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Becoming a Professional Christian Religious Education Teacher in The Era of Covid-19 Pandemic

Megawati Manullang[1] , Rogate Artaida Tiarate Gultom[2] , Lasmaria Lumban Tobing[3], Masniar Hernawati Sitorus[4]

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Abstract

The research aims to get an idea of how professional Christian Religious Education teachers are amid the Covid-19 Pandemic. Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers are custodians of the Christian faith and must change how their learning is delivered due to online learning. Then the Christian Religious Education teacher must remain professional in teaching and learning activities during online learning. In addition to the criteria for professional Christian Religious Education teachers that have been set, amid the Covid-19 Pandemic, other criteria must be added. The additional criteria are to imitate Jesus, who can teach in any situation, master online learning media, present learning materials more creatively, and use various online learning models.

1. Introduction

The covid-19 pandemic, that has hit the world since the year 2019, has had a significant impact on various activity life (Fegert et al., 2020; Kabir et al., 2020; Poudel et al., 2020; Veybitha et al., 2021). Various types of field life as if submit and not Empower face to face with pandemic this is good life social, economic, cultural, educational, religious and other fields other experience uncertainty, including life in Indonesia. Since the spread of the virus, the Indonesian government has done various methods to prevent the spread of the virus (Wajdi et al., 2020; Meywati et al., 2021). One of them with the issue a circular Ministry of Education and Culture Directorate of Higher Education No. 15 of 2020 where one of the contents is from learning by stare advance go online or *online*.

[1] *Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Tarutung, Sumatra Utara, Indonesia. Email: megawatimanullang2@gmail.com*
[2] *Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Tarutung, Sumatra Utara, Indonesia. Email: rogatearthagultom@gmail.com*
[3] *Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Tarutung, Sumatra Utara, Indonesia. Email: lasmarialumbantobing@gmail.com*
[4] *Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Tarutung, Sumatra Utara, Indonesia. Email: masniarsitorus76@gmail.com*

Thereby learning *online* as a learning alternative was implemented during this Covid- 19 pandemic (Srithazith & Ismail, 2020). Learning *online* is learning using an internet network. Teachers and students will study with the use of the internet network. The use of internet networks will impact change in the delivery Theory of classroom learning. Learning *online* will remodel activity early learning character conventional Becomes internet and technology-based.

Various media are also used for continuity activity learning *online*, including virtual classes that use the service *Google Classroom*, *WhatsApp Group*, *Zoom, Google Meet,* and others. Various applications could help educators convey the Theory of Learning. This online learning also affects Christian Religious Education (CRE) and Budi Pekerti learning. Undebatable, CRE teachers must prepare themselves. Quality learning is determined by how professional CRE teachers in teaching online. Although learning is online, the role of the teacher is permanent. No change like learning to stare face. Interaction between the teacher and student permanent Becomes a very important in activity teaching-learning activities.

The problem is the lack of understanding of CRE teachers in arranging the learning as long as online causes quality learning decreased. The problem is there are fewer teachers skilled in using online learning media such as the *Internet, Google Classroom, Zoom Meeting, Google Meet,* and others. Then many teachers experience *shock* and confusion because they must get used to having online learning (Baltà et al., 2021). At the same time, the CRE teacher has demanded permanent professional for teaching in any situation (Smith, 2018).

2. Materials and Methods

This paper is based on descriptive qualitative research, namely library research, to analyze the writings written by Christian theology experts, CRE experts, and learning experts. Literature can be in the form of books and journal articles relevant to the discussion in writing. This aims to explain how to become a professional CRE teacher amid a pandemic. On the current paper, the researcher will combine the opinions of these experts with the opinions of researchers through the results of the researchers' readings and elaborate on various relevant sources, and then present descriptively so that a new view is obtained that is useful for providing solutions to the problems being studied.

The Role of Professional CRE Teachers

Teachers play an essential role in fostering students (Chirico et al., 2020). Smith (2018) states that CRE teachers have a significant role in creating a good learning process. Teachers are responsible for educating, teaching, and guiding following their tasks. This can be seen in the book of Ephesians 6:46, which reads: "But educate them in the teachings and advice of the Lord," then 1 Peter 5:2-3 "Feed the flock of God that is with you, not by force, but voluntarily according to God's will, not for profit, but serving."

The CRE teachers, in their interactions, are needed to create a fun teaching system to arouse students' interest in learning. The role of religious teachers' competence is crucial to the development and quality of human resources, a religion teacher is expected to understand the psychology of the development of educational concepts, the environment of students and teaching methods to stimulate attention and ability to think creatively and critically (Kenyon, 2010). To stimulate student interest, it is necessary to be supported by the teacher's ability to teach. Teachers who can teach CRE are teachers who can carry out professional CRE teachers. The driving factor for the rise of students' learning enthusiasm is the teacher who is able to master the lesson material.

CRE teachers have a particular task that distinguishes general teachers as interpreters of the Christian faith as pastors, guides, leaders, and evangelists (Smith, 2018). Moreover, Smith (2018)

explains that CRE teachers serve not only as teachers but also as caregivers and coaches who convey the gospel, which is not only in the form of service but also in the form of example, which is shown in his life. The teacher realizes that he is still learning and in faith, so he always opens up to God's teachings and imitates Christ in teaching. The teacher's faith is fundamental in CRE because his job is not only to direct religious knowledge but related to faith. The Christian Religion teacher is obliged to nurture and be responsible for knowing each of his students and must love them and educate them before God (Buchanan & Hyde, 2006).

From the opinions of the experts above, it can be understood that CRE teachers have a tremendous moral responsibility towards their students; CRE teachers do not only serve as teachers but also as caregivers, coaches, and educators. Therefore, CRE teachers are required to develop their skills and knowledge following their profession. CRE teachers are teachers who are competent in the field of CRE teaching. He is the one who must guide his students to deepen their study of the Bible so that students experience faith growth.

The success of the CRE teaching and learning process is also determined by the teacher's ability to build positive interactions with students (Pusztai et al., 2021). Some teachers tend to only pay attention to bright children, while those less intelligent are ignored. In the CRE teaching process, where the achievement of competence is seen through the transformation of life values, the teacher's ability to interact with students is essential. If there is no interaction, the teacher will be less assisted in monitoring changes in student behavior, especially in CRE learning, which is part of the communication of faith that is carried out by teachers and students in an interaction relationship.

Carrying out the profession as a CRE Teacher is not just routine work and just a means to earn rewards or land to earn a living. The CRE Teacher Profession has a high faith commitment to service (Yoder, 2019). The presence of CRE in schools should be able to make students aware of their role as Christian youth. Especially in this day and age, students' interest in learning has decreased. Therefore it is indispensable for professionals who are able to bring students to understand Christian teachings and values and carry them out in daily life.

Professional CRE Teacher Competition

Having reviewed the ideas of Lase et al (2021), Sianipar et al (2021), Paskarina et al (2021), and Boiliu et al (2021), it is found that a CRE teachers, based on their explanations, must possess some requirements as follows. 1) Able to understand the contents of the Bible properly and correctly; 2) Mastering teaching materials; 3) Able to manage teaching and learning programs; 4) Able to use a variety of media and to learn resources in the context of the success of the teaching and learning process; 5) Able to manage class; 6) Able to build positive interactions between teachers and students; 7) Able to master the principles of learning evaluation; 8) Able to bridge the daily problems faced by students with the message of the Bible; 9) Mastering the principles of education; 10) Able to guide and assist students in the process of achieving transformation of life values as disciples of Jesus; 10) Able to use various research results to improve vision and ability to develop methodologies in teaching; 11) Able to build good character and integrity. In addition to the above points, a CRE teacher must have excellent and commendable qualities in his life in the school and community environment. S/he should also be a role model that is liked by everyone, especially students.

3. Results and Discussions

In this study, the researchers described other criteria that CRE teachers must possess in addition to the criteria described above as follows.

Imitation of Jesus Who Can Teach in Any Situation

This can be seen from the situation and condition of Jesus' teaching. Jesus teaches by the well (John 4:1-7: Conversation with the Samaritan Woman), Jesus teaches on the hill (Matthew 5-7), Jesus teaches in the temple (Matt. 21:23; 26:55; John 7:14; 8:2, 20), in cities and villages (Matt. 9:5; Mark 6:6; Luke 13:22), in homes (Mark 2:1-2), in along the way (Mark 10:32-34), on boats at anchor (Mark 4:1; Luke 5:3), and so on. From this explanation, Jesus did not focus on one place to teach. Jesus taught us not to be limited by place, space, and time. Jesus can teach anywhere and anytime. Where Jesus wanted to teach, He used the place where He was as a means and infrastructure of His learning.

Jesus' readiness to teach in any situation should be imitated by CRE Teachers. Disasters can come at any time at times that we never think about or imagine. The ability of Jesus to empower his teaching environment should be exemplified by the CRE teacher. This is an actualization of the faith of a CRE teacher who must learn from the Great Teacher. CRE teachers under no circumstances should continue to teach professionally. CRE teachers must demonstrate the ability to be strong individuals in dealing with problems in the midst of this pandemic.

Mastering Online Learning Media

There is no doubt that the use of the internet as a medium to support the learning process during a pandemic cannot be separated. The use of the internet or other facilities requires students to organize their learning without having to physically meet their teacher. The internet provides various advantages for its users, such as more accessible access to learning materials, opportunities for independent study, and opportunities to study without being limited by study schedules.

The online learning media offered for use by educators vary, such as Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Meet, Google Form, PDF, Powerpoint, Youtube, e-learning, Whatsapp, and others. Mastering the use of online learning media is very important for a CRE teacher. Learning all these applications is not easy and requires energy and a strong mind. However, the example of Jesus using learning media must be kept in mind. Jesus used media that were close to the learning environment. Jesus used natural media around the learning environment to explain the material. With the use of media that can be obtained easily, Jesus makes the message conveyed effectively. During this pandemic, the learning environment for teachers and students is online, so like it or not, CRE teachers must use online learning media to deliver their material.

The research results show that as many as 70.8% of CRE teachers are ready to implement online learning facilities. Therefore, learning and mastering online learning media is a must. For example, using Zoom and Google Meet to meet directly with students in cyberspace. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, doing more activities at home is an obligation for everyone so that the spread of the Covid-19 Virus does not spread further. Then the CRE teacher needs to master the steps for using these two applications. Like how to share the screen so that students can see the material or the teacher's presentation. The use of Google Classroom also provides a choice for CRE Teachers. The advantage of Google Classroom is that teachers can share assignments through the "Classwork" option or share material through the "Stream" option. Teachers can immediately give an assessment of student assignments, and students can see directly see the value they get.

During this pandemic, some teachers are still not responsive to the development of information technology (IT). Teachers have been required to quickly master and utilize technology. Thus, this pandemic provides space for CRE teachers to keep learning to master technology. Information technology, which is developing rapidly, can be seen as a friend in improving the quality of human life. This is manifested in daily human life in dealing with various problems, which can then be solved with the help of technology.

Based on this explanation, the CRE teacher must master online learning media so that the professional value of a CRE teacher is appropriately maintained. Another advantage obtained by the CRE teacher is that if students do not know how to use the media, the CRE teacher can share knowledge with students to be able to use online learning media.

Presenting Learning Materials More Creatively

Active learning requires teachers to be able to stimulate students to create creativity. Creativity can be grown by creating a learning atmosphere that allows students to feel free to study and explore learning materials. Creative presentation of the material is part of the professionalism of a CRE Teacher. In presenting learning materials, CRE teachers can combine them with imaginative concepts, learning that stimulates original ideas and works, presenting varied learning, and the learning is new. Modify the presentation of learning materials by using learning applications, for example, the Canva application. CRE teachers don't just use one application, for example, only PowerPoint. Thus, students will be stimulated to think critically of the learning material. In teaching, Jesus often stimulated his listeners' thinking abilities. Jesus asks thinking questions, using questions. Through this question, Jesus obtains not only various kinds of information and builds a conversation but also has other purposes, namely: as a simulation of attention (Matt.16:13); clear the mind (Mark 10:3); express emotions (Matt. 12:34); emphasize truth (Matt. 16:26); apply the truth (Luke 10:36); rebuke (Matt.21:25-27); convincing (Mark 2:25); test (John 21:15-17).

On the other hand, CRE teachers may encounter problems with learning tools such as focus. When the material is ready to be presented, but the focus is not yet available. However, during this Pandemic, CRE Teachers can present learning materials through Zoom or Google Meet meetings. This is an opportunity for CRE teachers to organize the presentation of learning materials more creatively, without thinking about tools such as focus. CRE teachers can display various exciting things to increase the quality of their learning materials using Various Online Learning Models

For the objectives of the CRE and Budi Pekerti subjects to be achieved well even though they are online, it is necessary to have a varied online learning model so that students are active in learning. From the results of research by Yuniar Hayati, students show active learning when teachers use various online learning models. He varies learning media Zoom Meeting, Google Meet, Powerpoint, Video, Pixton, etc. For example, if you continue to use Zoom Meeting every time you study online, you can spend a lot of money if you don't use Wi-Fi. In addition, the results of one survey stated that Zoom Meeting consumes a lot of internet data and wastes data packages. It's good for CRE Guru to vary it with Google Meet and WhatsApp Group.

However, this will be an inhibiting factor for areas that do not have a good internet network. Therefore, variations of online learning models need to be applied. In addition to the application of online learning media, several CRE teachers conduct home visits; they visit students who do not have an internet network or do not have internet data packages, or do not have Android mobile phones, computers, or laptops. Some CRE Teachers also use Facebook Lite because users can have free learning discussions in accessible mode. It can save costs. Then some CRE teachers also use the assignment method; students are given assignments on Monday, then the following Monday, the teacher comes to students' homes to take the assignments.

Using various online learning models is one way to become a CRE teacher for professionals amid the Covid-19 Pandemic. Various online learning platforms can be used as learning models. Thus, learning CRE can be more fun, and learning objectives can be achieved well.

4. Conclusion

The spread of the Covid-19 pandemic presents challenges for the world of education in Indonesia. Through the Indonesian government's policy, that learning is carried out online. This policy causes teachers as the main gate of education to change the way of learning. In particular, CRE teachers are custodians of the Christian faith, must also change the delivery of their learning, and must remain professional in teaching and learning activities. In addition to the criteria for professional CRE Teachers that have been set, these criteria must be added amid this Covid-19 pandemic. The additional criteria are to imitate Jesus, who is able to teach in any situation; master online learning media, present learning materials more creatively, and use varied online learning models.

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