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Influence of Christian Values on the Spiritual Well-Being and Academic Resilience of Preservice Teachers in the New Normal

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ABSTRACT: As many students navigate the new normal during the COVID-19 pandemic, it can be challenging to understand what role Christian values and spirituality play in the lives of everyone. It is likely believed that Christian values could make a difference in people's lives. Although this belief is widely held, there is still a question about how much Christian values make a difference in the lives of students. This survey-correlational research study sought to determine the influence of Christian values on the spiritual well-being and academic resilience of preservice teachers in the new normal. The participants were two hundred thirty-three (233) preservice teachers. Data were collected using the standardized academic resilience questionnaire adopted from Cassidy (2016), the spiritual well-being scale adopted from Paloutzian and Ellison (2009 cited in Darvyri, et al., 2014), and a researcher-made Christian values questionnaire. The findings revealed that the level of Christian values was very high. The spiritual well-being was very high. The academic resilience was high. There were significant differences in spiritual well-being and academic resilience based on Christian values. There were significant relationships among Christian values, spiritual well-being, and academic resilience.

KEYWORDS: Christian Values, Spiritual Well-Being, Academic Resilience, Preservice Teachers, New Normal

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has raised questions about the role of Christian values and spirituality in students' lives. Christian values, which include beliefs about God's character and teachings, are integral to creating a supportive classroom environment and fostering personal development. These values are taught not only in churches but also in academic institutions, where they aim to shape students into better individuals both academically and spiritually. Research by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and [1] shows that many college students are highly engaged in their spiritual journeys, with significant numbers believing in God and seeking to develop their values and sense of self through their education. Institutions are expected to support students' spiritual well-being alongside academic growth.

Spiritual well-being is linked to positive mental health, happiness, and a sense of purpose, contributing to students' overall development. [2] show that students with a strong spiritual sense experience higher levels of happiness, life satisfaction, and psychological well-being. Furthermore, religious beliefs are associated with improved mental health, particularly among female students. Christian values play a role in helping students cope with life's challenges, fostering resilience, and helping them view adversity in a positive light. Resilience, as described by [3] and others, is essential for students to adapt to life's difficulties, including academic struggles, which is particularly important in the context of the pandemic.

Academic resilience, defined by [4] as the ability to overcome educational setbacks, is influenced by factors like perseverance, reflection, and seeking help. Research by [5], [6], and [7] indicates that students with strong Christian values and spiritual well-being are better equipped to handle academic challenges and maintain a positive outlook despite setbacks. Some students demonstrate exceptional resilience, excelling academically even in the face of adversity. This ability to cope with challenges is linked to traits such as hard work, adaptability, and emotional

regulation. While the pandemic may have weakened some students' spiritual well-being, the combination of Christian values and academic resilience remains a key factor in overcoming educational obstacles.

This study aimed to determine the influence of Christian values on the spiritual well-being and academic resilience of preservice teachers in the new normal for the academic year 2021-2022. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of Christian values of preservice teachers as an entire group and as seen in the belief and affirmation, religious affiliation, values and character, classroom atmosphere and curriculum, and professional development?
2. What is the level of spiritual well-being of preservice teachers as an entire group and as observed in the affiliation with God, satisfaction with life, and alienation from the sense of the meaningless of life?
3. What is the level of academic resilience of preservice teachers as an entire group and as described in the perseverance, reflecting adaptive help-seeking, and negative affect and emotional response?
4. Are there significant differences in spiritual well-being and academic resilience based on the Christian values taught to the pre-service teachers?
5. Are there significant relationships among Christian values, spiritual well-being, and academic resilience of pre-service teachers?

II. RELATED LITERATURE

Christian values have been a foundational aspect of education in Christian schools, with a growing emphasis on promoting these values in the last two decades. Schools have developed programs, curricula, and teacher guidance to instill moral character in students, with teachers playing an important role as moral guides [8]. A Christian perspective on values differs from secular views, particularly in their origin—Christian values are seen as rooted in the character of an all-powerful, all-knowing, loving God. According to this worldview, values like loyalty, courage, and compassion are reflections of God's nature and expressions of His love [9]. Teaching Christian values is not just about conveying moral principles, but about helping students understand God's character, as revealed through Jesus Christ [10]. As students learn about God's love through Jesus' life and teachings, they are invited into a personal relationship with Him, which is further deepened by the Holy Spirit, guiding their transformation and internalization of these values [11].

The process of teaching Christian values in schools involves more than just imparting knowledge; it is about nurturing the "head, heart, and hands" of students—helping them understand, care about, and live out these values. The "head" represents intellectual understanding, the "heart" involves emotional engagement, and the "hands" refers to practical application in the community. However, moral education requires more than mere knowledge; it demands a choice on the part of students to adopt and live by these values, which cannot be coerced [9]. Teachers must foster an open and sensitive environment where students can reflect, discuss, and question these values from a biblical standpoint. Additionally, teaching values should be integrated with critical thinking, encouraging students to apply them thoughtfully in real-life situations. Since values may conflict with external influences like family or media, Christian educators must help students navigate these challenges, ensuring the values taught align with God's character and love, rather than with secular or distorted views of morality [9].

Spirituality is a broad concept that can include transcendence, purpose, self-fulfillment, and reliance on internal resources, and it may vary in meaning across individuals [12]. Spiritual well-being (SWB) is closely connected to spirituality, encompassing both a vertical dimension (relationship with God or a higher power) and a horizontal dimension (purpose and satisfaction in life) [13]. SWB is distinct from mental and physical health but is positively associated with both. Research shows that individuals with higher spiritual well-being tend to have more positive personality traits, such as lower neuroticism and higher extraversion and conscientiousness. SWB is also linked to a higher sense of purpose, self-esteem, and intrinsic religious commitment, while negatively related to loneliness and individualism [14].

Research further indicates that spiritual well-being is closely tied to life satisfaction, psychological flourishing, and hope for the future [15]. Studies have found that spiritual well-being improves emotional coping and helps individuals view negative experiences in a more positive light [16]. For instance, religious beliefs can help individuals cope with emotional and social situations, positively impacting their overall well-being. In Filipino culture, spiritual well-being is closely linked to living out values and morals through relationships with family and community, with a strong emphasis

on the connection to a Supreme Being and the concept of "kapwa" [17]. Despite cultural variations, spirituality plays a significant role in shaping an individual's mental health, happiness, and life satisfaction across different societies.

Resilience is an important, non-educational factor that significantly impacts students' academic success and empowerment. Resilience refers to the process of adapting positively in the face of adversity, and it is not a static trait but a quality that can be learned and developed. It involves a combination of protective and risk factors, where protective factors help buffer against negative outcomes. Resilience is closely linked with various academic factors such as academic achievement, support, and burnout, as well as with students' ability to cope with challenges and stress in the classroom [6]. Academic resilience, in particular, refers to a student's capacity to overcome obstacles in education, with a focus on perseverance, help-seeking behaviors, and managing negative emotional responses [4]. Studies show that students who demonstrate academic resilience, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, often succeed despite the challenges they face.

Research highlights that students' academic resilience can be influenced by both individual characteristics and external factors, such as family and school support. For example, studies have found that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds may perform better if they attend schools with higher-quality resources and strong family-community-school connections [18]. Teachers, mentors, and community support play a crucial role in fostering academic resilience and helping students navigate adversity and thrive academically [19]. Additionally, understanding the protective factors of academic resilience—such as family, peers, and community—can help educators and policymakers create more effective strategies and programs to support student's academic success, particularly for those facing multiple risk factors [20]. By recognizing and nurturing these resilience factors, schools can improve academic outcomes and ensure that students overcome challenges to reach their potential.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey-correlational design with a sample of 233 preservice teachers, selected through stratified random sampling. Slovin's formula was used to calculate the required sample size. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed Christian values questionnaire, a standardized academic resilience scale adopted [4], and a spiritual well-being scale based on [13]. These instruments were validated and reviewed by an expert committee, with their feedback incorporated to refine the tools. Following the validation process, pilot testing was conducted to gather data for factor analysis, construct validation, and reliability testing using SPSS software. Christian values served as the independent variable, while spiritual well-being and academic resilience of preservice teachers were the dependent variables. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (ANOVA and Pearson correlation), with a significance level set at 0.05.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Level of Christian Values

The level of Christian values as an entire group and as seen in the belief and affirmation, religious affiliation, values and character, classroom atmosphere and curriculum, and professional development are shown in Table 1. Data show that generally the level of Christian values is very high ($M = 4.44$, $SD = .49$). It also shows that the belief and affirmation ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .50$), religious affiliation ($M = 4.36$, $SD = .79$), values and character ($M = 4.50$, $SD = .52$), classroom atmosphere and curriculum ($M = 4.37$, $SD = .62$), and professional development ($M = 4.48$, $SD = .50$) are very high.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Christian Values

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Christian Values	4.44	Very High	.49
Beliefs and Affirmation	4.47	Very High	.50
Religious Affiliation	4.36	Very High	.79
Values and Character	4.50	Very High	.52
Classroom Atmosphere and Curriculum	4.37	Very High	.62
Professional Development	4.48	Very High	.50

Note Interval. 4.21–5.00: Very High, 3.41–4.20: High, 2.61–3.40: Moderate, 1.81–2.60: Low, and 1.00–1.80: Very Low

The Christian values of preservice teachers are very high. This implies that they always believe that the teaching of God is reflected in their lives. They are preservice teachers who display spirituality that guides their personal and professional lives. In other words, they are preservice teachers who go beyond teaching academics and make a significant impact on the lives of the students. It is because they like their students to grow in character and wisdom and experience the greatest joy when they recognize God who works directly in their hearts.

The belief and affirmation are very high. This implies that preservice teachers always believe that their personal and professional lives are founded in God. This means that they are preservice teachers who have strong faith in God. They are good people who make God an instrument to influence and inspire others. They are called in the teaching profession to make a difference in the lives of the students. It is because they show care and concern in the development of the learners. They also demonstrate commitment and love to win the interest and respect of the learners.

The religious affiliation of preservice teachers is very high. This implies that they always believe that the Christian way of life is part of the school's academic programs. This indicates that they are consistently or regularly part of the various religious activities and events in school. It is because they appreciate the Christian atmosphere, maintain good relationships, and conform to the Christian ideals of the institution. This helps them to become humble, faithful, and compassionate in the teaching profession.

The values and character of preservice teachers are very high. This implies that preservice teachers always have positive thoughts and actions to display Christian love to the students. It shows that they demonstrate a Christ-like image which provides an amazing opportunity to influence others. They are just true, honest, sincere, and more determined to do their best in work and be more confident about what they can accomplish. It is because they have the opportunities to plan the events, prepare the activities, and lead worship services to build a Christian community.

The classroom atmosphere and curriculum of preservice teachers are very high. This implies that they always believe that the school climate is a value-filled learning environment that improves academic skills and promotes the spiritual character of the students. They are preservice teachers who constantly engage in equity work and teach in a more effective conscious manner. This is achieved in a positive, caring learning environment because of the support, closeness, and good relationship between the students and preservice teachers with a mutual interest in creating an environment that encourages learning and sharing the love of God for everyone.

The professional development of preservice teachers is very high. This implies that preservice teachers always exhibit Christian values that strengthen faith and competence in teaching. They are preservice teachers who are selfless and have the desire to help the students. They sacrifice their well-being to support students' social, emotional, spiritual, and academic needs. This shows that the teaching of God guides them throughout the teaching responsibilities which gives them hope and confidence to succeed in their mission. It is because they know that no matter what comes up in the practice of the profession, they have to view the situation in a Christian way of life.

B. Level of Spiritual Well-Being

The level of spiritual well-being of preservice teachers as an entire group and in terms of affiliation with God, satisfaction with life, and alienation from the sense of the meaningless of life are shown in Table 2. The result shows that in its entirety the level of spiritual well-being is very high ($M = 5.22$, $SD = .46$). Data also show that affiliation with God ($M = 5.46$, $SD = .50$) and satisfaction with life ($M = 5.13$, $SD = .53$) are very high. While the alienation from the sense of the meaningless of life ($M = 4.98$, $SD = .67$) is high.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Spiritual Well-Being

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Spiritual Well-Being	5.22	Very High	.46
Affiliation with God	5.46	Very High	.50
Satisfaction with Life	5.13	Very High	.53
Alienation from God-sense of the Meaningless of Life	4.98	High	.67

Note Interval. 5.01–6.00: Very High, 4.01–5.00: High, 3.01–4.00: Moderately High, 2.01–3.00: Moderately Low, 1.01– 2.00 Low, and 0.01–1.00: Very Low

The spiritual well-being of preservice teachers is very high. This implies that it is always true that the preservice teachers have realized the essence, purpose, and meaning of the teaching profession about oneself, others, and God. They are preservice teachers who have great satisfaction in their work and have the desire to help and inspire students. It is because they are conscious, self-directed, and focused on promoting and maximizing human potential.

The affiliation with the God of preservice teachers is very high. This implies that it is always true that the preservice teachers have a strong relationship with God. They all the time rely on God and seek the leadership of Christ in their lives. It is because the source of their strength in fulfilling the daily tasks in school is the Lord. They need Him to withstand and manage their personal feelings of frustration to deal positively with students' challenging behaviors.

The satisfaction with the life of preservice teachers is very high. This implies that it is always true that the preservice teachers are indeed happy and fulfilled when they are with God. They exhibit love, joy, and peace, and walk by faith to gain clarity on how they can make adjustments in the challenges of work and life. This is inevitable because they need self-reflection, meditation, and a leisure walk to manage their emotions, maintain good relationships with others, and create a positive learning and working environment free from stress and pressure.

The alienation from the sense of the meaninglessness of life is high. This implies that it is oftentimes true that preservice teachers choose to depend on God to find meaning in desperate circumstances and dare to face the most difficult problems of life. This shows that they recognize the importance of God because they know that God called them to serve and meet the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual needs of the students.

C. Level of Academic Resilience

The level of academic resilience of preservice teachers as an entire group and in terms of perseverance, reflecting and adaptive help-seeking, and negative affect and emotional response are shown in Table 3. The result shows that in its entirety the level of academic resilience is high (M = 4.08, SD = .38). It also shows that perseverance (M = 4.19, SD = .41), reflecting, and adaptive help-seeking (M = 3.76, SD = .43) and negative affect and emotional response (M = 4.07, SD = .58) are high.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Academic Resilience

Category	Mean	Description	SD
Academic Resilience	4.08	High	.46
Perseverance	4.19	High	.50
Reflecting and Adaptive Help-Seeking	3.76	High	.53
Negative Affect and Emotional Response	4.07	High	.67

Note Interval. 4.21–5.00: Very High, 3.41–4.20: High, 2.61–3.40: Moderate, 1.81–2.60: Low, and 1.00–1.80: Very Low

The academic resilience of the preservice teachers is high. This implies that they often strive to do better despite the adversities in school. This indicates that the preservice teachers have the fighting abilities to face academic problems. They know that they are vulnerable to many challenges. In that sense, the preservice teachers try to be good, stable, and adapt to challenging conditions. It is because they are efficacious, committed, and responsive to contribute to the success of the school.

The perseverance of preservice teachers is high. This implies that they are often able to sustain the effort and thrive by responding positively to challenging situations and overcoming adversities. This determines that they can manage stress and deal with problems comfortably. It is because they know how to adapt to life-changing events, cope with turbulent times, and bounce back from hardship and tragedy.

The reflecting and adaptive help-seeking of preservice teachers is high. This implies that they often seek support from peers, and teachers, and rely on God when they are in need. In short, preservice teachers have recognized the importance of support and consensus so that they can observe, evaluate the outcomes, and learn from the situation. This is vital for them to obtain immediate relief from stress and acquire continuing healthy self-system resources which are essential for coping with future academic difficulties.

The negative effects and emotional responses of preservice teachers are high. This implies that they often avoid and ignore problems that affect their life and relationships. This shows that the preservice teachers are embracing and managing the negative emotions in a better approach. They are just interested in paying more attention to events that motivate and encourage them to do their work and responsibilities. This optimism is essential to preservice teachers because they seek beneficial outcomes for health and happiness as well as personal success.

D. Differences in Spiritual Well-Being and Academic Resilience Based on the Christian Values

The differences in spiritual well-being and academic resilience based on the Christian Values are shown in Table 4. Data show that there is a significant difference in spiritual well-being $F(9.737^*) = .000, p < .05$ in favor of the very high ($M = 5.37, SD = .42$) Christian values. Moreover, there is also a significant difference in the academic resilience $F(27.933^*) = .000, p < .05$ in favor of the very high ($M = 4.43, SD = 4.43$) Christian values. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in academic resilience and spiritual well-being based on Christian values taught is rejected.

Table 4: ANOVA on the Differences in Spiritual Well-Being and Academic Resilience Based on the Christian Values

Category	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Academic Resilience					
Between Groups	3.792	3	1.264	9.737*	.000
Within Groups	29.730	.130			
Total	33.522	232			
Spiritual Well-Being					
Between Groups	13.196	3	4.399	27.933*	.000
Within Groups	36.060	.157			
Total	49.256	232			

* $p < .05$ – significant at 5% level

The spiritual well-being of the preservice teachers varies significantly based on the Christian values. This implies that the spiritual well-being of the preservice teachers is influenced by the Christian values they possess. This explains that Christian values have a positive impact on the spiritual well-being of the preservice teachers. This is necessary for them to sustain positivism and optimism, connect with others, practice self-care, and accept goodness in their life.

Likewise, there is a contrast in the academic resilience of the preservice teachers based on Christian values. This implies that Christian values significantly work for the preservice teachers to successfully adapt to challenging life experiences. This indicates that to fully embrace the reality there is a need for the preservice teachers to build up their Christian values to overcome setbacks, difficulties, and defeats. This makes them carry out their daily responsibilities and better understand the meaning of life. In other words, when life difficulties emerge, they can rely on their Christian values to adapt to life in the face of adversity.

E. Relationships among Christian Values, Spiritual Well-Being, and Academic Resilience

The relationships among Christian values, spiritual well-being, and academic resilience are shown in Table 5. Data reveal that there is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between Christian values $r = .409^*, p = .000 < .05$, and academic resilience. There is also a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between Christian values $r = .600^*, p = .000 < .05$ and spiritual well-being. Furthermore, there is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between spiritual well-being $r = .459^*, p = .000 < .05$, and academic resilience. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there are no significant relationships among Christian values, spiritual well-being, and academic resilience is rejected.

Table 5: Pearson r among the Christian Values, Spiritual Well-Being, and Academic Resilience

Variables	r-value	Sig
Christian Values and Academic Resilience	.409*	.000
Christian Values and Spiritual Well-Being	.600*	.000
Spiritual Well-Being and Academic Resilience	.459*	.000

* $p < .05$ – significant at 5% level

The result shows that there is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between Christian values and academic resilience. This implies that the higher the Christian values, the better the academic resilience. It is because Christian values support the academic resilience of the preservice teachers. It becomes an important tool for the preservice teachers to overcome and cope with the challenges of their daily stressors. There is also a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between Christian values and spiritual well-being. This implies that the higher the Christian values, the better the spiritual well-being. It is because Christian values may reinforce spiritual well-being since this allows the preservice teachers to strengthen their faith and belief in God. Moreover, there is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between spiritual well-being and academic resilience. This implies that the higher the spiritual well-being, the better the academic resilience. It is because spiritual well-being enables preservice teachers to face academic challenges.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Given the high levels of Christian values among the preservice teachers, they are likely to treat one another with respect and compassion and offer meaningful service to their students. This strong foundation boosts their confidence in introducing a Christ-centered education that aims to guide and nurture students' God-given talents and interests. With a strong sense of spiritual well-being, these preservice teachers are also likely to feel more motivated in their work, enhancing their commitment to remain in the teaching profession. This, in turn, helps them develop empathy and compassion for their students, fostering a positive and supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, the high level of academic resilience in these preservice teachers assures them that they are capable of thriving even in challenging circumstances. This resilience enables them to empathize with struggling students, manage negative emotions, focus on positive experiences, and remain committed to their schools and profession.

The correlation between spiritual well-being, academic resilience, and Christian values suggests that these values play a key role in helping preservice teachers maximize their potential to deliver high-quality teaching while modeling a Christian way of life. They are equipped to handle challenges such as difficult student behavior, poor academic performance, or lack of engagement, while also managing their own emotions and well-being. Ultimately, the relationship between Christian values, spiritual well-being, and academic resilience highlights the importance of Christian values as powerful tools for strengthening both personal and professional growth. These values provide preservice teachers with the skills and strategies needed to care for their own well-being, build resilience, and confidently fulfill their roles for the benefit of their students and colleagues.

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