

# Religious Education as the Shaper of Individual Character Behavior in Financial Management

Marissa Silooy  
Faculty of Economics  
Maluku Indonesian Christian University  
Ambon, Indonesia  
Silooy.marissa@yahoo.com

Chricela Natalia Joseph  
Faculty of Economics  
Maluku Indonesian Christian University  
Ambon, Indonesia  
chricelajoseph@gmail.com

R Suryanti Ismail  
Faculty of Economics  
Maluku Indonesian Christian University  
Ambon, Indonesia  
yantiismail22@yahoo.com

Beatrix A. Talakua  
Faculty of Economics  
Maluku Indonesian Christian University  
Ambon, Indonesia  
talakuabeatrix@gmail.com

**Abstract**—The success of human life in this world can be indicated by a variety of ways, such as the collected treasures, career paths or positions achieved, the level of education passed, the preparation of future generations, and their contribution to life. All life's activities and decisions are no longer solely aimed at money, but money is seen as a means of achieving even more essential goals. Money is no longer in control of one's life, but one is in control of money. Behavioral finance in financial management where religious education plays an important role in the character formation guides and directs individuals to form behaviors that can lead individuals to the positive side to manage money wisely and impose money as it should so that money does not become evil lord. From the description, the writer will try to describe more about religious education as the shaper of the character of financial behavior in financial management.

**Keywords**— *Religious Education, Character Formation, Financial Management*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Every human being has a goal to be achieved. The purpose of life is different, but in general the family wants to achieve a happy life both in the world and in the hereafter. Humans will live happily if they succeed in achieving what they dream of. The success of human life in this world can be indicated by various ways, such as, the collected treasures, career paths or positions achieved, the level of education passed, the preparation for future generations, and their contribution to life. All life's activities and decisions are no longer solely aimed at money, but money is seen as a means of achieving even more essential goals. Money is no longer in control of one's life, but one is in control of money. There are many other things that are more decisive in life such as health, children, family, friends, charity worship, and others.

The high consumerism culture and the increasing prices for almost all needs require individual to be able to manage finances well. Moreover, if the individual has a lot of money but cannot manage it well then it will be wasted uselessly.

Yulis quoted describing financial management as a process of how individuals meet the needs of life through the management of financial resources in a structured and systematic way. In addition, financial management is the process of financial planning, including the circumstances and financial means, in order to form and implement the prepared financial plan. The fact shows that individuals often behave extravagantly (culture of consumerism) in using money. Individuals control money at will (dishonestly) based on irrational thinking and do not involve rational attributes and thoughts.[1]

This is what makes people love money that leads to evil, so life is rewarded with money. It is a fact of life that is very visible in the Christian life today. That is why religious education is needed in order to form a person's character. To achieve the ideal role of religious education, guiding must be done intensively with genuine and focused efforts to achieve tangible results in everyday life. This is related to the behavioral finance in financial management wherein religious education plays an important role in the formation of character in which individuals are guided and directed to form behaviors that can lead individuals to the positive direction to manage money wisely and to enforce the money properly and honestly so that money would not be a bad lord.

Viewed from an economic perspective, behavioral finance about learning how humans actually behave in a financial determination.[2] Behavioral finance also involves emotions, attributes, likes and various things that exist in human beings as intellectual and social beings whose interaction underlies the emergence of decisions in action. Behavioral finance is important in financial management because humans or living beings not only think rationally but also irrationally. This irrational factor is a trait inherent in the human self and can be changing, so it must be balanced with rational nature and thought in order to make decisions of using money wisely. Therefore religious education is very important as one's basis in thinking rationally to put money in to effect. In financial management, psychological factors play an important role both when the individual decides to

spend and classify money based on need. Sometimes individuals behave extravagantly and have no self-control in using money. In Christian view this means that the individual has a stronger desire of the flesh than the desire of the spirit.

From a theological point of view, the financial behavior of the individual financial management must be accompanied by responsibility for planning, disciplinary responsibility, service responsibilities and work responsibilities based on biblical values, objectives and priorities (Luke 12:13-23; 1 Timothy 6:6-10).[3] According to the writers, with this responsibility, the individual can create a shield to fortify themselves against irasioanal traits and thoughts that are inherent in human nature in managing and putting money into effect. So money does not become an evil lord causing dishonest and fraudulent behavior in managing finances. We must learn to be content with what we have. When we feel sufficient with what we have, we are free from greed and slavery of materialism.

This is an example of individual behavior in financial management that writers observe from real life. Mr. A just received an annual bonus of 2 times the salary. Later that weekend, he took his family shopping, strolling and spending money going to an electronics store where he bought a set of plasma TVs complete with home theater that was not a necessity but a momentary wish. The father was satisfied that he had spent his annual bonus for a good item. Mr. B received an annual bonus of 2 times the salary of the same company as Mr. A. The next day he went to the bank and saved some money. Coming home from the bank, he opened his savings book, and smiled with satisfaction as the savings grew. It can be seen that social and psychological factors are crucial to a person's decision choices. Mr A rated the bonus money which was 2 times the salary was not the same in value as a 2-month salary (although it was in the exact same amount) and chose to shop, goout and buy a set of home theater. Instead, Mr. B chose to immediately 'get rid of' the money by saving it so as not to get stuck into extravagant behavior.

The fact shows that individuals are often irrational in decision making because of bad financial management. The financial problems faced by each individual are caused by some individuals being unable to distinguish between primary and secondary needs and having no priority scale. The stronger the aspect of the husband and wife personality as the financial manager, the greater the influence of psychological decisions on financial decisions will be. Lifestyle, unplanned spending patterns, unrefunded social costs, the environment, and financial management literacy are factors supporting the emergence of bad management. Beware of the temptations and teachings of the world (Rome 12:1-2; 13:11-14; 1 Peter 1:13-16; 5:8).[3] There are hundreds of teachings each day that draw our attention through television, radio, advertising, and magazines. It's all made to encourage us to buy things we do not need, with the money we have, to amaze people who do not know, and to get pseudo-happiness.

The description on the background of this writing problem trigges the writers to seek factual information and to

describe more about religious education as a form of individual character behavior in financial management.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This type of research is observational because instead of treating the object, only observation is conducted, and according to its analysis it is a descriptive research as no statistic test is performed but only describing how religious education has an important role in shaping individual character behavior in financial management. Meanwhile, according to the time of the study, it is a cross sectional study because the observation is done on the spot. The informants for this research were people who had high, middle and low income interviewed. Researchers used triangulation as a technique to check the validity of data.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

In managing finances, individuals are often faced with extravagant, greedy, money-loving, and dishonest behavior. The facts show that individuals often place desires as necessity, a culture of high consumerism and materialism and certainly do not remember God as a source of blessing. The results of observations and interviews of researchers with informants and some of whom that became the key informants in this research can be seen in the table below.

**Table 1**  
**Triangulation of religious education as the shaper of individual behavior in financial management**

Informants	Interview result
Key Informant	I would prefer using the monthly salary for routine grocery expenditure such as to pay for electricity, telephone, school children's funding (education fee, money for books, pocket money), and weekly shopping.
Key Informant	When I get a monthly salary, I allocate money to the regular needs post to pay for electricity and phone bills. But once I went shopping in Ramayana, I saw and got interested in new products from women's clothing that was trendy especially with its discount offers and I bought them using daily-need money without thinking about needs. I honestly do not involve God in finances.
Key Informant	I planned that in the next 3 years I would buy a house. I kept some of my income to be allocated to the savings account. Suddenly I was attracted to a car which was actually my dream car so I took the decision to take money from my account and bought the car. Initially I was reminded of God through my conscience but I preferred following the desire of the flesh.
Key Informant	Every time I earned holiday allowance and the 13 <sup>th</sup> salary or other allowance, the money would run out faster because I spent it on the things I desired and I felt satisfied with it, because my thoughts are only those that make me happy and excited.

Based on the table it can be seen that the individual shows extravagant behavior, greedy, money-loving, dissatisfied with what they have; they felt that money can bring happiness and satisfaction, and above all they did not remember God as the source of all the blessings received so there was no inn

er bastion to withstand a desire that was not a necessity. If only one person's religious education is ideal in the sense that it can shape a person's character to behave in a positive direction, the writers argue that things like the above will not happen.

Financial management must be based on biblical values, objectives, priorities. Financial management must be done in dependence on God's command and in faith where we depend on God for security and happiness rather than our own strength (Proverbs 16:1-4, 9; Psalms 37:1-10; 1 Timothy 6:17; Philippians 4:19).[3]

If our financial management is working, it requires discipline and commitment so that our plans are realized in action. Financial honesty is an important aspect of spiritual growth (2 Corinthians. 8:7). Financial honesty comes out of recognition that everything we have comes from God (1 Chronicles 29:11-16; Rome 14:7-9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20).[3]

The Bible does not say money is wrong or criticizes those who have money, even those with lots of money. The problem is not the amount of money a person has but their attitude to what is owned or desired. The Bible has warned us to be on the alert against the wiles of Satan (1 Peter 1:13; 5:8). Why is it so? For, if we do not stay alert, Satan will change our focus from serving God slowly into serving the devil (1 Peter 2:9).[3]

#### A. Religious Education

Education is the process of changing the attitude and behavior of a person or group of people in an effort to mature human beings through the efforts of teaching and training.[4]

In the Great Dictionary of Indonesian Language, education is: "The process of changing the attitude and behavior of a person or group of people in an effort to mature man through the effort of teaching and practice".[5]

Religion is a principle of belief in God with certain *syariat* rules. In this case, certain *syariat* rules are meant to be rules that are in accordance with that religion. The rules of Christianity are rules that are in accordance with the laws of the Bible.

Religious Education is an act of changing the attitude and behavior of a person or group of people in an effort to mature them through the effort of teaching and training based on the teachings of religion.[5]

#### B. Financial Management

Yulis describes about personal finance that financial management is defined as the process of how individuals meet the needs of life through the management of financial resources in a structured and systematic way.[1]

Citing reveals that financial management is a technique to compensate for a human lifestyle, like a consumptive lifestyle with a productive lifestyle, such as investment, saving o

r business. The purpose of this financial management is that we avoid the condition of having more debt than income.[6]

Personal finance management is a process of achieving personal goals through proper and structured financial management.[7 Malinda] Financial management concerns how to manage the existing finances to obtain a maximum income.

#### C. Religious Education For Character Shapers

The term "character" in "karaso" language means "blueprint, basic format, finger-print as in finger-print. About the ambiguity of the terminology of this character, Mounier, proposed two ways of interpretation. He saw character as a level of strength through an individual capable of mastering certain conditions. Such a character is referred to as a desired process. Character is also a characteristic of a person so that he is different from others.

The role of ideal religious education is necessary to shape the individual character, then guiding must be done intensively with a serious and directed effort to achieve tangible results in everyday life.

### IV. CONCLUSION

Religious education is very important in one's life, especially in shaping the character of the individual in behaving. Character education becomes the right answer to the above mentioned problems and religion as the foundation is expected to be a place to learn to shape individual characters. One of which is in managing finance that the individual is expected to manage the financial wisely and treat the money as it is supposed to be so money will not turn into evil lord.

Money is a small matter (Luke 16:10). Why is it so? Because money cannot buy and give happiness. Money cannot provide eternal life or the true meaning of life (Isaiah 55:1-3; Revelation 3:17-18). Furthermore, this research can be developed again to see the influence of religious education as the shaper of individual character behavior in financial management.[8]

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