative Study. *Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education*, 14(3A), 121–145. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jcihe.v14i3> (Part 1).4636| <https://ojed.org/jcihe>
- Drexler, J. L., & Bagby, A. (2021). Defining and Assessing Spiritual Formation: A Necessity for Christian Schooling. *International Christian Community of Teacher Educators Journal*, 16(1). <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/icctej/vol16/iss1/2>
- Dykstra, C. (2005). *Growing in the Life of Faith, Second Edition: Education and Christian Practices* (2nd edition). Westminster John Knox Press.
- Eckert, J. (2014). Christian Liberal Arts Teacher Preparation for 21st Century Students. *Religion & Education*, 41(2), 207–219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2013.864203>
- Ferary, D. (2021). On Ki Hadjar Dewantara’s Philosophy of Education. *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 5(2).
- Finn, D. E., Swezey, J. A., & Warren, D. P. (2010). Perceived Professional Development Needs of Teachers and Administrators in PS-12 Christian Schools. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 19(1), 7–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656211003630166>

- Fyock, J. A. (2008). *The Effect of the Teacher's Worldviews on the Worldviews of High School Seniors* [Dissertations & Theses]. Liberty University.
- Graham, D. L. (2009). *Teaching Redemptively: Bringing Grace and Truth into Your Classroom* (2nd edition). Purposeful Design Publications.
- Hill, J. P., & den Dulk, K. R. (2013). Religion, Volunteering, and Educational Setting: The Effect of Youth Schooling Type on Civic Engagement. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 52(1), 179–197.
- Holloway, D., Lumb, A., Mills, L., Rickett, A., Vickery, S., Wilson, T., & Wright, K. (2019). *Spiritual Development: Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom*. The Church of England Education Office.
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/2019%20Spiritual%20Development%20%20Interpretations%20of%20spiritual%20developments%20in%20the%20classroom.pdf>.
- Horan, A. P. (2017). Fostering Spiritual Formation of Millennials in Christian Schools. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 26(1), 56–77.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2017.1282901>
- Hull, J. E. (2003). Aiming for Christian education, settling for Christian educating: The Christian school's replication of a public school paradigm. *Christian Scholar's Review*, 32(2), 203–223.
- Hunter, J. D., & Olson, R. S. (2018). *The Content of Their Character: Inquiries into the Varieties of Moral Formation*. Finstock & Tew.
- IT MPK, I. (2023, February 20). *Koordinasi Nasional Gereja dan Pendidikan*. MPK Indonesia.
<https://www.mpk-indonesia.org/koordinasi-nasional-gereja-dan-pendidikan/>
- Johnson, A., Lee, M. H., & Cheng, A. (2023). Which Characteristics Do Religious School Administrators Value in Teachers? Experimental Evidence from the Global Christian School Sector. *ACSI Working Paper No. 2023-02*, 37.

- Juntak, J. N. S., & Setyanti, E. (2022). Pengaruh pendidikan iman terhadap motivasi orang tua menyekolahkan anak di sd kristen banjarsari surakarta. *Elementary: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Dasar*, 2(3), 177–185. <https://doi.org/10.51878/elementary.v2i3.1381>
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (Eds.). (2004). *Christian Reflections on The Leadership Challenge* (1st ed.). Jossey-Bass. <https://www.amazon.com/Christian-Reflections-Leadership-Challenge-J-B/dp/0787967858>
- Lee, M. H., Cheng, A., & Wiens, K. (2021). *2020 Principal Survey*. Council on Educational Standard & Accountability. <https://cesaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/cesa-survey-final-final1.pdf>
- Lyon, W. (2020). *Mission Accomplished? How Faith-Based Schools' Missions Inform and Influence Their Operations* [PhD Thesis, Northeastern University]. <https://repository.library.northeastern.edu/files/neu:m045qf906/fulltext.pdf>
- Meehan, C. (2002). Promoting Spiritual Development in the Curriculum. *Pastoral Care in Education*, 20(1), 16–24. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0122.00216>
- Mulholland, M. R., & Barton, R. R. (2016). *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation: Vol. Revised and Expanded*. IVP Books.
- Munthe, B., Sirait, T., Bangun, B., & Sihombing, S. (2023). The Role of the Teacher in Implementing Christian Religion Education in Growing Christian Faith for Early Age Children. *Jurnal Obsesi : Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 7(3), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v7i3.4484>
- Nainggolan, C. B., & Ma, D. S. (2022). Student Teacher's Experiences of Spiritual Formation and Digital Learning in a Christian Higher Education. *Polyglot: Jurnal Ilmiah*, 18(2), 218–233. <https://doi.org/10.19166/pji.v18i2.5740>
- Neidhart, H., & Carlin, P. (2011). Strengthening Religious Identity in Christian Schools. *Religious Education Journal of Australia*, 27(1), 23–29.
- OECD. (2016). *Indonesia* (pp. 1–8). OECD. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264266490-21-en>

- Otto, P., & Harrington, M. (2016). Full article: Spiritual Formation Within Christian Higher Education. *Christian Higher Education*, 15(5), 252–262.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2016.1208594>
- Pangestu, D. A., & Rochmat, S. (2021). FILOSOFI MERDEKA BELAJAR BERDASARKAN PERSPEKTIF PENDIRI BANGSA. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 6(1), Article 1.
<https://doi.org/10.24832/jpnk.v6i1.1823>
- Pennings, R., & Wiens, K. (2011). *Cardus Education Survey: Phase I Report (2011)* (p. 56). Cardus. <https://www.cardus.ca/research/education/reports/cardus-education-survey-phase-i-report-2011/>
- Petrie, K., Marsters, G., McClintock, D., Lindsay, P., Allen, A., & Zullig, K. (2019). The Relationship between School Climate and Faith Engagement. In *Revealing Jesus in the learning environment: Experiences of Christian educators* (pp. 125–164). Avondale Academic Press. <https://dspace.avondale.edu.au/handle/123456789/102402>
- Pike, M. A. (2004). The Challenge of Christian Schooling in a Secular Society. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 13(2), 149.
- Prior, C. (2021). Teaching and Christian Worldview: The Perceptions of Teachers. *TEACH Journal of Christian Education*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.55254/1835-1492.1460>
- Rasmussen, J., & Rasmussen, R. (2005). The Challenge of Integrating Faith-Learning-Living in Teacher Education. *International Christian Community of Teacher Educators Journal*, 1(1). <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/icctej/vol1/iss1/8>
- Rhea, R. (2011). Exploring Spiritual Formation in the Christian Academy: The Dialects of Church, Culture, and the Larger Integrative Task. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 39(1), 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009164711103900101>
- Rooney, P. (2009). Educational and Biblical Perspectives for Academic Achievement in Christian Schools. *Journal of Christian Education*, 52, 7–19.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/002196570905200302>

- Schwartz, K. D. (2006). RESEARCH: Transformations in Parent and Friend Faith Support Predicting Adolescents' Religious Faith. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 16(4), 311–326. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327582ijpr1604_5
- Sikkink, D. (2012). Religious School Differences in School Climate and Academic Mission: A Descriptive Overview of School Organization and Student Outcomes. *Journal of School Choice*, 6(1), 20–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15582159.2012.651394>
- Smith, D. I., Green, B., Kurkechian, M., & Cheng, A. (2021). Assessing Christian learning: Towards a practices-based approach to faith, vocation, and assessment. *International Journal of Christianity & Education*, 25(2), 151–168. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056997121997156>
- Smith, D. I., & Smith, J. K. A. (Eds.). (2011). *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning*. Eerdmans.
- Steibel, S. R. G. (2010). Christian Education and Spiritual Formation: One and the Same? *Christian Education Journal*, 7(2), 340–355. <https://doi.org/10.1177/073989131000700207>
- Strommen, M. P., & Hardel, D. (2000). *Passing on the Faith: A Radical New Model for Youth and Family Ministry*. Saint Mary's Press.
- Sugiarta, I. M., Mardana, I. B. P., Adiarta, A., & Artanayasa, W. (2019). Filsafat pendidikan Ki Hajar Dewantara (tokoh timur). *Jurnal Filsafat Indonesia*, 2(3), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jfi.v2i3.22187>
- Sutton, J. P., & Watson, T. G. (1995). Barriers to Excellence: A National Survey of Teachers from the American Association of Christian Schools. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 4(1), 21–33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219509484825>
- Swaner, L. E., Dodds, C., & Lee, M. H. (2021). *Leadership for Flourishing Schools: From Research to Practice* (p. 34). Association of Christian Schools International. <https://blog.acsi.org/leadership-for-flourishing-schools>

- Tripasa, R., Arifianto, Y. A., & Hendrilia, Y. (2021). Peran Guru PAK sebagai Teladan dalam Meningkatkan Kerohanian dan Karakter Peserta Didik. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Kristen (JUPAK)*, 2(1), 109–126. <https://doi.org/10.52489/jupak.v2i1.24>
- Uecker, M. V. (2003). Moral and Character Development. In J. Braley, J. Layman, & R. White (Eds.), *Foundations of Christian School Education* (1st edition, pp. 223–235). Purposeful Design Publications.
- Van Dyke, J. (2012). Teaching Our Education Students to Teach Christianly. *International Christian Community of Teacher Educators Journal*, 8(1). <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/icctej/vol8/iss1/2>
- VanMeter, K. G. (2009). *The order of importance of component parts of the Biblical worldview in Christian high school students* [Dissertations & Theses]. George Fox University.
- Walton, J. A. P., & Walters, M. (2011). Eat This Class: Breaking Bread in the Undergraduate Classroom. In D. Smith & J. K. A. Smith (Eds.), *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning* (pp. 80–101). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Willard, D. (2002). *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ*. NavPress.
- Wolf, P. J. (2007). Civics Exam: Schools of Choice Boost Civic Values. *Education Next*, 7(3), 67–72.
- Woodrow, J. (2006). Institutional Mission: The Soul of Christian Higher Education. *Christian Higher Education*, 5(4), 313–327. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15363750600860778>
- Wrigley-Carr, R. (2022). A practitioner's reflection upon the spiritual formation of teachers: The wisdom of Evelyn Underhill. *Journal of Religious Education*, 70(1), 109–125. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40839-021-00158-2>
- Young, B. (2007). The Collaborative School Community: Building Meaningful Relationships Among Stakeholders. In J. L. Drexler (Ed.), *Schools as Communities* (pp. 297–316). Purposeful Design Publications.

Yust, K. M. (2012). Being Faithful Together Families and Congregations as Intergenerational Christian Communities. In K. E. Lawson (Ed.), *Understanding Children's Spirituality: Theology, Research, and Practice* (pp. 223–237). Cascade Books, an Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics

Variable	Observations	Mean	SD
<i>Administrators' demographics</i>			
Age	197	36.30	8.10
Female	217	0.70	0.50
Total years of experience	192	20.30	8.20
<i>Administrators' highest degree</i>			
Bachelor's degree	143	0.60	0.50
Master's degree	143	0.40	0.50
PhD	143	0.00	0.10
Less than bachelor's degree	143	0.00	0.10
Degree in education	143	0.80	0.40
Degree in education is from Christian university	120	0.90	0.30
<i>Teachers' demographics</i>			
Age	385	28.70	8.00
Female	425	0.75	0.40
Total years of experience	385	15.00	7.10
<i>Teachers' highest degree</i>			
Bachelor's degree	390	0.90	0.30
Master's degree	390	0.10	0.30
PhD	390	0.00	0.00
Less than bachelor's degree	390	0.00	0.00
Degree in education	390	0.90	0.30
Degree in education is from Christian university	347	0.90	0.30
<i>Parents' demographics</i>			
Age	1257	41.00	6.10
Female	1376	0.80	0.40
Low income (less than \$250 USD/month)	1147	0.20	0.40
<i>Parents' highest degree</i>			
Bachelor's degree	1358	0.60	0.50
Master's degree	1358	0.10	0.30
PhD	1358	0.00	0.10
Less than bachelor's degree	1358	0.30	0.50
Degree is from Christian university	987	0.22	0.41
<i>Parents' eldest child in Christian school</i>			
Pre-K	1105	0.06	0.20
Elementary	1105	0.45	0.50
Middle school	1105	0.29	0.50
High school	1105	0.20	0.40
<i>School characteristics</i>			
East Indonesia	1156	0.40	0.50
International Christian school	596	0.00	0.10

National plus Christian school	596	0.70	0.40
Rural Christian school	596	0.30	0.40

Table 2 Descriptive statistics: Outcome variables

Variable	Observations	Mean
<i>Educational goals ranking: Parents, Teachers, Admins</i>	2585	
Fostering religious and spiritual development		2.00
Shaping students to understand their calling		2.80
Building students to develop basic skills		5.10
Promoting students' personal growth (self-esteem etc)		5.30
Promoting good habits and self-discipline		6.10
Encouraging students to pursue academic excellence		6.50
Promoting interpersonal skills		6.80
Promoting moral values		7.00
Preparing students for postsecondary education		7.50
Promoting students to develop vocational skills		7.80
Promoting multicultural awareness and understanding		9.00
<i>Spiritual development (spirdev) programs</i>		
Schools have weekly spirdev for everybody	154	0.85
Spirdev programs in this school helps students' faith	1910	0.98
<i>Spiritual development (spirdev) discussion</i>		
Principals discuss weekly with teachers about spirdev	152	0.45
Teachers discuss weekly with students about spirdev	391	0.67
<i>Spiritual development (spirdev) participation</i>		
Principals' and teachers' participation in spirdev PD	463	0.97
PD always discuss spirdev in Christian education	465	0.65
Participated last year in retreat	454	0.83
Participated last year in theological courses	454	0.37
Participated last year in other spirdev program	457	0.88
<i>Barriers to progress in their spiritual development</i>		
Different theological backgrounds	435	0.48
Lack of healthy churches	435	0.18
Other reason	435	0.34

Table 3 All roles: Relationship between spiritual development as the highest purpose of education and spiritual development programs in schools

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Spirdev programs help students spiritually			
Spirdev is the highest goal	0.01* (0.00)	0.02** (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)
Age		0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Female		0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)
Low income		-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Eastern Indonesia			0.03*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)
Christian graduate				0.04*** (0.01)
Spirdev is the highest goal x Christian graduate				-0.02 (0.01)
Constant	0.97*** (0.05)	0.91*** (0.04)	0.90*** (0.04)	0.90*** (0.04)
N	1,910	1,046	1,043	1,043

*Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.*

Table 4 Relationship between spiritual development as the sole purpose of education and administrators who have weekly spiritual discussions with their teachers

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Administrators discuss spirituals development weekly with teachers			
Admin. who believes that spiritual development is the sole purpose of education	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.08 (0.08)	-0.18** (0.09)	-0.05 (0.07)
Christian graduate			0.49*** (0.08)	0.53*** (0.10)
Interaction term				-0.14 (0.13)
Constant	0.48*** (0.06)	0.61*** (0.20)	0.16 (0.29)	0.11 (0.30)
N	152	146	113	113
Demographic controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

*Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.*

Table 5 Relationship between spiritual development as the sole purpose of education and teachers who have weekly spiritual discussions with their students

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Teachers discuss spirituals development weekly with students			
Teacher who believes that spiritual development is the sole purpose of education	0.08* (0.05)	0.11** (0.05)	0.07 (0.05)	0.17 (0.16)
Christian graduate			-0.03 (0.10)	0.04 (0.15)
Interaction term				-0.11 (0.17)
Constant	0.62*** (0.04)	0.40*** (0.11)	0.39 (0.19)	0.32 (0.22)
N	391	354	312	312
Demographic controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

*Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.*

Table 6 Relationship between spiritual development as the sole purpose of education and spiritual development activities that they are engaged in.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Spirdev PD	Bible study	Spirdev retreat	Theology courses	Other Spirdev programs
Admins and Teachers who believe that spiritual development is the sole purpose of education	-0.01 (0.02)	0.03 (0.05)	-0.00 (0.04)	0.10** (0.05)	0.01 (0.03)
Constant	0.96*** (0.03)	0.48*** (0.10)	0.68*** (0.09)	0.15 (0.10)	0.80*** (0.07)
N	427	429	420	418	422
Demographic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.*

Figure 1: Proportion of administrators, teachers and parents who believe that the following is the sole purpose of Christian education (N = 1672)

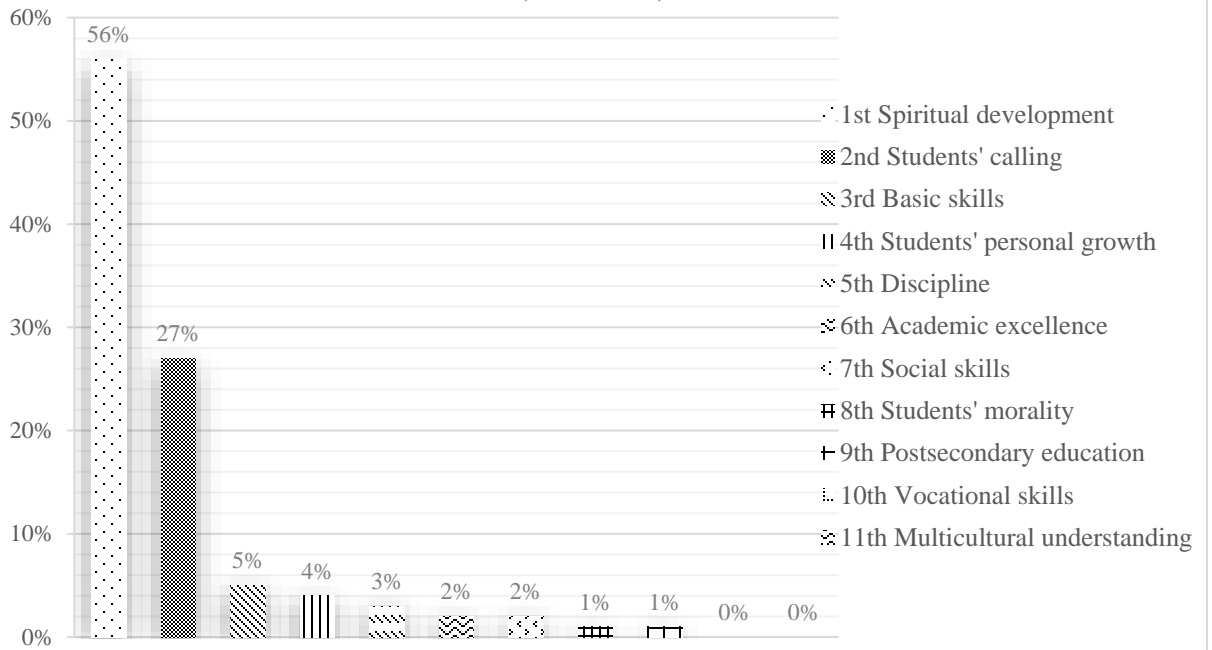


Figure 2: Proportion of parents who believe that the following is the sole purpose of Christian education (N = 1185)

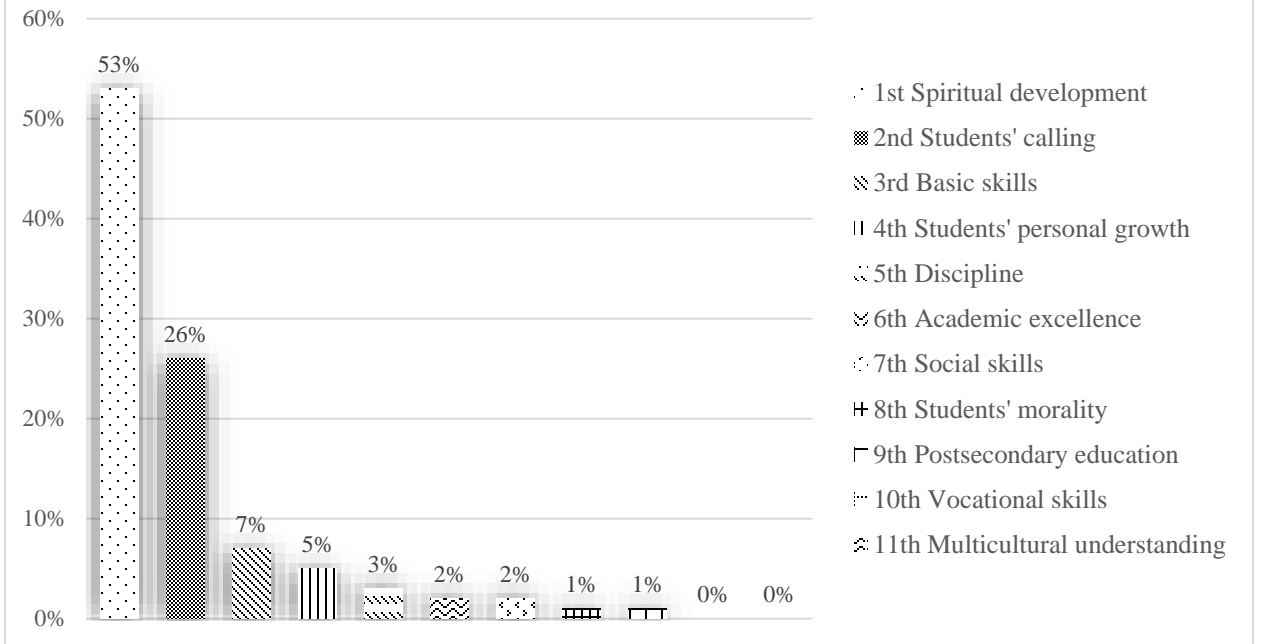


Figure 3: Proportion of Teachers who believe that these following is the sole purpose of Christian Education (N = 357)

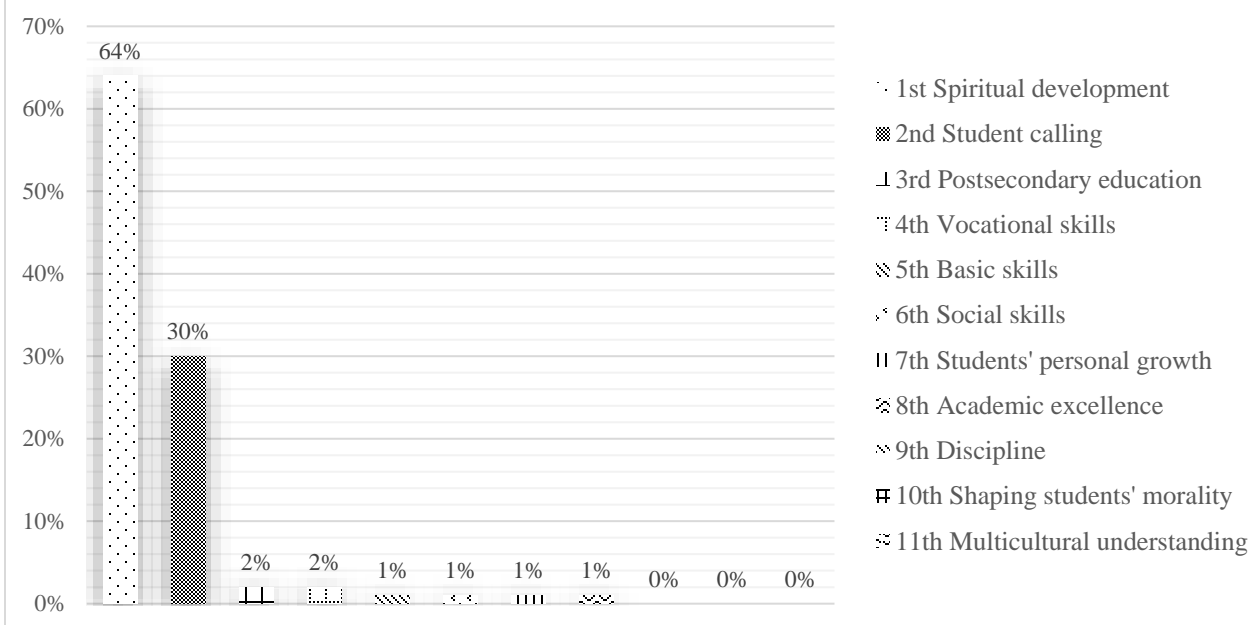
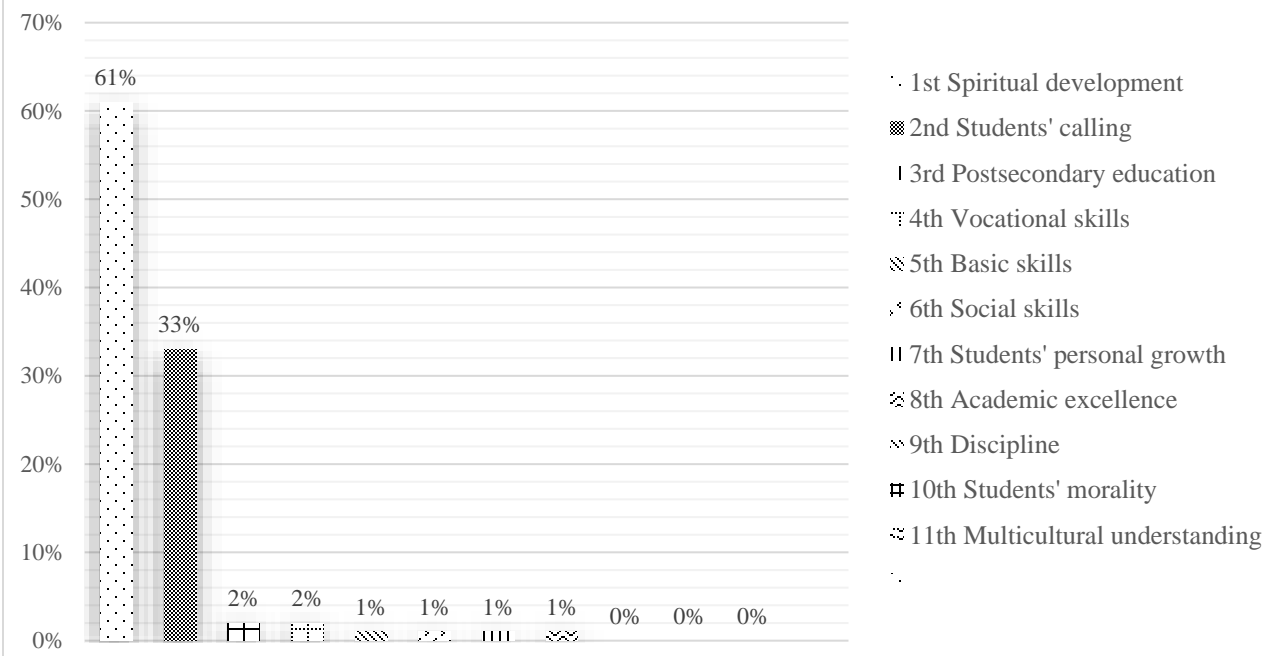
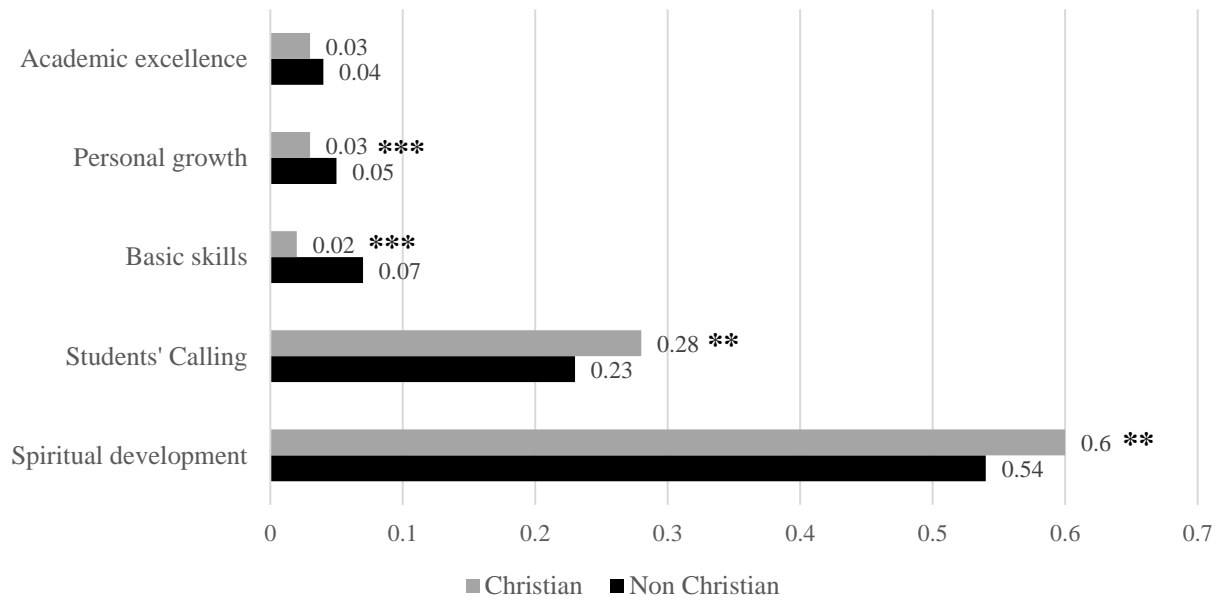


Figure 4: Proportion of Admins who believe that these following is the sole purpose of Christian Education (N = 130)



**Figure 5: Difference between Christian and Non-Christian university graduates:
What is the highest goal of Christian education?
(All roles, N = 1281, No demographic controls)**



**Figure 6: Difference between Christian and Non-Christian university graduates:
What is the highest goal of Christian education
(All roles, N = 1164 with demographic control)**

