

The Need for Integration of Faith, Values, and Learning in the Seventh-day Adventist Schools of Jakarta Conference

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Abstract - This study explores the urgent need for the Integration of Faith, Values, and Learning (IFVL) in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) schools within the Jakarta Conference. As outcomes, the spiritual and moral foundations central to Adventist education risk being marginalized. IFVL serves as a transformative framework that aligns academic excellence with spiritual formation and character development. Survey data from 43 teachers across SDA schools were utilized, revealing varied levels of understanding and implementation of IFVL. While nearly half of the respondents demonstrated a basic grasp of IFVL, many responses indicated the need for deeper training, consistent application, and contextualization of the concept. Literature from global and Indonesian contexts—spanning Adventist, Catholic, and Islamic education—further highlights how faith-based schools successfully embed values through curriculum, institutional culture, and daily routines. The findings emphasize that IFVL must not be treated as an add-on but must be integrated holistically into all aspects of school life. It also calls for greater institutional support, targeted professional development, and culturally responsive practices that reflect both Adventist philosophy and Indonesia's diverse moral and spiritual heritage. The study concludes that strengthening IFVL practices in SDA schools across Jakarta is essential not only for nurturing faith-based identity among students but also for equipping them to become morally grounded, socially responsible, and spiritually resilient citizens in a pluralistic society. Recommendations are provided for leadership, teacher development, and curriculum design to support this vision.

Keywords: integration of faith values and learning, Seventh-day Adventist education, faith-based education, IFVL concerns

I. INTRODUCTION

The Integration of Faith, Values, and Learning (IFVL) is a fundamental component of education in faith-based schools, as it fosters intellectual growth alongside moral and spiritual development. Within the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) schools under the Jakarta Conference, IFVL plays a pivotal role in nurturing students holistically, equipping them to be both academically competent and deeply rooted in Christian values and principles. Despite its acknowledged significance, there is a pressing need to evaluate how effectively faith and values are integrated throughout the entire learning experience in these schools. This study addresses this gap by examining the urgent necessity for a comprehensive IFVL approach in SDA schools

within the Jakarta Conference. It seeks to identify existing challenges and offers strategic recommendations for strengthening the seamless integration of faith, values, and learning. Without focused attention on IFVL, the spiritual and moral foundations central to Adventist education may become marginalized. IFVL thus acts as a transformative framework that harmonizes academic excellence with spiritual formation and character development, ensuring that students are prepared not only intellectually but also morally and spiritually for their roles in society and the church.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Education is an important part of Christian ministry (Kim 2023) aimed at equipping individuals to understand and live out their faith, anchored in firm principles and qualified for any position in life. There are plenty of opportunities for students at a faith-based school to develop strong Christian morals and ethics, especially when lessons are structured according to Christian tenets and character development is reinforced throughout the curriculum.

Can we still find such a kind of education? The answer is certainly yes if we thoroughly reflect on the Adventist Education Philosophy and aim to restore the image of God in our students and ourselves. To prepare people for useful and joy-filled lives, fostering friendship with God, whole-person development, Bible-based values, and selfless service in accordance with the Seventh-day Adventist mission to the world.

Adventist education serves as the main agent in forming the next generation of believers and training most of its employees and leaders while attracting new members (Rasi, 2020). Indeed, the Jakarta Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is very active in opening educational institutions to prepare workers who will serve in the Adventist Church (Dolokasaribu, 2020).

The Adventist education system reflects the heavenly "society" God intended for us. It gives us tools and resources to become wiser and healthier. It provides us opportunities to look beyond ourselves and to serve others. It connects us as friends, as partners, and as a community. Most importantly, it helps us fulfill our potential of being "good" citizens, eagerly anticipating an eternity with the God who created us (Education, 2024).

IFVL in Adventist Education

Because the Lord is the source of all true knowledge, all true education, all Christian education should direct our minds toward Him and toward His own revelation about Himself. Through nature, through the Written Word, through the revelation of Christ in that Written Word, we have been given all that we need, and then some, to come to a saving relationship with our Lord and, indeed, to love Him with all our heart and soul. Even nature, so defiled by thousands of years of sin, still speaks, even powerfully, of the goodness and character of God when studied from the perspective given us in Scripture. But the Written Word, the Scriptures, is the perfect standard of truth, the greatest revelation we have of who God is and what He has done and is doing for humanity. Scripture, and its message of creation and redemption, must be central to all Christian education (Sabbath School, 2020).

Adventist education is about teaching a whole and complete life, for a lifetime. To realize these precepts, Adventist education needs Adventist teachers who are capable and armed with the right tools to do their duties and responsibilities. According to the Philosophy of Adventist Education, Adventist teachers should be committed Adventist Christians and exemplary role models of Christian character. In addition to having extensive professional competencies in teaching, Adventist teachers should show love for their students. They should avoid favoritism, bullying, and any kind of harassment toward students.

The purpose of Adventist education is to help students reach their highest potential and to fulfill God's purpose for their lives. Students in Adventist schools should be loved, accepted, and treated as children of God, no matter what their behaviors. In addition, Adventist teachers must also have a spirit of evangelism, realizing that they are chosen and placed in God's field to bring these young souls to Christ and prepare them to be heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

Adventist Teachers and IFVL

Teachers play a critical role in facilitating spiritual development. Their insights, worldviews, and adherence to ethical principles significantly impact on how spirituality is integrated into the curriculum. Effective teachers foster positive relationships with students, creating an atmosphere where spiritual discussions can occur naturally and meaningfully (Nasrollahi, et al., 2020)

The Adventist teacher needs to develop a biblical worldview that serves as a framework to shape the understanding of the world that directs the actions within it. A worldview serves as a conceptual tool or framework for perceiving and interpreting reality, which, in turn, informs the philosophy, mission/vision, and goals of an organization. Adventist teachers indeed have the responsibility of presenting biblical truth while knowledge is being attained, all with the intention of transforming the hearts and minds of the learners so that they reflect Christ's character (Harvey, 2019).

For Seventh-day Adventists, the Bible remains the foundational text of our faith. It teaches the worldview, the "filter," by which we are to see and understand the world, which can be a very daunting and complicated place. Scripture creates the template to help us better understand the reality we find ourselves in, which we are part of, and are often confused and befuddled by it.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we must firmly adhere to the teachings of the Bible, for this is God's revealed truth to humans, explaining for us many things about the world that we would otherwise not know or understand. Hence, all Christian education must be rooted and grounded in the Word of God, and any teaching contrary to it must be rejected.

While Adventist schools do have excellent curricula, it's the teachers who are the living curriculum. They live and breathe their own walk with Jesus and ultimately teach from the overflow of their time with Him. Some say that genuine spirituality must be caught, not taught, and this is ever true with character development. However, it's the teachers who live and speak

about their love for Jesus who inspire students the most. When students see genuine spirituality modeled by three significant adults in their lives, they are much more likely to grow an authentic love for Jesus themselves. Teachers in Adventist schools often become one of those significant adults. (Neilsen, 2023)

Although literature specific to Indonesia's SDA schools is limited, insights from Indonesian Christian education signal the significance of contextualizing curricula to local cultures. Arjanto et al. (2024) show how indigenous leadership values (e.g., Minahasa models) reinforce Christian principals' morality. A comparable study in Catholic and Islamic schools demonstrates that faith-based integration supports identity formation and social cohesion in multicultural Indonesian settings. Such findings point to the potential for SDA Jakarta schools to embed local cultural values in enhancing IFVL effectiveness and relevance.

Importance of IFVL

Integrating faith, values, and learning is crucial for providing a well-rounded education that nurtures students' spiritual, moral, and intellectual growth. Rutebuka (2019), Hendricks (2018), Sturgeon (2022), & Ramirez et al (2022) pointed out some key reasons why this integration is important:

- 1) Faith-based schools teach from a religious perspective, reinforcing students' understanding of their faith and how it fits into their lives. This allows children to begin developing a strong religious identity and deepening their relationship with God.
- 2) Integrating faith and learning provides opportunities for students with similar values to learn and grow together, fostering a sense of community. It also encourages the development of strong Christian morals and ethics, as lessons are structured according to Christian tenets and character development is reinforced throughout the curriculum.
- 3) A faith-based education allows students to learn about their faith, ask questions about complex spiritual topics, and understand God's role in our world and lives. When children are encouraged to have an open dialogue about religion, they can become closer to God and their faith.
- 4) True education necessitates an integration of faith and learning that prepares learners for life beyond the present. By assisting students in seeing the world through a Christian worldview, faith-based institutions help them "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ".
- 5) The integration of faith and learning emphasizes the importance of moral values in character formation. Teachers help students understand the difference between the holy and the common, and guide them in distinguishing between the unclean and the clean.

Furthermore, Research on faith integration in classrooms can measure the changes in students' level of understanding of faith integration and academic learning. Studies have shown that faith integration can lead to greater increases in faith integration among students who initially have a lower degree of faith integration, and students with higher self-spirituality

exhibit a statistically significant positive association with changes in faith integration (Mun and Bermejo, 2023).

The integration of faith and learning is foundational to their mission. It links the institution's educational goals with its spiritual objectives, ensuring that all aspects of the educational experience reflect its core values. Without this integration, the purpose of a faith-based institution may be compromised, leading to a disconnect between what is taught and the values the institution aims to promote (Rutebuka, 2019)

IFVL Concerns

There are several reasons why IFVL is not properly implemented in the educational setting. Harvey (2019) and Rutebuka (2019) found the following concerns:

- 1) The insufficient support from school administrators. Teachers often express a need for guidance and encouragement from their principals to effectively integrate faith into their teaching. Without a strong commitment from leadership, teachers may feel isolated and lack the motivation to pursue IFVL actively.
- 2) Many educators lack the necessary training and resources to implement IFVL effectively. While most teachers may express interest in integrating faith into their curriculum, they often do not know how to do so practically. This knowledge gap can lead to superficial or artificial integration, where faith is treated as a separate subject rather than being woven throughout the curriculum.
- 3) There is often a lack of clarity regarding what IFVL truly entails. Some educators may have misconceptions about the integration process, viewing faith and learning as separate entities rather than complementary components. This misunderstanding can result in disjointed approaches, where religious education is seen as an isolated subject rather than an integral part of the overall educational experience.
- 4) The influence of secular culture can also impede the integration of faith in educational settings. As secular worldviews become more prevalent, they may overshadow the biblical principles that underpin faith-based education. This cultural shift can lead to a reluctance among educators to incorporate faith into their teaching practices, fearing backlash or criticism.
- 5) The commitment to IFVL often varies across institutions. Some schools may not prioritize faith integration as a core component of their mission, leading to inconsistent implementation across different disciplines and grade levels. This lack of institutional commitment can diminish the overall effectiveness of IFVL initiatives.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

There are concerns about why IFVL is not implemented, or if the teachers need help with doing it. As Christian educators, we are called by God to be faithful to him and his revelation. Still, secularist governments and societies press us to use pedagogy and curricula to promote their expectations, values, and beliefs (Beech & Beech, 2019).

1. Research Design: This study will employ a descriptive quantitative research design to systematically assess the current understanding and needs related to the integration of faith, values, and learning (IFVL) among teachers in Seventh-day Adventist schools within the Jakarta Conference. This design allows for the collection of standardized data that can be statistically analyzed to provide a clear picture of IFVL implementation, challenges, and training requirements.

2. Participants/Data Sources: This study will gather responses from teachers actively serving in various Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) schools under the Jakarta Conference. These participants represent diverse teaching backgrounds and school levels, ensuring comprehensive insights into the practice and needs of IFVL across the Seventh-day Adventist schools of the Jakarta Conference.

3. Tools and instruments: A questionnaire was developed to assess IFVL knowledge and understanding, as well as to identify the needs of teachers and administrators in integrating faith, values, and learning in their respective classes or schools. The survey asked specifically about personal profiles and demographic background, IFVL knowledge, and the needs and concerns of IFVL, which are aimed at determining and facilitating needed training, workshops, and consultation about the practice of IFVL in our SDA schools here in the Jakarta Conference.

4. Procedures: Data collection will begin with obtaining permission from the education director of the Jakarta Conference. After formal consent, the questionnaire will be distributed electronically to the targeted teachers. Participants will be given clear instructions and assured of confidentiality and voluntary participation. Data collection is expected to take place over a 4-week period, followed by data cleaning and coding for analysis.

5. Analysis techniques: Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, including frequencies and percentages, to summarize participants' profiles, IFVL knowledge, and expressed needs. Cross-tabulation may be employed to explore relationships between demographic variables and levels of IFVL understanding or needs. The results will be presented in tables and graphs to facilitate interpretation. Findings will guide recommendations for enhancing IFVL integration within SDA schools in the Jakarta Conference.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study gathered responses from 43 teachers serving in various Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) schools under the Jakarta Local Conference. 14 of the participants were male and 29 were female, representing a range of age groups and professional backgrounds. This group reflects a diverse spectrum in terms of educational qualifications and teaching experiences.

In terms of academic background, 14 respondents held a master's degree, 27 held a bachelor's degree, and 2 had completed a diploma in teaching. Regarding the institutions from which they graduated, 16 were alumni of Adventist universities or institutions, another 16 had attended private universities, 9 were from government institutions, and 2 had graduated from

other types of institutions. Teaching experience among the respondents varied significantly, ranging from as little as two months to more than 20 years. This diversity underscores the range of perspectives and professional maturity within the sample group.

When asked the open-ended question, "What is your understanding of the Integration of Faith, Values, and Learning (IFVL)?", the responses varied notably in form and content. A total of 21 respondents attempted to articulate their understanding in English, while 14 preferred to answer in Bahasa Indonesia. Six respondents either answered with "yes," "no," or gave unrelated responses, and two respondents submitted non-verbal symbols (a period or a dash), indicating either uncertainty or a lack of response.

The responses can be interpreted as follows: 49% of the respondents demonstrated a basic understanding of IFVL and attempted to express it in English, while 33% understood the question but chose to respond in Bahasa Indonesia, possibly due to language comfort, and 18% showed limited engagement or provided unclear responses, suggesting the need for follow-up to assess their comprehension of the concept.

These findings reveal a mixed level of awareness and articulation concerning the Integration of Faith, Values, and Learning among SDA teachers in the Jakarta Local Conference. While nearly half of the respondents showed foundational understanding, the data also indicates a need for further professional development, particularly in clarifying the concept and ensuring linguistic confidence in expressing it. Additionally, this highlights the importance of continuous training and support to ensure that all educators are equipped to effectively integrate faith and values into their teaching practices.

Table 1: Selected sample responses to highlight the variety of understanding of IFVL

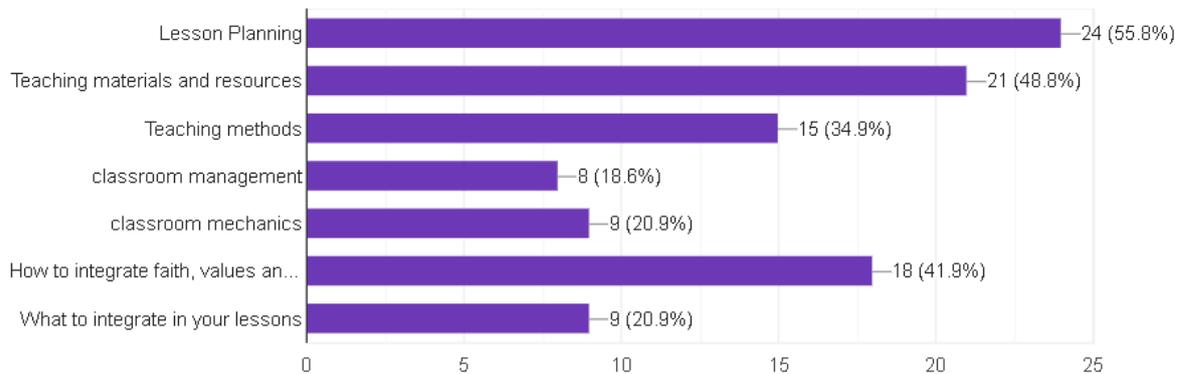
| Respondent | Response | Indications |
|--|---|--|
| Female, 7 years of experience, Bachelor's degree, Adventist graduate | To fulfill the aim of education, we need a learning program to equip the teaching method. So that we need the integration of faith, values, and learning. | This shows a good grasp of IFVL, with emphasis on integrating moral and Biblical content into academic teaching. |
| Male, 11 years of experience, Master's degree, private university graduate | "It is a way of showing students how God is present in all subjects, not just Bible class." | This response reflects a holistic understanding of IFVL, recognizing the presence of spiritual themes across the curriculum. |

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| <p>Female, 5 years of experience, Bachelor's degree, government university graduate</p> | <p>"Saya mengerti bahwa IFVL adalah integrasi iman, nilai dan pembelajaran dalam proses belajar mengajar." ("I understand that IFVL is the integration of faith, values, and learning in the teaching and learning process.")</p> | <p>This indicates a conceptual understanding despite the response being in Bahasa Indonesia.</p> |
| <p>Female, 20 years of experience, Master's degree, private university graduate</p> | <p>"To fulfill the aim of education, we need a learning program to equip the teaching method. So that we need the integration of faith, values, and learning."</p> | <p>This response shows a lack of elaboration, suggesting either limited understanding or difficulty in articulating an answer.</p> |
| <p>Female, 1 year of experience, Diploma, government university graduate</p> | <p>-</p> | <p>This response does not show any understanding of IFVL.</p> |

In correlation, and as with observations, respondents with longer teaching experience than 5 years or those who graduated from Adventist institutions tended to provide more complete and reflective definitions of IFVL, while teachers who responded in Bahasa Indonesia often gave accurate but general definitions, suggesting that language proficiency might affect articulation, but not necessarily the depth of understanding. Some responses reflected rote or superficial knowledge, which may point to the need for targeted professional development programs on IFVL.

These findings show that while a significant proportion of SDA elementary school teachers in the Jakarta Local Conference have at least a basic awareness of the concept of IFVL, the depth and clarity of understanding vary considerably. The data suggest that educational background, years of experience, and familiarity with Adventist philosophy influence how well teachers grasp and express the concept. Given these insights, the study recommends ongoing training and mentoring, particularly focused on practical strategies for integrating faith and values into everyday teaching across all subjects.

The chart below shows the particular area where they need help or assistance in the integration of faith, values, and learning (IFVL). The teachers responded with the following needs:



Based on other concerns it is found on the survey that the teachers are trying to do what they can to implement IFVL but not in a maximized form due to pressures such as the government requirements such as required curriculum and other activities, the lack of IFVL of resources, and the inability to understand and communicate in English, lack of leadership guidance and the lack of knowledge on how to implement it in their class.

With this, the leadership of the education department is looking for appropriate ways to address the concerns and aiming to provide opportunities for the teachers to understand and learn how to integrate faith, values and learning through online seminars, small group collaboration and school visitations to be able to create classrooms that integrate faith and values with learning in simple but meaningful ways to the benefit of students of the SDA schools in the Jakarta conference.

Training educators to effectively integrate faith into their teaching practices enhances both academic and spiritual growth among students. When educators are well-equipped to connect academic content with biblical principles, they create a learning atmosphere that encourages critical thinking and moral reasoning. This connection helps students see the relevance of their faith in all areas of study, thereby deepening their understanding of both their academic pursuits and spiritual beliefs. Institutional leaders need to be intentional and deliberate in ensuring that training is provided to equip administrators and teachers with the skills necessary to effectively implement IFVL in the classroom (Harvey, 2019).

Hence, training for the integration of faith, values, and learning is critical for developing well-rounded individuals who are prepared to navigate the complexities of life with a strong moral compass. This training not only enhances educational experience but also aligns with the broader mission of faith-based institutions to cultivate character and community among their students.

V. CONCLUSION

The IFVL is the intentional action of an individual to bring his or her personal beliefs and faith into his or her classroom in a way that affects the behaviors and attitudes of the

students. The behavior of the teacher influences the worldview of the students in such a way that the student experiences a paradigm shift in their thinking. There is an urgent need for the implementation of IFVL in the SDA schools of the Jakarta conference.

Integrating spiritual development into the curriculum requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses holistic curriculum design, subject integration, opportunities for reflection, and the active involvement of teachers and the school community. This integration not only enhances students' educational experiences but also fosters their personal and spiritual growth and a holistic educational approach that does not only focus on academic achievement but also on the development of student's character and spiritual intelligence, among others, which are highlighted emphasize values such as; (1) integrity, (2) empathy, (3) sincerity, and (4) gratitude. These values form the basis of a strong character and encourage students to play an active role in society. This will help students understand the meaning of life, social responsibility, and relationships with others (Rifai et al., 2023).

This research study has several limitations, particularly the limited data in answering the survey, due to the language barrier. Involving more participants would generate more data to find the real condition of Adventist education in the Jakarta Conference in the practice of IFVL in the classroom and up to the school level. Despite this weakness, the survey results can suggest the following:

- 1) Adventist teachers and administrators need guidance on how to explicitly incorporate biblical principles and values into their teaching practices, ensuring that students receive a comprehensive education that aligns with the institution's mission and values.
- 2) Educational administrators in the Seventh-day Adventist schools, particularly here in the Jakarta conference, will see the urgent need to conduct workshops and seminars, mentoring, collaboration, and model teaching on the integration of faith, values, and learning among teachers to help them in implementing IFVL in their classrooms.
- 3) SDA Higher educational institutions that are offering degrees in education can build the foundation and strengthen the minds of education students on the importance of IFVL and how to do it in their lessons.
- 4) SDA educational administrators can seek to nurture and strengthen teachers' commitment towards IFVL.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

The comprehensive assessment of the current state of Integrating Faith, Values, and Learning (IFVL) within Seventh-day Adventist schools under the Jakarta Conference identifies gaps, challenges, and specific needs of teachers and administrators. The research offers evidence-based insights that can inform policymakers, school leaders, and curriculum developers. Furthermore, the author proposes practical strategies and actionable recommendations to enhance the effective integration of faith and values into academic

programs. This contribution supports the development of more holistic educational practices that align with the SDA church's philosophy, ultimately promoting the spiritual, moral, and intellectual formation of students. This study also adds to the limited existing literature on IFVL implementation within the regional context of Indonesia, thereby enriching academic discourse and providing a foundation for future research in faith-based education.

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