Abrahamic Religions: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama
Volume 6, Number 2, September 2026, pp: 549-571
E-ISSN: 2797-6440 P-ISSN: 2797-7722
DOI: 10.22373/arj.v6i2.37285

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING CHRISTIAN VALUES IN CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN PONTIANAK CITY

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Abstract

This study describes how students at public and private senior high schools in Pontianak City, Indonesia, perceive the Christian values taught in Catholic Religious Education (CRE) and the teaching strategies their CRE teachers use. It used a descriptive qualitative design with an open-ended online questionnaire yielding 53 submissions from 52 students at two public and two private Catholic schools between August and October 2025; after one student's two submissions were merged and three generic responses were excluded, 49 students (7 public, 42 private) were analysed; a literature review supplied the conceptual framework but not the field findings. Responses were analysed thematically. Students described the values taught mainly as respect without discrimination, helping and sharing, gratitude, emotional self-control, and courteous speech. They identified four teaching strategies: teachers' own conduct as a model (11 of 49 students), a safe and relaxed classroom with room for questions, shared habituation such as opening and closing prayer, group work, and collective donations, and fair but firm handling of discipline. Some students read values such as joy and generosity in terms of grades, free periods, or lighter workloads, indicating interpretations that differed from the study's conceptual definitions of these values. The study captures students' perceptions only; it did not observe classes, interview teachers, or analyse documents, does not test effectiveness, and, because of the small and uneven sample, does not compare school types. Its contribution is a student-centred description of value teaching at the senior high school level in a setting with little prior research, with a clear separation between field findings, literature-based concepts, and practical recommendations.

Keywords: *Christian Values, Teaching Strategies, Student Perceptions, Catholic Religious Education, Senior High School*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan persepsi siswa SMA negeri dan swasta di Kota Pontianak, Indonesia, terhadap nilai-nilai Kristiani yang diajarkan dalam Pendidikan Agama Katolik (PAK) serta strategi pengajaran yang digunakan guru PAK. Penelitian menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif dengan kuesioner daring terbuka yang menghasilkan 53 isian dari 52 siswa di dua SMA negeri dan dua SMA swasta Katolik pada Agustus–Oktober 2025. Setelah dua isian dari satu siswa digabungkan dan tiga respons yang terlalu umum dikeluarkan, analisis mencakup 49 siswa, terdiri atas 7 siswa sekolah negeri dan 42 siswa sekolah swasta. Kajian pustaka digunakan untuk menyusun kerangka konseptual, bukan sebagai sumber temuan lapangan. Respons dianalisis secara tematik. Siswa terutama menggambarkan nilai-nilai yang diajarkan sebagai sikap menghargai tanpa diskriminasi,

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menolong dan berbagi, bersyukur, mengendalikan emosi, serta bertutur kata santun. Mereka mengidentifikasi empat strategi pengajaran: keteladanan perilaku guru yang disebutkan oleh 11 dari 49 siswa; suasana kelas yang aman, santai, dan terbuka untuk bertanya; pembiasaan bersama melalui doa pembuka dan penutup, kerja kelompok, serta pengumpulan sumbangan; dan penerapan disiplin secara adil tetapi tegas. Sebagian siswa memaknai nilai sukacita dan kemurahan hati dalam kaitannya dengan nilai akademik, jam pelajaran kosong, atau beban tugas yang lebih ringan, yang menunjukkan perbedaan dengan definisi konseptual penelitian. Penelitian ini hanya merekam persepsi siswa, tanpa observasi kelas, wawancara guru, atau analisis dokumen, serta tidak menguji efektivitas strategi maupun membandingkan jenis sekolah karena sampel yang kecil dan tidak seimbang. Kontribusinya adalah memberikan deskripsi pengajaran nilai dari perspektif siswa SMA dalam konteks yang masih terbatas diteliti, dengan membedakan secara jelas temuan lapangan, konsep berbasis literatur, dan rekomendasi praktis.
Kata Kunci: *Nilai-Nilai Kristiani, Strategi Pengajaran, Persepsi Siswa, Pendidikan Agama Katolik, Sekolah Menengah Atas*

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A. Introduction

Education is one of the main indicators of a nation's progress because the quality of a nation depends on the quality of the human resources it produces (Koesoema A., 2012). Education therefore needs to be managed in a planned, equitable, and high-quality manner so that students become not only academically capable but also morally and spiritually mature. Unequal access to and quality of education between regions has contributed to learning loss and a learning crisis. One strategic response of the Indonesian government is the Independent Curriculum, stipulated in Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology No. 56/M/2022 on curriculum guidelines for learning recovery (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia, 2022). The Independent Curriculum continues the emphasis of competency-based curriculum thinking on strengthening student competencies (Mulyasa, 2002), and places character development alongside 21st-century competencies.

Religious education in schools contributes to the intellectual development, character, morals, and personality of students. In this article, Catholic Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Katolik dan Budi Pekerti*, hereafter CRE) refers to the school subject taught to Catholic students. CRE is expected not only to convey doctrinal knowledge but also to guide students to internalise and live out Christian values in daily life (Tibo & Lumban Tobing, 2022b). It complements faith formation that begins at home and in the community and continues in formal education (Widharsana & Hartono, 2017), and it is expected to encourage tolerance, harmony, peace, and respect for the dignity of every person (Lumban Tobing et al., 2023). In Christian understanding, Jesus Christ is the primary model for these values through his life, service, and teaching (Schouten, 2008). At the same time, intolerance, conflict, disorderly behaviour, and weakening social sensitivity are visible in the lives of young people in a digital and globalised era (Hamu,

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2011). Because the literature uses "Christian Religious Education" in a broader sense, that term is used in this article only when referring to the titles and scope of the cited studies.

In Catholic education, Christian values can be integrated through several strategies: faith-based teaching across subjects, systematic moral and ethical instruction, extracurricular activities that foster care and service, collaboration with families and communities, and a school climate that reflects Catholic values (Konsili Vatikan II, 1965; Tibo & Lumban Tobing, 2022a; Widharsana & Hartono, 2017). Teachers are expected to master the subject matter, select essential material, organise concepts coherently, and integrate character values into each lesson (Lase, 2016; Mulyasa, 2012), while also using technology creatively for meaningful learning (Mulyasa, 2015). Adolescence adds further complexity because students are vulnerable to psychosocial problems and may resist authority when positive guidance from family and environment is weak (Hamu, 2011). Teachers' success therefore depends not only on pedagogical and professional competence but also on humanistic relationships with students (Tibo & Sitohang, 2022). Religious education is also expected to maintain human dignity as God's creation (*Kompendium katekismus Gereja Katolik*, 2005/2013), and CRE learning in the digital era has been discussed in the light of the Council's declaration on education (Daiman & Omin, 2023).

This study understands the teaching of Christian values as a process that combines four aspects: building awareness of moral norms, the personal example of educators, an educational activity system that involves students in worship and service, and the formation of Christian values grounded in Scripture and Church teaching (Table 1). Two analytic lenses guide the interpretation of field data. First, the social learning perspective explains how students learn through observing and imitating models (Bandura, 1977), which makes teachers' conduct a relevant object of observation. Second, the character education perspective distinguishes knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good (Lickona, 1991), which supports examining whether value teaching reaches beyond cognitive understanding. Table 1 is a conceptual framework drawn from the literature; it is not a finding of this study. The framework is used to read students' descriptions, not to claim that any strategy is effective.

Table 1. Aspects of Christian values education (conceptual framework)

Aspect	Essence	Example
Building awareness of moral norms	Developing children's knowledge of moral values through educational programmes, study of religious texts, analysis of the lives of the saints, and introduction to Church traditions.	Teaching religious ethics in school, reading the Bible, discussing Bible stories, studying the lives of the saints.
Personal example of educators	Passing on moral norms through the personal example of teachers, educators,	Teachers show honesty and fairness in their interactions with students; parents

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	and parents who embody Christian values in their behaviour.	accompany their children in adhering to moral principles.
Educational activity system	Involving children in religious activities, charitable works, and social service that foster awareness of moral responsibility.	Participation in Church worship, organising charitable activities, and involvement in volunteer and social initiatives.
Christian values formation	Fostering Christian values through educational programmes, especially CRE, based on Catholic teaching drawn from Holy Scripture, the Magisterium, and Tradition.	Teaching Christian values in school through CRE and its application in everyday life.

Source: synthesised by the authors from the literature cited in this section.

Table 2 summarises 21 earlier studies on teaching Christian values in schools. Each entry reports the focus or strategy described by the cited authors, not a finding of the present study. The studies in Table 2 were identified and selected because they address strategies for teaching Christian values or character in school settings.

Table 2. Previous studies on strategies for teaching Christian values in schools

Study (source title)	**Main focus / strategy**	**School level / context**	**Citation**
Christian Values and Their Influence on Pedagogical Practice: Theological Foundations of Moral Education Formation	Scripture, the lives of the saints, teacher example, and structured activities (worship, charity, service) to form moral norms and social responsibility.	Historical and contemporary Christian schools (US, South Korea)	Park et al. (2025)
Pendidikan Kristen Responsif Disrupsi: Integrasi Nilai Kristiani dalam Transformasi Pendidikan Abad Ke-21	Integrating Christian values into digital curricula; interactive media and faith-based pedagogy for Generation Alpha.	Christian schools in the digital era	Boiliu & Kia (2025)
Pentingnya Pendidikan Agama Kristen terhadap Moral Siswa SMP Negeri 6 Wewewa Timur Sumba Barat Daya	Contextual, life-related teaching, creative methods, and morally integrated teachers to shape honesty, responsibility, love, and tolerance.	Lower secondary school	Lende (2025)
The Influence of Christian Religious Studies on the Moral Values and Ethical Development of Students in Secondary Schools in	Curriculum on forgiveness, humility, love, and tolerance; service projects and partnerships with churches to practise values.	Secondary schools (Nigeria)	Ogbodo & Shanpepe (2025)

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Apa Local Government of Benue State			
Learning Strategy for Christian Education Based on Local Wisdom in Disruption Era	Ethnopedagogy: using local culture, stories, and community practices to build Christian values and character.	Schools and local communities	Poroe et al. (2022)
Integrating Biblical Teachings in Christian Religious Education to Foster Christ-Centered Character Among College Students	Scripture-centred teaching using narratives, parables, and a virtues focus; strong teacher modelling and supportive faith community.	High school / college	Jacob (2025)
Analisis Pendidikan Karakter pada Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Katolik di Sekolah Dasar Katolik Kota Pontianak	Teacher as model of Christ-like character; value-integrated curriculum, supportive environment, and leadership for character growth.	Catholic primary schools, Pontianak	Lumban Tobing et al. (2023)
Pembinaan Guru PAK dan Budi Pekerti terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Peserta Didik pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19 di Sekolah Dasar Katolik Pontianak	Teacher development and teacher as model of Christ-like character.	Catholic primary schools, Pontianak	Lumban Tobing, Astuti, et al. (2022)
Value acquisition of school pupils' after a Christian Religious Studies based intervention (teacher-led digital story telling strategy) in Lagos State, Nigeria	Teacher-led digital storytelling; the authors report improved value acquisition compared with conventional teaching.	Primary schools (Nigeria)	Aremu (2023)
The Role of Catholic Religious Education Teachers in Developing Moral Values for High School Students: A Case Study at Parbuluan	Teacher as agent of restoration: teaching love, forgiveness, justice, and tolerance through character formation and interreligious dialogue.	High schools with religious diversity	Tibo & Lumban Tobing (2022c)
Pembentukan Hidup Rohani terhadap Karakter Calon Guru Pendidikan Agama Katolik	Integrating love, honesty, integrity, and tolerance in lessons and extracurriculars to	State college (prospective CRE teachers)	Lumban Tobing, Cenderato, &

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	build character in multicultural settings.		Meman (2022)
Implementasi Kompetensi Pedagogik Guru Pendidikan Agama Katolik di Sekolah Menengah Pertama; Hidup Rohani Katekis	Interactive, contextual strategies and teacher example to instil moral and spiritual values.	Catholic teachers (Indonesia)	Tibo & Sitohang (2022); Tibo & Lumban Tobing (2022a)
Pedagogical Content Knowledge of Christian Values Educators in King's College of the Philippines: A Case Study	Integrative teaching of Christian values using modern and conventional strategies; teacher-chosen varied methods.	Kindergarten to college in one Christian institution	Ticada (2024)
Wyśpiewać wartości. Wychowanie chrześcijańskie na lekcjach języka angielskiego w katolickiej szkole podstawowej w Belfaście	Integrating Christian values into English lessons using spiritually themed songs and value-transmission strategies (witness, simulation).	Catholic primary school (Belfast)	Adamczewski (2020)
Beyond Transmissional Pedagogies in Christian Education: One School's Recasting of Values Education	Moving from lecture-based to participatory and transformative pedagogies to foster lived Christian values.	One Christian school	Collier & Dowson (2008)
An Analysis of Patterns and Values of Humanist Christian Religious Education	Humanist CRE: Bible-based teaching, class management, positive teacher–student interaction, guidance, and modelling love, peace, patience, and mercy.	Schools in Rote Ndao district	Natonis et al. (2023)
Christian Religious Education Strategies for Early Childhood in Fostering Knowledge of God in Schools	Play-based, child-centred, sensory-rich, and exploratory learning grounded in Christian values.	Early childhood / preschool	Setiawan et al. (2024)
Riset Pengembangan Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Berbasis Nilai Kristiani di SMP Methodis 8 Medan	Integrating Christian values into language lessons through discussions, case studies, worship routines, and teacher collaboration.	Lower secondary Indonesian language classes	Simamora et al. (2024)
The Integration of Christian Values in the Implementation of an	Embedding love, patience, tolerance, honesty, and responsibility in the	Christian schools using the	Larosa (2024)

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Independent Curriculum in Christian Schools in Developing Student Character in the Era of Digital Technology	Independent Curriculum to form digitally resilient character.	Independent Curriculum	
Penanaman Nilai Etika Kristiani terhadap Anak Peneladanan Karakter	Role modelling and family–school cooperation; character education grounded in biblical ethics and daily practice.	Children in school and family contexts	Harianja et al. (2024)
Christian Values as the Foundation for Character Formation in Students in the Modern Era	Integrating Christian values into curriculum, teacher example, and Christian community life; value-based activities and service.	Christian schools (modern era)	Paparang & Marjono (2024)

Source: authors' synthesis of the cited studies. Titles are given as published; descriptions of focus follow the cited authors.

Three points emerge from Table 2. First, teacher example, participatory and reflective methods, and value-based activities such as service recur across studies. Second, most studies concern early childhood, primary, lower secondary, or tertiary levels, or are conceptual or literature-based; the studies from Pontianak concentrate on Catholic primary schools (Lumban Tobing et al., 2023; Lumban Tobing, Astuti, et al., 2022) and prospective teachers (Lumban Tobing, Cenderato, & Meman, 2022). Third, among the sources reviewed, we found no empirical description of how CRE teachers teach Christian values at public and private senior high schools in the same local context. Studies on Dayak local wisdom in Christian Religious Education in Kalimantan (Duatan et al., 2026) point to the relevance of local context but concern contextual learning models rather than the strategies described here. This study addresses that gap for Pontianak City by describing, from the students' side, which values they say CRE teachers teach and which strategies they perceive, including how students interpret them.

The study is guided by three questions. (1) How do students at public and private senior high schools in Pontianak City describe the Christian values that their CRE teachers teach? (2) Which teaching strategies do students perceive, and how do they interpret them? (3) What variation appears in students' descriptions across the two school types? The study is descriptive. It reports students' perceptions only; it does not aim to compare school types statistically or to measure the effect of the strategies on student character.

B. Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative design (Sandelowski, 2000; Sugiyono, 2017), bounded to students' perceptions of CRE teaching at public and private senior high

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schools in Pontianak City. The aim was to describe the meanings and perspectives of the people involved, in their own words, without manipulating variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moleong, 2017). Data came from an open-ended online questionnaire. Teacher interviews, classroom observation, and document analysis were not part of this study, so the findings describe what students report and perceive, not what teachers plan or what happens in the classroom. Schools of two types were included, but the study is not comparative: school type shows the range of descriptions rather than testing differences. A literature review was used in a supporting role, to build the conceptual framework (Table 1) and to synthesise earlier studies (Table 2). It is not a source of field findings.

The study was conducted at four senior high schools in Pontianak City, two public (PU1, PU2) and two private Catholic (PR1, PR2). School names are withheld to protect confidentiality. In Indonesian schools, every student is entitled to religious education of his or her own religion taught by a teacher of the same religion (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003, 2003); CRE at PU1 and PU2 is therefore taught to Catholic students in schools that are not Catholic, whereas PR1 and PR2 are Catholic schools. The questionnaire link was distributed by the researcher through WhatsApp to students taught by CRE teachers at the participating schools. Participation was voluntary. The online form recorded only each student's name, school, and submission time. Grade level, age, and gender were not collected and therefore cannot be reported. Table 3 summarises the total submissions received and the students included in the analysis. Each submission was identified using its submission number and school code, for example, S15-PR.

Table 3. Research sites, questionnaire submissions, and students analysed

Site code	School type	Submissions	Students analysed
PU1	Public	4	3 (one student submitted twice; submissions merged)
PU2	Public	4	4
PR1	Private (Catholic)	35	33 (two generic responses excluded)
PR2	Private (Catholic)	10	9 (one generic response excluded)
Total	2 public, 2 private	53 (from 52 students)	49 (7 public, 42 private)

Note: the questionnaire was completed online between 8 August and 13 October 2025 (42 submissions in August, 11 in October).

The instrument was an online questionnaire with twelve open-ended items. Each item asked students to describe the forms of one Christian value that their CRE teacher teaches at school (for example, "What are the forms of the value of love that your CRE teacher teaches students at school?"). Responses were free text in Indonesian and were translated by the authors for reporting. The research proceeded in three stages: preparing the instrument and obtaining permits, administering the questionnaire, and analysing the responses.

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Questionnaire responses were first cleaned in three steps. First, the form contained twelve items, but items 4 and 5 repeated the label of the joy item and mostly repeated its answers, so they were excluded; the analysis therefore uses ten items (love, joy, peace, patience, generosity, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-mastery, and compassion). Caring, forgiveness, and justice were not asked as separate items and are reported only where students raised them. Second, one student submitted

the form twice (August and October 2025, same name and school, different answers). The raw data were checked, and the two submissions were treated as one student: for each item, the two answers were pooled, and a category was counted once for that student. All counts therefore refer to students, not submissions. Third, responses were assessed against explicit criteria for generic responses: (G1) the text is written in a teacher or curriculum voice or as a general statement (for example, "as a CRE teacher…" or "the values taught in CRE cover various aspects…") rather than as the student's own experience; (G2) the same template (numbered lists or a repeated sentence stem) is used for at least eight of the ten items; and (G3) the answers contain no concrete reference to the student's own school, teacher conduct, or an event. Responses meeting all three criteria were excluded from the analytic sample. Three submissions (two from PR1 and one from PR2) met them, so the analytic sample is 49 students (7 public, 42 private). As a sensitivity check, the six broad categories reported below were also counted for all 52 students (50, 47, 44, 42, 39, and 27 students, against 47, 44, 41, 39, 36, and 25 in the analytic sample); their order did not change. Short answers that did not meet the criteria were retained, including one student whose answers were single words naming values (S08-PR1).

Analysis followed data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014), with thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Free-text answers were coded into categories by keyword-assisted content analysis, and counts report the number of students whose answer to an item mentions a category. An answer may mention more than one category. Categories were defined after reading all answers, and each category was operationalised as a list of Indonesian keywords (for example, "syukur" for gratitude and "marah" or "emosi" for emotion control) applied to each item's answer, so a student was counted once per category per item, however many keywords occurred. Overlapping categories were allowed. To check context, a random sample of three matched answers per category (105 matches) was read against the full answer; three matches were judged ambiguous or incorrect (one for perseverance in learning, where the subject was the teacher, and two for loyalty to friends and for keeping promises, where the keyword referred to people in general or to the teacher's consistency). These matches were not corrected in the counts, so the counts in Tables 5 and 7 are approximate. The counts that carry specific claims in the text (teacher conduct, donations, good grades or free periods, and references to other religions) were verified by reading each answer. Coding was carried out by the counts underlying the specific claims reported in the text concerning teacher conduct, donations, good grades or free periods, and references to other religions,

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which were verified by reading each response. All responses were coded by the lead researcher. No second coder or formal inter-coder reliability assessment was used. Table 4 served as the reference frame for values and behavioural indicators. It is an analytic framework, not a finding: it was compiled by the authors from value formulations in CRE teaching materials and from the literature (Koesoema A., 2012; Lickona, 1991), and only ten of its twelve values were asked about. Teaching strategies were identified from students' descriptions of what teachers do and are presented separately from the predefined categories of Christian values. The researchers' backgrounds in pastoral catechetics, literature, and educational technology informed the design of the instrument, the literature review, and the interpretation of data.

Table 4. Analytic framework: Christian values and behavioural indicators used for coding

Christian value	Main meaning	Behavioural indicators at school
Love	An attitude of respect, empathy, and concern for all people without discrimination.	Respecting friends, not bullying, being willing to share, helping friends in trouble, and forgiving even when hurt.
Joy	An inner attitude of gratitude, optimism, and peace in all situations.	Showing a cheerful face, accepting tasks positively, not complaining easily, and keeping hope in God in times of difficulty.
Peace	The desire to live in harmony and create a harmonious atmosphere.	Avoiding quarrels, reconciling friends who disagree, respecting differences, and taking part in activities that build social justice.
Patience	The ability to restrain oneself and manage emotions in difficult situations.	Not reacting impulsively, staying calm when reprimanded, waiting one's turn, and not being easily provoked.
Caring and forgiveness	Sensitivity to the needs of others and willingness to forgive.	Comforting sad friends, offering help without being asked, apologising and forgiving, and maintaining peaceful relationships.
Generosity	The attitude of being willing to give and serve selflessly.	Sharing supplies or goods, joining school social activities, volunteering, and not calculating when helping.
Kindness	A sincere intention to do what is right and beneficial to others.	Helping without being asked, greeting in a friendly manner, not hurting with words, and helping create a comfortable classroom atmosphere.
Faithfulness	Consistency in commitment, responsibility, and trust.	Keeping promises, completing assignments on time, not cheating, and being faithful to school values and faith teachings.
Gentleness	Humility and gentleness in words and actions.	Speaking politely, not shouting, accepting criticism humbly, respecting friends and teachers, and not abusing position or power.

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Self-mastery	The ability to control negative urges and desires.	Refraining from harsh words, avoiding brawls, managing gadget use, and considering the impact before acting.
Justice	The attitude of upholding everyone's rights and the truth.	Not showing favouritism, rejecting discriminatory actions, daring to speak the truth, and defending friends who are treated unfairly.
Compassion	Unconditional love expressed in concrete actions.	Respecting people of different ethnicities and religions, helping without expecting return, taking part in service and charitable works, and being ready to love even those who dislike them.

The study rests on a single data source, so source and technique triangulation were not possible. Data sufficiency was judged against the limited, descriptive aim of the study; saturation was neither claimed nor tested. All 49 analysed students answered all ten items (490 answers, none blank). Answers were short but informative: the median answer had nine words (range 1–76), and 33 of the 490 answers had three words or fewer. Thirty-two of the 33 categories in Table 5 were mentioned by students from at least two schools; the exception, good grades or free periods, came from one school. The sample is uneven, however: 33 of the 49 students come from one private school, and only seven from public schools, so sufficiency is limited for any statement about school types, and none is made. Credibility checks were limited to reporting verbatim, translated quotations with codes, separating description from interpretation, reading a random sample of keyword matches in context, and verifying the counts that carry specific claims (see Data Analysis). No inter-coder check, member checking, or audit trail was carried out.

The questionnaire form collected respondents' names. Names were replaced by codes before analysis and are not reported, and school names are withheld. Ethical procedures were as follows: Research permission was obtained from the relevant university and the schools where the study was conducted. Before completing the questionnaire, students were informed about the purpose of the study and provided their oral consent to participate. Parental or guardian consent and student assent were also obtained for respondents under 18 years of age. However, students' ages were not recorded in the questionnaire. The questionnaire collected respondents' names and school information. Before data analysis, respondents' names were replaced with codes, while school names were omitted from the research report to protect the identities of participants and participating institutions. Teachers had access to the questionnaire responses. Therefore, the extent of teachers' access to individual-level data and personally identifiable information, as well as the measures implemented to maintain the confidentiality of students' responses, requires further clarification. The research data were collected through Google Forms and stored in digital format. The data storage location and access settings for the form and response data should be clearly documented to ensure transparency and the protection of research data.

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C. Results and Discussion

This section reports students' perceptions by theme. Each theme presents the finding, the supporting evidence from the questionnaire, and an interpretation that is compared with earlier studies (Table 2). Counts refer to the 49 analysed students (7 public, 42 private) unless stated otherwise. Evidence is cited with submission and school codes (Table 3); quotations were translated by the authors, and some are abridged. Concepts drawn from the literature and practical recommendations are kept separate and are labelled as such. All statements describe what students reported; the study did not observe classes, interview teachers, or measure change in students' character.

1. Students' Descriptions of the Values Taught

Students' descriptions were relational and tied to everyday school behaviour. Across the ten items, 47 of 49 students mentioned self-regulation (patience, emotion control, discipline, responsibility, or honesty), 44 mentioned helping, sharing, or caring, 41 mentioned respect or non-discrimination, 39 mentioned faith practices such as prayer, worship, or gratitude, 36 mentioned courteous speech or manners, and 25 mentioned forgiveness. Table 5 shows the most frequent descriptions for each value. Gratitude was the most common description of joy (27 students), polite speech the most common description of gentleness (34), and emotion control the most common description of patience (20) and self-mastery (22). Faithfulness was described as loyalty to God and the faith (21) and as keeping promises and commitments (20), and peace as tolerance and respect for difference (26) and avoiding or resolving conflict (16).

Table 5. Students' most frequent descriptions of each value taught by CRE teachers (number of submissions, of which public)

Value (item)	**Most frequent descriptions (n of 49 students; public of 7 in brackets)**
Love	Helping, sharing, and care 21 (2); respect without discrimination 18 (3); love of God, neighbour, and self 12 (2); forgiveness 8 (1)
Joy	Gratitude 27 (5); cheerful and positive classroom (smiling, humour, games) 11 (1); sharing joy and supporting others 11 (1); good grades or free periods 4 (0)
Peace	Tolerance and respect for difference 26 (6); avoiding or resolving conflict 16 (1); forgiveness and reconciliation 9 (1)
Patience	Controlling emotion and not getting angry 20 (4); perseverance in learning 9 (2); waiting calmly 5 (0)
Generosity	Sharing and giving 21 (4); helping without reward 17 (3); humility, forgiveness, second chances 15 (1)
Kindness	Helping others 15 (3); courtesy, polite speech, greeting 14 (4); honesty, discipline, rules, cleanliness 10 (3)
Faithfulness	Loyalty to God and faith 21 (6); keeping promises, commitment, tasks 20 (4); loyalty to friends and others 13 (2)

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Gentleness	Polite and soft speech 34 (7); humility, patience, not angry 13 (1); respect for others' views 8 (2)
Self-mastery	Controlling emotion 22 (2); discipline, responsibility, use of time 12 (2); thinking before acting 7 (1)
Compassion (*cinta kasih*)	Mutual love and affection 26 (4); respect and friendship without discrimination 17 (3); helping and care 15 (0); forgiveness 8 (2)

Note: counts are students whose answer to the item mentions the category; an answer can mention several. Coding was keyword-assisted, and counts are approximate (see Data Analysis). With all 52 students, counts are higher by 0–3 per cell, and the most frequent description of each value is unchanged, except for kindness, where two categories tie (16 each). Only seven students are from public schools, so public-school counts are indicative only.

These descriptions match many indicators in Table 4, such as helping friends, respecting differences, speaking politely, controlling emotion, and keeping promises. They are what students reported that teachers teach, not measures of student behaviour. At least six students (one public, five private) referred explicitly to people of other religions, for example, solidarity "without distinguishing religion" (S47-PR2).

2. Strategies Perceived by Students

Four teaching strategies emerged from what students said teachers do. Table 6 summarises them with examples; they are strategies as perceived by students, not strategies verified by observation.

Table 6. Teaching strategies perceived by students

Strategy	**What students described**	**Example (translated)**
Teacher's own conduct as a model	Teachers' patience, not getting angry, polite speech, and care for students (11 of 49 students; 1 public, 10 private).	"Patient in everything, such as the teachers who teach patiently even though we students sometimes do things that raise their emotions; that already counts as teaching us." (S28-PR1)
Safe, relaxed, dialogical classroom	A class that is not tense, humour, room to ask questions, and detailed explanation when asked.	"Giving students the opportunity to ask questions." (S15-PR1)
Shared habituation and service	Opening and closing prayer, group work, games or ice-breakers, and collective donations for classmates in difficulty (donations: 4 students, all private).	"Love for God is shown by praying at the beginning and end of every lesson." (S51-PR2)
Fair but firm handling of discipline	Sanctions applied without anger, second chances, remedial opportunities, and fairness to all students.	"Never angry when we cheated, but immediately gave the sanction that applies." (S19-PR1)

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Note: counts are students; a student can describe more than one strategy.

a. Theme 1: Teacher's Own Conduct as a Model

Finding. Eleven of 49 students (1 public, 10 private) described the teacher's own conduct as the way a value was taught, rather than a lesson delivered in words. Students named patience, not getting angry, polite language, and care for students.

Evidence. One student wrote that the teacher "has never been angry since Grade 10 (this is a fact), always uses polite language, and is always patient" (S06-PU1). Another wrote: "Patient in everything, such as the teachers who teach patiently even though we students sometimes do things that raise their emotions; that already counts as teaching us" (S28-PR1). A third said the teachers "care for us" and showed what love means (S21-PR1, abridged).

Interpretation and comparison. These accounts agree with the social learning view that people learn values by observing models (Bandura, 1977) and with earlier studies that identify teacher example as central (Harianja et al., 2024; Jacob, 2025; Lumban Tobing et al., 2023; Paparang & Marjono, 2024; Tibo & Lumban Tobing, 2022c), and with the call for CRE teachers' spirituality and exemplary life (Anggota Komunitas Sahabat Pena Kita, 2020; da Santo, 2019; UCA News, 2010). The data show that some students perceive teacher conduct as teaching. They do not show that it is more important than other strategies or that it changes students' behaviour.

b. Theme 2: A Safe, Relaxed, and Dialogical Classroom

Finding. Students described classes that felt safe, not tense, and open to questions. They linked this atmosphere to the teacher's humour, kindness, and willingness to explain.

Evidence. Students mentioned a teacher who "sometimes jokes and laughs, which makes the class not tense" (S49-PR2), teaching that is "enjoyable and not tense" (S15-PR1), "the opportunity to ask questions" (S15-PR1), and detailed explanation "every time" a student asks (S25-PR1). One student described learning "with a sense of safety and comfort," so that there is no conflict and students feel at peace in class (S32-PR1). Another said the teacher explains in more depth when students do not understand and offers remedial opportunities (S20-PR1, paraphrased). Interpretation and comparison. This theme matches the shift from transmission to participation reported by Collier and Dowson (2008) and the positive teacher–student interaction found in humanist CRE (Natonis et al., 2023). Students also described participation in group work, where students were taught to be "humble and help one another" (S50-PR2), which fits the indicators of gentleness and peace in Table 4. The study cannot show whether the classroom climate shapes students' values; it shows that students notice and name it.

c. Theme 3: Shared Habituation and Service

Finding. Students named concrete practices that make values visible in school life: prayer at the start and end of lessons, group work, games or ice-breakers, and collective donations for classmates in difficulty.

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Evidence. One student wrote that love for God is shown "by praying at the beginning and end of every lesson" (S51-PR2). Four students, all from private schools, referred to donations or solidarity funds, for example "giving solidarity money when someone suffers a misfortune, without distinguishing religion" (S47-PR2) and fundraising for others, with "the spirit of giving without expecting anything in return like the generous Jesus" (S48-PR2, abridged). Another student described the joy of games after finishing a lesson and ice-breakers "to build our mood" (S26-PR1).

Interpretation and comparison. The practices resemble structured activities such as worship, charity, and service reported by Park et al. (2025), service projects and partnerships with churches in Nigeria (Ogbodo & Shanpepe, 2025), and discussion, case study, and worship routines in Indonesian classes (Simamora et al., 2024). Studies that use media, digital storytelling, or local culture (Aremu, 2023; Boiliu & Kia, 2025; Poroe et al., 2022) suggest further options, which students did not mention except creative media in one answer (S26-PR1). Aremu (2023) reports an intervention effect, whereas this study makes no claim about effect. Donation and prayer practices were mentioned only by students from private schools, but with eight public-school submissions this cannot be read as a difference between school types.

d. Theme 4: Fair but Firm Handling of Discipline

Finding. Students described how teachers handled mistakes and discipline: applying sanctions without anger, giving second chances, and treating students fairly.

Evidence. One student wrote that the teacher was "never angry when we cheated, but immediately gave the sanction that applies" (S19-PR1). Another said the teacher gives students who lack sufficient grades another opportunity (S25-PR1), and a third described forgiving a friend who made a disturbance in class (S49-PR2, paraphrased). Students also named fairness: "being fair to all students" (S20-PR1).

Interpretation and comparison. These descriptions link discipline with values of patience, forgiveness, and justice, in line with studies that present the teacher as a model of Christ-like character and as an agent of restoration (Lumban Tobing et al., 2023; Tibo & Lumban Tobing, 2022c). Because the data are student reports, they show how discipline is perceived, not how it is carried out.

3. Variation in Students' Interpretations

Some answers differed from the study's conceptual definitions of the values; the study did not establish the meanings intended by individual teachers. Six students from private schools linked joy or generosity to good grades, free periods, or lighter workloads, for example, "getting good grades, getting free periods while studying, being fair to all students" (S20-PR1). One student interpreted a teacher's anger as care: teachers "reprimand" firmly because "they do not want students to fall into wrongdoing" (S33-PR1, abridged). Three generic responses were excluded from the analytic sample (see Data Analysis), and a few other answers listed values without describing teacher practice. These readings show variation in students' understanding and suggest that value teaching

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is not received uniformly. The study had no baseline or follow-up, so none of these answers show that students' character improved.

4. Characteristics and Variation Across School Types

The two school types differ in context. As described under Research Sites and Participants, CRE at the public schools (PU1, PU2) is taught to Catholic students in schools that are not Catholic, whereas the private schools (PR1, PR2) are Catholic schools. Further information on differences in CRE instructional hours, teachers' employment status, and routine religious activities across the two school types was not systematically recorded in the study. These characteristics are therefore not compared. Table 7 reports how many students from each school type mention each category. The comparison is descriptive. Only seven students come from public schools, and 33 of the 42 private-school students come from one school, so the frequencies are too uneven to support conclusions about institutional differences between school types, and none is drawn.

Table 7. Submissions mentioning each category, by school type

Category (at least one answer)	Public (of 7)	Private (of 42)
Self-regulation (patience, emotion control, discipline, responsibility, honesty)	7	40
Helping, sharing, or caring	7	37
Respect or non-discrimination	7	34
Faith practices (prayer, worship, gratitude)	7	32
Courteous speech or manners	7	29
Forgiveness	4	21
Teacher's own conduct as a model	1	10
Explicit reference to people of other religions	1	5
Collective donations or solidarity funds	0	4
Joy or generosity linked to grades, free periods, or workload	0	6

Note: counts are students; keyword-assisted coding, approximate (see Data Analysis). The numbers are descriptive and are not tested for differences.

1) Discussion: Meaning and Limits of the Findings

Taken together, students' answers describe value teaching as a combination of teacher example, a safe and dialogical classroom, shared habituation, and fair handling of discipline, rather than the delivery of doctrine alone. This supports the view that religious education can involve the formation of faith and character as well as the transfer of knowledge (Schouten, 2008; Widharsana & Hartono, 2017). Teacher conduct was explicitly identified as a way of teaching values in the answers of 11 students, consistent with the emphasis on teacher example in previous studies.

Several limits apply. The study is qualitative and descriptive and rests on one data source: students' free-text answers. It did not observe classes, interview teachers or

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principals, or analyse planning and assessment documents, so it cannot say how teachers plan, how they assess values, or whether practice matches what students report. Students may have answered favourably or described a value in general terms rather than the teacher's practice. The sample is small and uneven (7 public and 42 private students analysed, 33 of them from one school) and was not randomly drawn. Two items were duplicated in the form, so only ten of the twelve values in Table 4 were asked about; one student submitted the form twice, and three generic responses were excluded. The study does not establish effectiveness, causal links to student character, or transferability to other regions, and it was not designed as a comparison of school types. Interpretations should therefore be read as grounded descriptions that other settings can test.

2) Practical Recommendations

The following recommendations are the authors' proposals based on the findings and the literature. They are normative statements, not findings, and each should be adapted to the local school context. Table 8 summarises them.

Table 8. Practical recommendations (not findings of this study)

Area	Recommendation	Illustrative implementation
Strengthening CRE teacher competence	Strengthen the spiritual, pedagogical, and reflective competence of CRE teachers so that they can be role models and professional educators.	Retreats and recollections, workshops on value-teaching strategies, periodic supervision and reflection, and teacher learning communities to share good practice.
Making values clear to students	Explain explicitly what each value means, because some students read joy and generosity as grades, free periods, or lighter workloads.	Short discussions that link each value to concrete behaviour, using the indicators in Table 4, and reflection sheets in which students describe what the value asks of them.
Value-based learning tools	Include Christian value indicators and concrete, assessable activities in lesson plans, modules, and learning media.	Columns for value indicators in ATP and lesson plans, modules with case studies and reflections, and daily or weekly student reflection sheets.
Institutional and community support	Align school policy, culture, and extracurricular programmes with the values of love, justice, and peace, in cooperation with families and parishes.	Rules against violence and discrimination, habituation of shared prayer and service, service-based student council (OSIS) programmes, and cooperation with parishes.

D. Conclusion

This study described how students at two public and two private senior high schools in Pontianak City perceive the Christian values taught in CRE and the teaching

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strategies of their CRE teachers. In the questionnaire answers of 49 students, students most often described the values taught as respect without discrimination, helping and sharing, gratitude, emotional self-control, and courteous speech. They perceived four strategies: teachers' own conduct as a model (11 of 49 students), a safe and relaxed classroom with room for questions, shared habituation such as prayer, group work, and collective donations, and fair but firm handling of discipline. Some students linked joy and generosity to grades, free periods, or lighter workloads, indicating interpretations that differed from the study's conceptual definitions of these values.

The study contributes a student-centred description from the senior high school level in a local setting that earlier research has covered mainly at primary and tertiary levels, and it separates field findings from literature-based concepts and recommendations. Its limitations are a single data source, a small and uneven sample, two duplicated questionnaire items, and the absence of classroom observation, teacher interviews, and document analysis; it does not show that students' character improved. Further research is recommended to combine student reports with teacher interviews, observation, and document analysis, to include more public schools so that school types can be compared, to involve families and parishes, to explore the use of learning media and local culture, and to use designs, such as mixed-methods or longitudinal studies, that can assess the effectiveness of these strategies.

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