

TEACHER'S ROLE AS A GUIDE IN SHAPING STUDENTS' CHARACTER

[PERAN GURU SEBAGAI PEMBIMBING DALAM MEMBENTUK KARAKTER SISWA]

Velina Br. S. Depari¹, Siane Indriani²
Universitas Pelita Harapan¹⁾²⁾

01101200010@student.uph.edu¹, siane.indriani@uph.edu²

Abstract

One of the goals of Christian education is to assist students in cultivating godly character. However, the reality indicates that some students display traits inconsistent with godly character, such as bullying, irresponsibility, and disrespect. Therefore, the role of teachers as a guide becomes crucial in encouraging students to grow in faith and exhibit Christlike character in their life. This paper aims to explain the role of Christian teachers as a guide in shaping students' character using a literature review method. In shaping students' characters, teachers implement various strategies in the classroom such as creating a positive learning environment, integrating characters' education into lessons, and fostering reflection and self-awareness among students. The finding of this paper shows that Christian teachers have responsibility to guide the development of students' Christian characters. To enhance this role, the suggestions for teachers are to provide learning methods that encourage character development and establish partnerships with families and churches to collectively guide the students.

Keywords: Character development; students' character; teachers' role

Abstrak

Salah satu tujuan pendidikan Kristen adalah untuk membantu siswa mengembangkan karakter yang saleh. Namun, kenyataan menunjukkan bahwa beberapa siswa menunjukkan sifat-sifat yang tidak sesuai dengan karakter yang saleh, seperti perundungan, tidak bertanggung jawab, dan tidak sopan. Oleh karena itu, peran guru sebagai pembimbing menjadi sangat penting dalam mendorong siswa untuk bertumbuh dalam iman dan menunjukkan karakter Kristus dalam kehidupan mereka. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan peran guru Kristen sebagai pembimbing dalam membentuk karakter siswa dengan menggunakan metode studi literatur. Dalam membentuk karakter siswa, guru menerapkan berbagai strategi di dalam kelas seperti menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang positif, mengintegrasikan pendidikan karakter ke dalam pelajaran, dan menumbuhkan refleksi dan kesadaran diri di antara siswa. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa guru-guru Kristen memiliki tanggung jawab untuk membimbing perkembangan karakter Kristen siswa. Untuk meningkatkan peran ini, saran untuk para guru adalah untuk menyediakan metode pembelajaran yang mendorong pengembangan karakter dan membangun kemitraan dengan keluarga dan gereja untuk secara kolektif membimbing para siswa.

Kata Kunci: Pengembangan karakter; karakter siswa; peran guru

Introduction

Christian Character education is clearly different because specifically the goal of Christian education is to produce students with Christlike character. This is rooted in the idea that students should reflect Christlike through their words, actions, and identity. In the same way, students should reflect godly character in their lives. Godliness is simply becoming more like God every day or becoming more like Christ every moment (Hunter, 2000). The role of teachers as a guide is crucial in this process, with their responsibility extending beyond academic achievement to actively instill positive values in students. However, the reality poses challenges, as students may lack self-control and easily adopt behaviors deviating from proper ethics such as dishonesty, irresponsibility, and lack of empathy.

These facts prove that the education of students' character is needed immediately. Christian education can be one of the ways to transform students' character through teacher as a guide. Van Brummelen (2009) states that God calls Christian teachers to guide students in knowledge and sensitivity which then leads them to serve God and others. Teachers are called upon not only to guide cognitive development but also to help students know God and develop Christlike character. In shaping students' characters, teachers implement various strategies in the classroom such as creating a positive learning environment, integrating characters' education into lessons, and fostering reflection and self-awareness among students. Through these teaching and learning, teachers encourage the students to know more about Christ and apply it in their lives. Something that is done continuously will become a habit for students, which can gradually make them have Christlike character. Therefore, the study aims to explore how a teacher played his/her role as a guide to shape students' character?

Research Method

This paper is based on a literature review method. A literature review is like a thorough investigation into what other researchers have already studied and written about a particular topic. Instead of doing new experiments or surveys, it gathers and examines existing articles, books, and studies. The goal is to understand what is already known, identify any missing pieces, and suggest where future research could go. It is a way

for researchers to build on what has been done before and contribute new insights to academic conversation.

Students' character

Character is the composite of an individual's enduring qualities that shape behavior, encompassing values, attitudes, and actions reflecting morality and ethics (Lickona, 1991). Pike et al. (2021) emphasize character as integral to one's identity, manifested through actions. Hunter (2000) further defines character as enduring, distinctive moral, emotional, and behavioral qualities that differentiate individuals. Aswat & Tayibu (2022) connect character to moral qualities, attitudes, and behaviors, particularly in students, encompassing traits like honesty, respect, responsibility, and kindness.

From a Christian standpoint, the concept of *Imago Dei* underscores that all students are made in the image of God (Hoekema, 1994). This belief emphasizes inherent dignity and uniqueness, aligning with God's values. Moore (2020) suggests that students' character, influenced by biblical virtues, reflects the teachings of Jesus Christ, contributing to positive educational environments.

The Role of Teacher As a Guide

In the journey of education, Christian teachers serve as guiding lights for students, illuminating their path amidst the vast possibilities. Like a lighthouse steering ship away from danger, these teachers navigate students through storms, empowering them to discover their true purpose (Packer, 2021). Abraham Kuyper (2014) emphasized that teachers as guides have an important role in guiding students to see the world with a Christian perspective. Teacher as a guide help students understand and apply Christian moral and ethical values in various aspects of their lives.

Christian teachers are responsible for teaching students the teaching of Jesus Christ found in the Bible that was aligned with Edlin emphasized (2008) about the teacher's role as a guide in illuminating the truths of God's Word and helping students experience a deep and heartfelt response to those truths. Besides, teachers' role as a guide also needs to equip and empower students for ministry and service (Grudem, 1994). Christian teachers must be born again and become a new creation in Christ, furthermore, earnestly pursue personal growth and consistently

seeking to deepen understanding of God's Word. Then, life should reflect obedience to His teachings empowered by the Holy Spirit.

The Teacher's Role as a Guide in Shaping Students' Character

Christian education has a broader purpose than just transferring knowledge, but also involves the development of students' character based on Christian principles (Knight, 2009). Teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' character by modeling positive behaviors, providing moral guidance, and creating a supportive and respectful classroom environment. They are expected to have a good understanding of Christian values, exhibit good examples, and provide spiritual guidance to students to help them grow in faith and develop character in accordance with Christian principles (Brueggemann, 2010). Thus, the role of teachers as a guide in shaping students' character is seen as a serious and important responsibility in Christian education.

One important aspect of character development is the creation of a positive learning environment that refers to the establishment of a classroom atmosphere that nurtures and supports the growth of positive character traits, values, and behaviors in students (Hull & Wolgemuth, 2019). A positive learning environment fosters a sense of safety, respect, and belonging among students. When students feel safe and supported, they are more likely to engage actively in the learning process and develop their character. Furthermore, a positive learning environment emphasizes the importance of mistakes and failures as opportunities for growth. Teachers create a culture that views mistakes as learning opportunities, encouraging students to take risks, embrace challenges, and persevere in the face of setbacks.

Another one is encouraging reflection and self-awareness among students. Teachers can promote character development by encouraging students to reflect on their own actions, values, and personal growth (Lickona, 1991). Through activities such as journaling, self-assessment exercises, or guided reflection discussions, students can gain insight into their strengths, areas for improvement, and the impact of their choices on themselves and others. This self-reflection helps students develop self-awareness, empathy, and a sense of personal responsibility.

Another important aspect is that explicit teaching of character traits and values is crucial for students to develop a strong moral compass. It involves intentionally incorporating lessons and discussions

that focus on specific virtues, ethical principles, and values into the curriculum (Asway & Tayibu, 2022). Through direct instruction, teachers can introduce students to virtues such as honesty, compassion, empathy, integrity, fairness, respect, responsibility, and perseverance. By using real-life examples, case studies, and role-playing scenarios, teachers can help students understand how these traits manifest in different contexts and why they are important for personal and social well-being.

Not only that, but character development is also encouraging reflection and self-awareness as it allows students to engage in self-assessment, introspection, and thoughtful evaluation of their actions, words, and personal growth (Park et al., 2020). Reflection provides a space for students to pause, think critically, and make connections between their thoughts, actions, and character development. Through reflection, students gain self-awareness, which is essential for personal growth and character formation (Lickona, 1991). They can examine their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, and evaluate how these align with biblical teachings, values, and the character of Christ (Packer, 2021). Teachers can encourage reflection by incorporating various strategies into the learning process. Writing in a reflective journal provides a private space for students to explore their values, make meaning of their experiences, and set goals for personal improvement. Through this reflective process, students grow in their faith, deepen their understanding of biblical values, and strive to embody Christ-like character traits in their daily lives.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the role of the Christian teachers as a guide in shaping students' character is a significant responsibility that extends beyond the classroom. By creating a positive learning environment, service, and community engagement, explicitly teaching character traits, and encouraging reflection, students are encouraged to live out their faith, develop Christ-like character, and make a positive impact on the world around them. It is crucial for Christian teachers should continually seek personal growth and spiritual renewal, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide them in their interactions with students and in creating a learning environment that fosters character development. Teachers should engage in open and honest communication with students, encouraging

them to reflect on their choice and behavior. By striving for excellence in character and continuously learning and growing, teachers can become effective guide, inspiring students to live out their faith, and become ambassadors of Christ's love in the world.

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