



# The Role of Christian Educators in Answering Challenges in the Disruption Era

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**Abstract.** One of the challenges for Christian educators is to face the moral degradation in the education field. The values in Christian education about Christ-like characters will be the things shared by the educators through daily life examples. We found a troubling condition where educators are victimizing the students. The purpose of the research is to pay more attention toward the moral of the educators to create a better environment for the students. The method used is qualitative research in descriptive approach by doing library research. The result of the research is that Christian educators must prioritize to have sound morals as set by the Biblical standard. It should be reflected through their attitude and behavior in daily engagements comprehensively.

**Keywords:** Christian Educator, Disruption Era, Challenge, Education

## 1 Introduction

Education is supposed to be the safest place for students to learn and to create a bright generation in the future. What if educational institutions have turned into scary places for students? In 2022, the news about moral degradation in educational institutions is increasing. There was an elementary school's teacher who molested seven of his students and it happened this year. [2] Not only from the Moslem and public schools, but irresponsible Christian teachers in Sumatera also committed immoral acts, namely molesting two students.[3] And even there were lecturers suspected in cases of molestation of their own students. [4]

Without mentioning the number of the victims in moral turbulence in the educational institutions in Indonesia, it is true that educational institutions in Indonesia are currently experiencing an emergency situation that lacks educators with good moral character.

Parents who initially felt happy to bring their children into the world of education are now shocked and shaken by the news that makes them shocked and concerned.

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S. E. Zaluchu et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Theology, Humanities and Christian Education 2022 (ICONTHCE 2022)*, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 802, [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-160-9\\_34](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-160-9_34)

Teachers and lecturers who should act as educators who are noble and sincere to educate students are now starting to be exposed to the actions that are not heartbreaking. It is known that the role of Christian teachers as communicators is considered an effective way to prevent and resolve students' conflicts." [2] Sidjabat wrote about the role of Christian teachers to accommodate the five needs of high-achieving students. The teachers should be responsible not only to show professionalism in meeting the students' expectations but also showing the right way to study that please God by avoiding being self-centered. This research emphasizes the role of Christian educators to survive the disruptive era by having a good moral toward the students during the study process.

## **2 Methods**

This research is done using descriptive qualitative method. Library research is done in preparing this article where data are searched and compiled by the authors. The data are found as the result of the study being held, are compiled, analyzed and some discussions are having the purpose of clearly expounding the purpose of the research being achieved through all the processes of writing

## **3 Values of Christian Educators**

### **3.1 Mission Today**

Christians have the Bible as life guidance that will lead to have characters in accordance with the will of God that is to behave properly before the Lord, to do His will although not in accordance with ours and to have a God-fearing attitude so that every action or words will have the purpose to glorify the Lord. [1] This also applies for the Christian educators to be guided in their characters. By having such characters, Christians can be effective witnesses of Christ and having the internal strength with the purpose to glorify the Lord. To have the character means as being a part of Christian education values that make one not easily giving up and also doing good in words and deeds. [9]

Chan said that there are six characters so important to be obtained by the followers of Christ, they are as follows: [1] first, self-submission, a basic matter for a follower of Christ. Self-submission is marked with self-denial, an action of not demanding rights but doing all the obligations as obedient disciples of Christ, not seeking for being self-righteous. Second, dedication, an action done after self-submission. A true Christian should devote themselves entirely to the Lord, not to mammon. Third, humility, to accept and honor others, not putting first self-interest. Fourth, meekness, a measurement of character maturity owned by the followers of Christ especially in facing anger. Meekness is really important to be maintained for its role in edifying unity (Ephesians 4:1-3). Fifth, holiness, is a character that differentiate between followers of Christ to the world, also in relation to believers from non-believers. And the sixth, is love, the greatest (1 Corinthians 13:13). Love is shown not only toward those who do good, but especially shown in action toward the enemies.

Lickona mentioned the ten characters that must be grown in a person, are: first, wisdom, considered as the highest virtue of a character. A wise person could give a good judgment, able to take good decision for him/herself and for others. Second, justice, means to honor others' rights. The content of the verse in Matthew 7:12 is a principle of justice being applied in the environment of culture and religion. Justice also includes to keep their respective pride, honoring their rights and prestige appropriately. Third, fortitude, enabling in doing the right thing in the midst of difficulties, handling all hardships, discomforts and miseries. Fourth, self-control, the ability of a person to lead or manage one-self. Able to control emotion, lust and sexual desires and also able to wait or delay the satisfaction toward something higher and longer purpose. Fifth, forgiveness. Love does not expect any reward, it is the strongest power in the world. It is said in Matthew 22:39 that the second law equal to it is to love others as yourself, this guide us to love one another. If this Word of God is practiced in daily life, then gossip can be avoided and not to look for others faults in purpose. Sixth, a positive attitude, is an asset for oneself. The characters in a positive attitude are to have hope, enthusiast, flexible and a sense of humor. Being positive or negative is one's own choice. Seventh, hard work, the virtue that should exist in working for there isn't any substitute in life. The elements of hard working are initiative, diligent, purpose determination and ingenious. Eighth, integrity. Having integrity means to be 'whole' meaning what is said and done are not in the contrary toward each other in any situation. Ninth, gratitude. Gratitude is equal as love, not a feeling but an action of a desire. The action of being grateful and to love is each a choice. For example, we are all drink the water of a well that we did not dig by ourselves. This shall encourage us to count the blessings we receive each day. Gratitude will also avoid us to complain. Tenth, humility. This character can be considered as a completion toward other characters for it will make one to realize the imperfection or shortcoming and lead one to be a better person. Werner G. Graendorf in *Introduction to Biblical Christian Education* states that Christian education is a process of teaching and learning based on the Bible and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Christ-centered) to guide individuals in every level of growth through contemporary teaching means knowing and experiencing God's purpose and His plan through Christ in all aspects of life and to equip individuals for the effective ministry with a focus on the command and example of Christ, the Teacher Educator to make mature disciples.[7]

Robert W. Pazmiño in *Foundational Issues in Christian Education* asserts that Christian education is a deliberate divine and human effort, systematic, and continuous to share and to adjust knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, sensitivities and behaviors which are in line with Christian faith. It encourages change, renewal, reformation of individuals, groups, and structure by the Holy Spirit to be the same as revealed God's will in the Scriptures and especially in the person of Jesus Christ Himself.[8]

This definition describes the cooperation between the Lord and learners, a clear description of cognitive, affective and psychomotor dimensions of learning, change and renewal, the work of the Holy Spirit.[8]

In another part, Beth E. Brown provides the following definition: Christian education is the interaction with truth and its implications for having life under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, then it influences transformation in the learner's life - these changes conforming the image of Christ.[6] All of these definitions included significant foundations such as biblical based, theologically sound, empowered by the

Holy Spirit, elements of teaching/ learning/ growth/ equipment, change, church, evangelism and ministry.

Christian education is an education presented comprehensively that has cognitive, psychomotor also effective. Christian educator is needed to recover humans to the grand design of God that is to be like Him in His image. Therefore, the learning activities should be Biblical, guided by the Holy Spirit and embedded in Christ’ character.[8] Hence, every christian educator in any subject must have self-devotion to Christ. In Galatians 5:22-23 it is written that the fruit of the Spirit contains high – quality characters. Christian educators have a special calling to work with His mission and power to educate and lead the generations. The educators with fear of the Lord will have authentic and authoritative teaching. The qualified educators know how to communicate with the students and parents. In addition, committed Christian educators are able to bring Jesus’ teaching into practice. By seeing a good example, the students will learn about submission, dedication, humility, meekness, holiness and the greatest is love. The vibes of every class or meeting will be wonderful and exciting both for the educators and the students. These great values will bring transformation to the students, their family, peer group and also society.

**3.2 The influences of Christian Educator**

There are many verses that relate Biblical mandate with faith communities in the Old Testament. Table 1.1 contains a list of those parts with the comments about the teaching implications.

**Table 1.** Significant Old Testament Passages about Christian Education

<b>Passage</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Educational Implications</b>
Deuteronomy 6:1–9	The family is responsible for childhood instruction through teaching and community life.	Both the content and context of Christian instruction are essential. Create teachable moments.
Deuteronomy 30:11–20	The nation of Israel, having been instructed, must choose between faithfulness and rejection of God.	Instruction must lead students toward making a personal decision of faith.

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Deuteronomy 31:9–13	Priests are to read the law to the assembly of people (Hebrew and resident aliens), including children, so they can know and obey the law.	Christian education is meant for both those of the community of faith and those outside of it. All are compelled to acknowledge God and live in obedience to Him.
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Psalm 78	The passage recounts the intervention of God on Israel's behalf, noting that these should be taught to the children by their families.	Christian education includes the passing down of history and traditions, and as such becomes an inter-generational affair.
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Nehemiah 8:1–9	Nehemiah has Ezra read the Mosaic Law to an assembly of people, with the Levites providing commentary and further instruction on the meaning of the text.	Christian education must be concerned with communicating the contents of the Bible, but must also provide commentary aiding students in understanding the meaning of the Scriptures.
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Ezra 7:10–11	Teachers assume four roles: Devotee (“heart”) Student (“know”) Disciple (“observe”) Instructor (“teach”)	The teacher's spirituality must be holistic in nature, not merely intellectual, but also developing in the affective and volitional domains.
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Wisdom Literature (Proverbs)	Three kinds of teaching: Wisdom (1:20; 8:1–36; 9:1) Instruction (2:17) Correction (13:24; 17:20; 22:15; 29:25–27)	Christian education must seek to maintain the tradition of “wisdom,” not as the mere accumulation of knowledge, but the ability to make suitable application of biblical text to life.
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Prophetic Literature	Pazmiño (1997) comments that the prophets were addressing the nation to remind the people of their accountability to God, both individually and socially.	Christian education must not only focus on personal needs, but also those of the faith community and the society. God’s sovereignty applies to every aspect of life, including the necessity of justice.[11]
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In the Bible, both the Old Testament and New Testament contained meaningful teachings and the impacts in Christian education through the educators. The New Testament reveals that every Word of God is able to transform someone and even nation. Purpose leads someone into specific instructions that should be followed by training. There are various methods such as discussions, inquiries, corrections, role modeling and response. Socialization of Christian community is needed. Christian education is not only personal, but the skills and talents for the maturity of the congregation. There are six aspects in education which are handling the Word of God, having pure faith, harmonious family, leadership and also spiritual formation. It is called multidimensional. It should be owned by the Christian educators.

According to the New Testament there are some points: family responsibility, decision making, generation to generation training. Every child in a family can use their heart to know, observe and then teach others that leads into development. A teacher and learner are in the same boat where wisdom and instruction are essential. In all countries, history and tradition are familiar because every moment is precious. Furthermore, a Christian educator is impactful to build accountability to God individually and socially. In fact, teachable moments should be created by teachers, parents, and church leaders.

### 3.3 The roles of Christian Educator

McKinney wrote in his journal entitled *David Stow: Christian educator in nineteenth-century Scotland*, about a teacher whose life was given to the poor to enhance education and to bring his purpose to rescue them from the influences that may corrupt them in the setting of an urban city. Social control and the promotion of Christianity however would replace the corrupting influences.[15]

It was also mentioned in the article that David Stow had a concern about the teachers that they should be trained, therefore he gave attention to the matter. Further criteria that Stow demanded are the need to possess a cheerful and condescending manner of the teachers. Those who teach must know general information and know how to narrate stories to the children. Yet sound moral and religious principles are the must-have of a teacher.

We agree that it is important for Christian educators to be well-trained beforehand and to meet the criterias of owning sound moral and holding on to Christian religious principles.

Of course, they must have a natural fondness for young children – they must be cheerful in disposition and condescending in manners – they must be possessed of general information and have a facility of narrating stories – above all, they must have sound moral and religious principles.[15]

Priyatna in his writing quoted Knight that mentioned the specific role of a teacher or educator. Teachers are not only sharing their knowledge with the students in the learning process happened inside the classroom, but also have the most essential role as an agent of restoration and reconciliation while bringing the students to Christ. The image of God should be in balance in the students through the restoration and reconciliation done by the redemptive act of education. The teacher then has the role in the sense of ministerial and pastoral as an agent of reconciliation.[16]

In the conclusion of Priyatna's article, he said that the role of the Christian teacher is needed in the sanctification process of newborn students to have the character of Christ in the redemptive act as an agent of restoration, restoring the broken image of God in the students' life and as an agent of reconciliation to restore the students' relation with Lord, others and themselves.[16]

We see that the Christian educators should have the role to act in the reconciliation and restoration of the students. The students shall be brought to the image of God shown in their attitudes and behaviors daily.

This research suggests that the Christian educators need to be supervised periodically in order to monitor their performance in teaching including their moral integrity.

## 4 Conclusion

The task of Christian educator is more than just teaching Christians. Christian education is an education presented comprehensively that has cognitive, psychomotor also affective sides. The role of Christian educator is needed to recover humans to the grand design of God that is to be like Him in His image. The learning activities should be Biblical, guided by the Holy Spirit and embedded with Christ' characters. The moral integrity of Christian educators is one of the most fundamental parts to face challenges in this disruptive era.

**Research Contribution:** The research will contribute to Christian teachers, lecturers and educators. Parents of the students also are helped in making decisions in determining the quality of the education for their children and their future

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