

# Relevance of Implementing Christian Religious Education at Manado Polytechnic, Indonesia

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**Abstract.** In Indonesian educational institutions, religious education, including Christian Religious Education, must be taught to all students and Christian students. However, most students today focus on developing scientific competencies in a particular field rather than general compulsory learning such as Christian Religious Education. The objectives include determining the significance of Christian Religious Education in universities and the role and impact of education on student life at the Manado State Polytechnic. This research concluded that Christian Religious Education must still be taught in all universities because it has a vital role in the growth of intellectual, spiritual, moral, and social students.

**Keywords:** Christian Religious Education; Relevance; Character Development.

## INTRODUCTION

Currently, the education field faces various severe obstacles in the 21st century. This is due to several factors, one of which is the growing impact of globalization. Indonesia is located in a world region experiencing increased freedom and change due to technological advances and globalization. Growing change and competition can only be controlled by human resources, especially qualified educators or lecturers. Educators/lecturers are believed to contribute to efforts to improve human resources, especially the creation of welfare for the entire community. Therefore, the government must be able to grow competitive human resources by utilizing human resources from other nations through education. According to [1], education is one component that plays an essential role in changing attitudes and behaviours to mature through the teaching and training process, methods, and educational actions.

With the learning process carried out in every educational institution, the Indonesian government hopes that the Indonesian people will be able to improve the quality of their human re-

sources. This is made clear through several passages that fall within this sense. This part is essential because the quality of its human resources can influence the capabilities of a society, nation, and state.

According to [2], the Indonesian government has made participation and junior high for all citizens. Law of the Republic of Indonesia No 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System regulates education. Academic degrees are awarded by Higher Education institutions known as universities. As a formal educational institution, it has the authority and responsibility to ensure that the learning process runs smoothly. The university works to build a good society that fulfils the state's commitment to preparing citizens to keep abreast of developments and changes throughout history [3].

The events in South Africa, which received responses from several countries, illustrate to the Indonesian government how much the student movement will lose if universities are treated improperly [4]. This research is directed to the development of three components (intellectual, spiritual and emotional) of Manado State Polytechnic students. With the Christian Religious

Education course, it is hoped that the government will be able to improve the ability and quality of human resources.

According to [4], one cannot live a victorious Christian life based solely on experience. Therefore, developing Christian Religious Education learning in universities can be one of the best strategic efforts to achieve educational goals stipulated by the National Education Law because students cannot succeed on their own without the help of others. National Education aims to develop students into people with faith and piety in God Almighty and responsible citizens.

Through evaluating the role played by previous levels of education and preparing students to undergo an introduction and experience of Christianity, Christian Religious Education at the university must be tailored to meet the demands of the needs and development of the Christian faith Higher Education Pad. This is because many universities still ignore it, and the role of evaluation becomes crucial to implement. The author [5] asserts that research conducted at the university level in spiritual coaching has yet to be utilized to evaluate Higher Education. The influence of Christian Religious Education at the secondary school level significantly impacts knowledge in students who continue their education at university.

To combat the currents of modernization and globalization, universities must contribute to supporting the vision and mission of the government, especially considering the rapid advancement of technology and science, which hurts man's relationship with God. It will help humans recognize the quality of science and technology, measured in terms of practical value for economic and social welfare and overall human value [6]. Ethics development should be possible in each university per the psychological and mental development requirements.

The implementation of Christian Religious Education at this university results from efforts to integrate the Christian faith with real-world struggles, including teaching students about the power of love and the inclusion of God in every stage of life.

According to [7], cultural lag or inaction that is not balanced and incompatible with technological and scientific advances leads to a loss of organic intimacy in social relations and the absence

of conformity among members of society, resulting in extreme individual patterns and other patterns. This suggests that social disorganization is a byproduct of urbanization, technology, information, and industry, resulting in a significant shift in some communities, especially among learners who cannot integrate and function effectively. This is usually the result of the emergence of social issues as a distinction between *das sollen*, or what it should be, and *das sein*, or what is real.

This writing aims to examine the phenomenon of university education. Students often show social disorganization, usually having influential people, leaders, or teachers who do not adhere to accepted ideologies. If this phenomenon clashes with sacred values taught through religious education, especially Christian Religious Educators, it will be realized how important Christian Religious Education is in its implementation. Through this paper, his study at the Manado State Polytechnic became the object of research on implementing Christian Religious Education.

## METHODS

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected through words, pictures, and numbers. The terms used in this study come from other sources of evidence about the meaning of Christian Religious Education in universities, including current student issues and further research. According to [8], the strategy used is analysis, where articles and other forms of research are used as a means of research so that valid conclusions can be drawn.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Christian Religious Education is one of the many educational activities at the Manado State Polytechnic that plays a vital role in shaping the personality of students. The government and parents hope they can all live their ideals with good character while studying. To ensure that every student adheres to the Christian faith that God has bestowed upon him throughout his life, this character plays a vital role in life's journey.

The author [9] asserts that education aims to foster the Christian faith among members of faith communities in the context of families, faith communities, and formal educational

institutions. Become the main focus of all universities.

This is because Christian Religious Education must pursue the goal of fostering relationships between the development of faith and character of students today, in the future, and up to the state level, such as family building, region of residence, and so on. The author [10] mentioned this, stating that Christian Religious Education is expected to produce students who become "salt and light amid society" through value education (character or value education) and courage to take a positive attitude toward the future of the nation, which aims to cultivate "good citizens" who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the good of the country and state by their profession.

Christian education must contribute to developing religious values through government efforts and education. These values are the foundation for the development of the science and technology of students and their ability to anticipate shifts in the times, social changes, and modifications in globalization. Christian Religious Education also serves as a moral force for all individuals to solve all problems and achieve national integration or goals. The function of religion plays a vital role in the formation of the character of the nation. Individuals and groups can use religious values as a force in the face of a multifaceted crisis that is very challenging to solve.

*The Urgency of Christian Religious Education in Universities.* The National Education and Higher Education Act has emphasized Christian Religious Education as a subject and a subject to be taught [11]. Christian Religious Education should focus on man as a whole person, not only on reason but also on the heart. Teaching must be done practically so that all students and students can experience God's goodness in all aspects of life and walk the path to salvation.

In the Christian Religious Education class, the Indonesian government has established nine main subjects that students and college students must learn, including: God; humans; law; morals; art, science, and technology (Science and Technology); interfaith harmony; common; culture; and politics [11]. According to [11], the purpose of this course is for the student's personality to reflect the Christian faith. Similarly, the conclusion of [12] research in Kenya is that Christian Religious Education, like other religious subjects in the school system in

Kenya, is intended to support its consumers' spiritual, moral, and social development.

Christian Religious Education is essential to the national education system, especially in higher education, because it fosters spiritual, moral, and social development. National Education is the legal basis for a Christian religious education teacher to fulfil his duties as an educator. The goal is for every learner to be a blessing to the world. Meanwhile, the specific purpose is to shape and guide students towards a whole personality that reflects the image of God and is responsible for the development of society and the state [10].

Christian Religious Education in Higher Education needs to help students live their faith and morals through activities that align with their life goals. This will help students learn more about the Christian faith. Christian Education also addresses the Christian faith as the cornerstone of life's journey, with doctrines based on the Bible and church tradition.

Christian Religious Education must be carried out by its purpose: to remind and direct students to declare a responsible life in all aspects of human beings in their daily lives. Man is valued and made the subject and object of education through Christian Education to be in harmony with the word of God through the Apostle Paul: Be transformed by the renewal of your mind, not the world, so that you may determine which will of God is that which is perfect, reasonable, and pleasing to God".

This statement makes it clear that Paul desperately wanted everyone to be able to tell what was perfect, reasonable, and pleasing to the Lord of the Roman believers. According to [13], the word "renewal" means an intention that all stages of a believer's journey occur continuously and not in response to a single event. Christian education in universities, including at the Mando State Polytechnic, should play a role in spreading the relevance of Implementing Christian Religious Education at Manado State Polytechnic.

For the existence of the Indonesian nation to be conquered in a positive direction, globalization, one of the obstacles faced in fostering citizens' morale, needs serious attention. Before entering college, Christian students are expected to have the character of Christ, so they do not deviate from biblical instructions when facing challenges. Therefore, for students to emulate Christ in all

their daily activities, they need to have a strong understanding of who Christ is and what Christ is like for him to live his life [14].

Students are human beings who develop due to various life challenges, both for personal, family, and community purposes. They must be constructive and dynamic in responding to the multiple challenges of state life and get guidance in understanding the vocation of life. Political life and the movement to shift the basis and direction of the state from Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, diversity, and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (known as NKRI) are why this response is so significant [15]. This kind of effort is a betrayal of the commitment of the country's founders.

Students are not only seen in terms of cognitive or knowledge. The affective aspect, or personality and attitude, is also the most crucial aspect the student must take. One of the components of the personality development course is the university's desire to cultivate students' personalities through Christian Religious Education (PAK) classes. Therefore, Christian Religious Education remains relevant in all developmental ages and educative entities, including at the Manado State Polytechnic.

According to [16], what needs to be emphasized immediately is that when religion is considered to have lost its influence, it turns out to be far from losing its relevance. Despite the rapid and dramatic shift in religious opinion, the perception that religion is still relevant to current issues has remained constant for several years.

The real purpose of Christian Religious Education for students must be to understand God's work of love. This can be achieved through communion with brothers and sisters, contextual Bible study, and connection with the Holy Spirit. The result is that learners become images of Jesus Christ in every activity of their lives through personal responsibility and concern for others.

*Implementation of Christian Religious Education at Manado State Polytechnic.* The excellent quality of teaching can be seen from the communication it uses. Many things can affect the quality of learning, including communication between lecturers and students. Communication of lecturers must be considered because, in education, there must be a communication process. This process aims to convey lecturers' messages so that stu-

dents can receive the news, which can affect their understanding and behaviour.

Lecturers must be able to communicate Christian Religious Education effectively both inside and outside the classroom. Less careful communication, such as reckless words, can influence student behaviour. Therefore, practical, sympathetic, courteous, enthusiastic, and optimistic communication is required. As a result, Christian lecturers' teaching methods and daily life combine contact with students.

The Government Regulation Plan on Teachers requires teachers and lecturers to be able to carry out educational and dialogical learning. Critical thinking and communication must arise from implementing learning, which must depart from a dialogical process between fellow learners. Proper education would only exist with communication.

The application of teaching from Christianity at the Manado Polytechnic is carried out with intense communication so that good quality can also be created through good communication. The interaction in applying Christian teaching at the Manado Polytechnic is carried out with the appropriate communication and the correct language.

In the spiritual development of Christian students, Manado Polytechnic applies, among other things, three kinds of ministry: First and foremost, personal ministry. Second, Directing small groups (groups that grew up together) and General Communion (Worship) are the third. The activities of the three types of services vary.

1. Personal Servants can be implemented in several forms, as follows:

1.1. Personal evangelism for first-year students, as some Christian students refer to as "Christians without repentance" because they do not understand what it means to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

1.2. For those who have received Jesus, the additional direction is applied.

1.3. Guidance through individual counselling to solve past problems.

1.4. Pray gradually.

1.5. Visit the person in question and invite him to the fellowship of learners so that he will not abandon his faith.

2. Small Group Monitoring can be applied in various ways, namely as follows:

2.1. Bible study groups that use PIPA material, especially groups for people who have not been born again.

2.2. The purpose of the mentoring group is to help people who have accepted Jesus and want to grow spiritually understand the Bible.

2.3. Guidance for group leaders to grow together, focusing on preparing them to serve learners.

3. The General Fellowship can be applied through the following:

3.1. Fellowship in general: held from afternoon to evening on campus every Friday. All students of Manado State Polytechnic are welcome to attend this fellowship.

3.2. Management fellowship and service evaluation: the goal is for each administrator to remain steadfast in the service and to be able to evaluate the most recent usefulness to improve it for the next service.

3.3. Easter revival service. The goal is that the student has the power of faith and can endure life's hardships.

3.4. For first-year students, retreat. The first goal is to hold private meetings individually to allow first-year students to meet Jesus. Second, explain what a Christian student fellowship is and introduce senior students so that when the first-year students arrive on campus, they immediately feel the company's closeness. Intensive training aims to produce campus servants for God.

3.5. Training consists of personal evangelism, directing small groups and encouraging shared group growth. Student service organizers and student fellowship leadership regeneration are examples of these activities.

3.6. Each activity in a student fellowship is based on a prayer fellowship.

*Challenges of Christian Religious Education at Manado State Polytechnic.* Compared to Christian Religious Education, a General Course, Christian students often prioritize courses by their study program. According to [17], they are willing to ignore Christian Religious Education courses that they consider less important because they have taken them since elementary school. This is because they want to maximize their competence to face the challenges posed by globalization.

Under different conditions, students place Science and Technology as their top priority in achieving their competencies. However, they often consider science and technology contrary to religion when setting a priority scale. This had happened since the Age of Enlightenment when the dominance of faith over science was questioned [18].

According to [6], this fact makes it very challenging for learners to understand the consequences of the abandonment of faith, which can cause people to focus only on a brief existence and generate civilization as well as a wasteful, materialistic and hedonistic mentality.

*Solutions to the Challenges Faced.* By innovating the curriculum to anticipate the broad cultural currents of globalization, Christian Religious Education must keep up with the times without changing the basic principles of belief [19]. Students who believe that learning Christian Religious Education is monotonous and that there is nothing useful for competency development can be dispelled through curriculum innovation.

The learning process of Christianity is considered essential to improve, not only in the classroom but anywhere and anytime. Christian Religious Education lecturers must organize learning with a human touch to foster and maintain faith. This is very important because it can bring Christian Religious Education back to its true goal, which is to help students know God personally through the presence of lecturers and independent learning throughout their lives [20].

Through incorporating personal and group assignments, activities in and out of the classroom, discussions, presentations, and lectures, lecturers should strive to be more creative in teaching. Deliver material outside of the school through events such as student fellowship activities, new student retreats, and Early School Year Spiritual Briefings. For the teaching process to form the character for which instructional teaching is intended, learners must also be role models in their lives; learners are expected to apply what they learn in real-world situations more easily. Students will also be more interested in Christian Religious Education lectures, as evidenced by their willingness to participate in every learning activity.

## CONCLUSIONS

Because of its relevance, Christian religious education should be taught in all universities, including Manado State Polytechnic. However, students prioritize courses that they consider more important than Christian Religious Education in the learning process. Taking it up since elementary school, college students feel bored because they don't think it matters. Therefore, Christian Religious Education must adapt to these challenges without compromising the core beliefs of Christianity. However, for students to be enthusiastic about attending lectures, each student must be able to change the process of learning models and methods to be more interesting. This spirit is how it can advance intellectually, spiritually,

morally, and socially. Students who successfully develop this ability can influence their personal, social, and national influences. Therefore, the development of science and technology does not hinder faith development; instead, it serves as a platform for college students to consider their beliefs in everything they do. Implementing Christian Religious Education at the Manado State Polytechnic is done through interactive communication. It is ensured to run well so the message can be well received. Manado State Polytechnic also classifies three forms of application as needed, namely personal services, directing small groups (groups that grow together) and General Fellowship (worship).

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