

*Review Article*

# Leadership in Biblical Teachings in a Multicultural Society Through Christian Religious Education

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**Abstract:** This research was conducted to examine global developments in an increasingly complex and dynamic multicultural society, so that Christian Religious Education (PAK) is important to adapt to the challenges and developments that exist. Things that are currently present in society are plurality, multiculturalism, ethical challenges, technological developments, social change, conflicts between communities, and consumerism. Based on these emerging issues, the importance of integrating PAK values into character development in forming leaders that are relevant to the global context is highlighted. In terms of leadership in biblical teachings, Christian leaders must uphold the rules contained in the teachings of Christianity and be able to keep up with global developments in a multicultural society. This becomes a challenge for a leader who upholds the teachings of the Bible to be able to respect the diversity of views and opinions to be able to produce decisions that are universal for the whole community. The research method in this paper uses descriptive qualitative with a systematic literature review and is supported by the literacy of international journals, theological articles, and theological teaching books. Based on the results of the research study that has been carried out, leadership in the teachings of the Bible in a society that has diversity, there are teaching values contained in the PAK that can generally be applied to all people without discrimination because these values are in accordance with universal values. The conclusion that can be drawn in this study is that leaders have an important role in building unity in a diverse society by appreciating diversity and being able to overcome conflict, namely by practicing the principles of Christian leadership values to form good and effective leaders.

**Keywords:** Christian leadership; Christian Religious Education; multicultural society.

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## 1. Introduction

Multicultural society is a characteristic of Indonesia that distinguishes it from other countries. In a diverse society, there will be many differences in religion, ethnicity, race, culture, and social status. This is certainly a wealth as well as a challenge that must be maintained and preserved by respecting, appreciating, and supporting local wisdom as the uniqueness of the nation. The many ethnicities scattered in Indonesia present the colorful colors of the nation's culture, but still in a unified frame of Unity in Diversity.

Christian Religious Education in a multicultural society is the basis for understanding the diversity that lives, grows, and develops in society, in order to form citizens who understand the beliefs of spiritual values and instill an attitude of respect between differences (Waruwu et al., 2024). A correct understanding of PAK is expected to establish tolerance between human beings and live side by side, because basically for Christians living in peace is part of God's blessing. Therefore, PAK has an important role in building harmony in a diverse society.

This shows the importance of PAK, especially for the Christian community in understanding the knowledge and religious values contained therein. Strengthening PAK can be done through a structured learning process and internalizing Christian values such as love, empathy, humility, justice, and social care, among others. This is the foundation that must be

possessed in every individual. In the current era of globalization, these basic values are important to have in Christian leadership, because being a leader will effectively interact with diverse communities.

Discussing a multicultural society, of course in it there will be leaders who exercise authority to organize and direct, both in small and large scopes. A leader does not only act authoritarian towards his decisions but has the ability to provide guidance and motivation to individuals or groups, so that he not only provides instructions, but also provides examples that can be followed in his footsteps (Herman & Dharmawan, 2024). The following are examples of leaders who have succeeded despite having a different culture and society from themselves, for example, Joseph and Daniel are leaders with integrity that is implemented in their leadership. They are leaders who do not compromise on moral standards. However, what is often found in leadership in the current era is that many leaders are trapped in narrow thinking so that they do not carry out their functions properly (Blegur et al., 2022).

Based on the study of the Bible, there are several principles that should be carried out by leaders, including: honesty and justice in exercising their power (Rom 13:1-4). The leader's devotion to society and also to God, the leader must have fear when his actions violate God's word. The next principle is to reject greed, which means not taking actions to enrich oneself and take the rights of others. But in reality, in today's leadership, there are many discrepancies with the principles of God's word. Based on the news contained in (Kompas.com 2021), the corruption case that was rife in 2020 attracted the attention of the Indonesian people which was carried out by the former Minister of Social Affairs Juliari Batubara who received bribes from third parties in the social assistance program from the impact of Covid-19. (Nggebu, 2021).

In terms of Christian ethics, the perpetrators include Christian officials who are easily tempted by worldly treasures which at the same time undermine their morality, because basically acts of corruption not only violate the juridical applicable law but also contradict the absolute truth of God's word. Corruption is a crime that goes against the Christian faith and the teachings of the Bible. Therefore, Christian Religious Education does not only teach values in learning, but as an integration of the values of Pancasila as the basis of leadership in Indonesia. The rise of corruption cases, sexual harassment committed by several church members such as cases published in the news (Media Indonesia.2021) in it contains data information on around 216000 victims of sexual abuse in a Catholic church in world data. This shows that there is a need to emphasize each church and take action against leaders who are considered to have committed these immoral acts.

After reviewing the background of this research discussion, the researcher highlights the importance of PAK in leadership in a diverse society. The emergence of many cases of corruption and immoral acts committed by Christian leaders is a polemic that will be studied in the perspective of leadership in the Bible. In the midst of a multicultural society, Christian leadership needs to have an understanding of the values of Christianity and hold on to the teachings of the Bible and integrate it in society, so that it is expected to create leaders who can hold their roles and responsibilities in the midst of a diverse and multicultural Indonesian society.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Christian Leadership Theory in a Multicultural Context

Leadership in biblical teachings contains principles that are very relevant to be applied in a multicultural society, especially through Christian religious education. Based on theological analysis of the Letter of 1 Timothy, Christian leadership emphasizes integrity, perseverance, and love for the congregation, and must be an example of respect for diversity. The principles of dialogue, tolerance and respect for different beliefs are important foundations for Christian leaders to build bridges between religious communities and manage diversity harmoniously. Thus, Christian leadership is not only authoritative, but also serving and inclusive, which is much needed in the context of a complex multicultural society (Windi, et,al, 2023).

## 2.2. Foundations of Biblical Multiculturalism and Implications for Christian Education

In addition, the foundation of multiculturalism in the Bible is very strong and serves as the basis for Christian religious education in shaping leaders who are able to coexist harmoniously. In both the Old and New Testaments, the Bible presents narratives of pluralism and multiculturalism, such as the call of Abraham and the mission of Jesus Christ who reached out to various ethnic groups, including Samaritan women in John 4:7-39. Christian religious education that refers to these values seeks to build leadership that is not only oriented towards faith and morality, but also adaptive and serving in the context of cultural and religious diversity. The leadership model of multicultural Christian education places love, justice and service at the core, so that the resulting leaders are able to become agents of peace and harmony in a plural society (Damanik, 2023)..

## 3. Method

This research was conducted with a descriptive qualitative method, using a literature review of various supporting literature, researchers get information and in-depth understanding of the research conducted (Bungin Burhan. 2020). Through the study of the information obtained, an analysis of the implementation of leadership in a multicultural society is carried out, so as to obtain research results that are relevant to the research problem of leadership in biblical teachings in society through PAK and actualized with many cases of immoral leaders in the current era. In supporting this research and to strengthen the argumentation, researchers used relevant sources, among others, there are Academic Journals: Articles published in highly reputable journals that have been peer-reviewed and indexed in Scopus, Web of Science, and other leading academic databases of theological journals, also from leading books: fundamental and recent publications from international theological and leadership experts.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Leadership Principles in Bible Teachings

The discussion on leadership in the Bible has a strong basis to be implemented in society. Christian leaders are expected to live a righteous and good life so that they can be an example of Christianity itself. A righteous and good life is part of living in integrity and loyalty to God. Therefore, leadership for Christians must be based on the morality of leaders who can set an example for their people. This is a valuable asset for the church and Christianity. Christian leadership should model Jesus and prioritize integrity and living in integrity (Gea, 2020).

Based on biblical principles, it is explained that Christian leaders come from God's calling, so those who are called by God should have responsibility for the grace they have. Like Nehemiah's leadership in the context of the modern church, especially in Indonesia, this principle can be applied. Nehemiah is an illustration of a leader who understands how to balance personal integrity, devotion to God and his people (Clark, Jason: 2019). In addition, in general, leadership is a position held by someone to be able to collaborate and establish connections with other parties, so that leaders are able to solve problems by exchanging arguments. Associated with the contemporary Indonesian government system, dynamic leaders are needed to develop and adjust to the needs of their people (Qois & Rahmi, 2021).

The application of leadership principles taught in the Bible must be actualized in a multicultural society. Leaders do not just carry out their duties and responsibilities, but must be able to explore the understanding of theological teachings, as a basis for shaping the character of leaders who can harmonize the values contained in biblical teachings and integrated with social and cultural changes in the local community. The perspective of leadership in biblical teachings is very relevant when considering the global challenges of leadership in Indonesia which requires a leader who is not only theologically competent, but is able to carry out leadership that prioritizes universal values that can be used for the entire community both the values of unity, humanity, and justice values contained in Pancasila (Adrian et al., 2025).

Leaders who have a correct understanding of PAK tend to have a strong commitment to moral principles, including the value of Pancasila as a universal foundation that includes respect for human dignity and social justice (Jones et al., 2018). Jesus is one of the historic and inspiring examples of leadership models for every Christian leader from time to time until today. This shows the superiority of Jesus' leadership model, which is based on the touch of compassion that is the basis of His leadership towards humanity. Matthew 20:25-28 teaches

about servant leadership and non-servant leadership. Paul also explained the principle of leadership in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 that the qualifications of leaders must have an attitude of integrity, loyalty, and ability to lead. Paul wrote in Romans 13:1-7 that as believers, we must obey our leaders and government and fulfill our obligations as citizens (Farigan et al., 2021).

PAK teachings explain the importance of Christian leaders having an honest, fair, and impartial attitude. However, in reality, many leaders do not pay attention to the values of the teachings in the Bible as taught in the leadership model of Jesus, so that cases of leaders who intersect with immoral acts and cases of corruption and others are found in the current era of leaders (Rini et al., 2024).

#### 4.2. Christian Religious Education Shaping Leaders in a Multicultural Society

The discussion related to PAK is a lesson that needs to be instilled from an early age, not only to equip the knowledge of the nation's generation about the rules in the teachings of the Bible, but also to form leaders with integrity in a diverse society. Forming leaders with integrity is not easy, it requires a deep understanding of the teachings of God's word and its application in different societies. The inability to integrate the teachings of the Bible and service as a leader can create disintegration in the leadership.

In the midst of a diverse society, a strong foundation is needed to create interfaith harmony, where each religion has guidelines that are used as a basis for instilling religious moderation in a multicultural society. The implementation of PAK in leadership is one of the ways Christians lead a multiethnic society. Christian leadership must be rooted in the values of love taught by Jesus Christ as stated in Matthew 22:39 which reads: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The content of this verse is not just an invitation to live in peace, but is an ethical basis for building multi-ethnic and multi-dimensional community relationships for mutual respect (Nainggolan & Paradesha, 2022).

Based on the results of research published in the journal "The Concept of Multicultural Education in the Views of Banks and Islam" (Mo'tasim et al., 2022), James Banks, who is one of the main figures in multicultural education, states that "Education must be able to create a space where all cultures are valued and recognized as equal". This approach is in line with the mission of PAK, which is committed to respecting human dignity as God's creation. In addition, in terms of implementation, PAK does not only focus on one particular group but deals with the increasingly complex dynamics of cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. Therefore, in this context, PAK has the responsibility to offer an approach that not only strengthens faith, but fosters and builds social harmony in a multicultural society (JP et al., 2023). In a research study conducted by Clark, church leaders who have an understanding of PAK theology tend to have a strong commitment to the principles of moral principles, as mandated in the values of Pancasila, which include respect for human dignity and social justice (Rini et al., 2024).

The era of globalization is increasingly widespread, making today's leaders have challenges in dealing with the political and social world that lives in society. This research shows that PAK, which is based on biblical teachings, does not only teach religious doctrines, but also produces leaders who are able to implement these values into social actions that have a positive impact on a multicultural society (Nicolaidis, 2020). Therefore, the thing to watch out for in the midst of multicultural pluralism is the potential for disintegration or horizontal conflict that can arise in the midst of community life. Leaders are needed who can build the value of harmony with the community through active and effective dialogue and interaction between various parties in order to provide synergy in building the integrity of the nation. It is intended that fellow religious believers, as well as between religious believers can realize a society that lives in tolerance so that it can have an impact on the realization of a harmonious society (Purwoto et al., 2021).

Leadership in the study of theological education according to Brian Turner 2021 in the journal (Blegur et al., 2022), explains that the character of church leaders formed through Christian teachings is able to influence social and religious policies positively in various cultural contexts. Galatians 3:28 clearly teaches the principle of equality in diversity, so that Christian leaders who carry out the principles of PAK can appreciate and maintain the diversity and differences that live in the Indonesian community. Leaders must be able to appreciate the diversity of cultures, religions, and backgrounds of the people they lead (Gulo, 2023). It is hoped that by providing PAK debriefing for Christian leaders, leaders can be created who are "light and salt" in the midst of a multicultural society and can build the right paradigm

and understanding in their leadership. It is hoped that leaders will emerge who are not only effective in managing spiritual organizations, but can be a source of inspiration, hope, and transformation and also become role models who have a major impact on the surrounding community. This example is very important as a reference for today's Christian leaders both as an identity in their leadership position in mediating for a pluralistic society (Nainggolan & Paradesha, 2022)..

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the discussion of the research that has been described previously, it can be concluded that leadership in Indonesia needs to be given PAK principles, especially for Christian leaders and prospective leaders. Christian teachings also teach that leaders have a right and good life so that they can be an example in the community. This concept is actually in line with today's leadership in the 4.0 era, which requires collaborative, creative, and innovative leaders to create ideas as ideas for national change (Purwanto et al., 2020).

In terms of Christian Leadership and leadership in general, a leader should have an attitude and responsibility that upholds the values of integrity, morality and the value of biblical truth. The diversity of society is certainly a challenge for future leaders to have an attitude of tolerance and be able to solve problems by paying attention to the needs of their people. The application of the context of PAK theology and leadership with the spirit of Pancasila have similarities that are in harmony with the conditions of Indonesian society, both in terms of the context of education within the scope of the church or leadership within the scope of multicultural society. The integration of these two elements can create Christian leaders who have strong moral integrity in favor of social justice, and are able to bring positive changes to society based on the values of Pancasila.

The principle of leadership should be carried out in accordance with the teachings of the Bible through PAK as Jesus taught about servant leadership, not servant leadership. Paul in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 explains about the qualifications of church leaders, who must have an attitude of integrity, faithfulness and ability to lead. Therefore, based on these two arguments, it can be concluded that a leader must have a sense of love and empathy for his people who have different backgrounds in terms of culture and religion, this is as previously explained that Jesus Christ provides an example for today's leaders to be able to serve people with various differences in them. In addition, Christian leaders are expected to be able to easily adapt to all models of the challenges of the times in terms of social, political, economic, and spiritual aspects that live and grow in Indonesian society.

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