



The Influence of Teachers' Personality Competence on Students' Character Formation in the Light of *Didaktikos*: A Case Study at SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between teachers' personality competence and students' character growth within the theological framework of didaktikos ("able to teach," 2 Timothy 2:24) at SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua, North Nias, Indonesia. The research is grounded in the premise that effective teaching in Christian education integrates professional skill with moral and spiritual integrity. Using a quantitative descriptive–correlational design, data were collected from 10 teachers and 80 students through Likert-scale questionnaires measuring two variables: teachers' personality competence (integrity, emotional stability, responsibility, exemplary life, and wisdom) and students' character growth (discipline, honesty, empathy, responsibility, and spirituality). Statistical analysis using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation revealed a strong and significant positive relationship ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.05$) between teachers' personality competence and students' character development. The most influential dimensions were exemplary life (mean = 4.58), moral integrity (mean = 4.47), and emotional stability (mean = 4.41). These findings indicate that teachers who model moral consistency and emotional maturity significantly enhance students' ethical behavior and spiritual growth. Theologically, the didaktikos principle emphasizes that being "able to teach" requires embodying patience, humility, and Christlike love. Thus, character formation is best achieved through imitation and relational mentorship rather than instruction alone. This study concludes that teachers' personality competence is not merely a professional attribute but a spiritual vocation, shaping classrooms into sacred spaces where knowledge and faith unite. Integrating the didaktikos model into teacher training is essential for strengthening Christian character education in vocational schools.

Keywords: *Personality Competence, Character Formation, didaktikos*

INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia today is no longer limited to the pursuit of academic achievement; it has been redefined as a holistic process aimed at shaping students into individuals of integrity, resilience, and faith. The national education system emphasizes that intellectual capacity must go hand in hand with moral and spiritual maturity, forming citizens who are both competent and ethical in facing real-world challenges (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2007). Within this framework, vocational education (*Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan or SMK*) occupies a particularly strategic position, as it not only prepares students for technical and professional fields but also nurtures personal discipline, social responsibility, and moral awareness essential for community life (Suyanto & Djihad, 2020). Teachers play a central role in realizing these educational ideals. Beyond delivering subject content, they serve as moral models whose personality profoundly influences the attitudes, motivation, and behavior of students (Mulyasa, 2013). The teacher's personality competence-encompassing emotional stability, moral integrity, self-confidence, and wisdom-is therefore a foundational element of effective education. According to the Ministerial Regulation on Teacher Competency Standards (*Permendiknas No. 16/2007*), teachers in Indonesia are expected to demonstrate four competencies: pedagogical, professional, social, and personal. Among these, personal competence is considered the cornerstone, as it determines the teacher's credibility and authority as a moral exemplar (Supriadi, 2017). Without this foundation, pedagogical expertise and professional mastery may fail to produce meaningful character transformation in students.

The context of SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua-a vocational school situated in a multicultural and religiously diverse region-presents unique challenges in character formation. Students encounter both the digital influences of modern culture and the moral complexities of social change. While technological advancement promotes efficiency and global connectivity, it also brings ethical dilemmas such as individualism, moral relativism, and diminished respect for authority (Nasrullah, 2021). Within this dynamic environment, teachers are required not only to impart knowledge but also to embody ethical principles that inspire students to live responsibly and faithfully. From a theological perspective, the Bible provides a timeless foundation for understanding the moral and spiritual identity of teachers. In 2 Timothy 2:24, the Apostle Paul exhorts Christian educators to be "*didaktikos*" (Greek: διδάκτικος), meaning "able to teach." The term extends beyond mere intellectual proficiency; it signifies a character marked by gentleness, patience, and wisdom. A *didaktikos* teacher is not only skilled in communication but also transformed by the character of Christ-teaching through love, humility, and moral consistency (Marshall, 2004). This biblical view implies that effective teaching must integrate spiritual integrity with intellectual competence, forming a unity of being and doing. The essence of *didaktikos* thus lies in the educator's ability to teach through both word and life, embodying truth in action (Knight, 2006). In the context of Christian education, this theological principle has profound pedagogical implications. Teachers who internalize the *didaktikos* spirit function not merely as transmitters of information but as agents of moral and spiritual transformation. They help students develop discernment, empathy, and a sense of divine calling in their professional and social lives (Estep, Anthony, & Allison,

2008). When applied in the setting of SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua, this perspective suggests that the growth of students' character is inseparable from the moral example and emotional maturity of their teachers. A teacher's integrity, compassion, and self-control form the moral atmosphere that shapes the classroom environment and influences how students learn to practice responsibility, respect, and perseverance. Consequently, this research seeks to explore the relationship between teachers' personality competence and students' character growth within the theological framework of *didaktikos*. The study assumes that the teacher's personal integrity-rooted in moral consistency and spiritual authenticity-plays a decisive role in shaping students' values and behavior. The central research question thus emerges: Is there a significant relationship between teachers' personality competence and students' character development at SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua, viewed through the biblical principle of *didaktikos*?

METHODS

A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was implemented on this research, aimed at examining the relationship between teachers' personality competence and students' character growth within the context of Christian education. The correlational approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to determine whether a significant association exists between two measurable variables without manipulating them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this research, teachers' personality competence-conceptualized as a combination of moral integrity, emotional stability, and exemplary behavior-was treated as the independent variable, while students' character growth-expressed through values such as honesty, empathy, responsibility, and spirituality-served as the dependent variable. This design was considered appropriate because it aligns with the study's objective to reveal the extent to which the internal attributes of teachers influence the moral and behavioral formation of their students (Sugiyono, 2019). The study was conducted at SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua, a public vocational high school located in North Nias Regency, North Sumatra, Indonesia. This setting was purposefully selected because of its multicultural environment and the school's strong religious ethos, which provide a relevant context for exploring moral and character education. The participants consisted of 10 teachers and 80 students representing various vocational programs such as automotive engineering, accounting, and hospitality. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, ensuring that the respondents met the criteria of being directly involved in classroom learning and character-building programs (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2019). The inclusion of both teachers and students provided a comprehensive understanding of how personality competence is perceived and practiced in everyday educational interactions. The research instrument consisted of a Likert-scale questionnaire (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The instrument was divided into two main sections corresponding to the study variables. For Variable X (Teachers' Personality Competence), the indicators included (a) moral integrity, (b) emotional stability, (c) responsibility, (d) exemplary conduct, and (e) wisdom. For Variable Y (Students' Character Growth), the indicators comprised (a) discipline, (b) honesty, (c) responsibility, (d) love and empathy, and (e) spirituality and cooperation. Each indicator was represented by several items designed to measure the respondent's perception or

experience in relation to the construct (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, & Walker, 2018). Prior to administration, the instrument underwent expert validation to ensure clarity, content relevance, and construct validity. Data collection was conducted through the distribution of closed-ended questionnaires complemented by field observations to contextualize the quantitative findings. This triangulation helped strengthen the interpretation of results by linking statistical outcomes with observed classroom behaviors. The collected data were processed using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between teachers' personality competence and students' character growth. The level of significance was tested at $\alpha = 0.05$, meaning that correlations with a p-value less than 0.05 were considered statistically significant (Santoso, 2020). The quantitative analysis was supported by descriptive statistics-mean scores and standard deviations-to summarize the general tendency of both variables. Overall, the methodological framework of this study integrates empirical rigor with theological reflection, consistent with the *didaktikos* principle that effective teaching is both a matter of competence and character (Knight, 2006).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis revealed a Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.71 with a significance value of $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between teachers' personality competence and students' character growth at SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua. This means that the higher the teachers' personality competence, the better the character formation of the students. The finding confirms that the internal quality of the teacher-their integrity, emotional control, and exemplary lifestyle-exerts a measurable influence on students' moral and behavioral development. The descriptive statistics of each subdimension provide further insight into which aspects of personality competence contribute most significantly to character growth. Table 1 presents the mean scores of each dimension.

Table 1. Descriptive Mean of Teachers' Personality Competence Dimensions

| Dimension | Mean | Interpretation |
|------------------------------------|------|---|
| Moral integrity | 4.47 | Very High – Teachers consistently align words and actions |
| Emotional stability | 4.41 | High – Teachers remain calm and composed in teaching situations |
| Responsibility | 4.32 | High – Teachers show accountability and consistency in duties |
| Exemplary life (role model) | 4.58 | Very High – Teachers practice what they teach, inspiring students |
| Wisdom and discernment | 4.29 | High – Teachers act with fairness and maturity |

The data show that the exemplary life dimension obtained the highest mean score (4.58), suggesting that students perceive teachers' consistency between their words and actions

as the most influential factor in nurturing honesty and discipline. This is followed closely by moral integrity (4.47) and emotional stability (4.41), indicating that calm and morally grounded teachers create a peaceful classroom climate conducive to ethical learning and personal growth. These findings demonstrate that the essence of the biblical term *didaktikos*-translated as “able to teach” (2 Timothy 2:24)-goes beyond intellectual mastery. It represents a moral-spiritual quality that integrates wisdom, patience, and love in guiding learners. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.71$) thus not only confirms a statistical connection but also reveals a theological truth: character formation flourishes when teachers embody the values they teach.

The significant relationship between teachers’ personality competence and students’ character growth implies that teaching effectiveness in vocational education cannot be separated from the teacher’s moral and emotional integrity. In vocational schools like SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua, where students are being prepared to enter professional and social life, the modeling of values is as essential as the transmission of technical skills. Teachers’ personality competence functions as an invisible curriculum. When students observe consistency between what teachers teach and how they live, they internalize moral values more deeply than through verbal instruction alone (Lickona, 1991). The data suggest that emotional stability also plays a crucial role. Teachers who remain composed in the face of provocation demonstrate self-control—a core Christian virtue that reflects the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23). Such composure creates a classroom culture of mutual respect and patience, allowing students to learn ethical behavior by imitation rather than coercion. This alignment between professional and spiritual dimensions of teaching reflects the integrative Christian concept of education-*educare* as nurturing the whole person (*holos anthropos*). According to Knight (2006), true Christian education involves not only intellectual enlightenment but also moral and spiritual transformation through relationships. The findings in Tuhemberua validate this principle empirically: teachers’ personal integrity and emotional stability significantly predict students’ honesty, discipline, and responsibility.

The term *didaktikos* (Greek: διδάκτικος) appears in 2 Timothy 2:24, where Paul exhorts, “And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach (*didaktikos*), not resentful.” The word does not merely denote the ability to convey information but signifies the moral-spiritual posture of the teacher—patient, humble, and guided by divine wisdom (Marshall, 1999). In its biblical context, *didaktikos* integrates two dimensions: (1) the technical competence to explain the truth clearly, and (2) the moral integrity to embody that truth in behavior. This combination forms the theological foundation for Christian pedagogy, in which teaching becomes both proclamation and incarnation of truth. A *didaktikos* teacher thus becomes an embodiment of Christ’s teaching ministry—demonstrating love, forgiveness, and moral clarity. When viewed through this lens, the findings of this study show that teachers at SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua who practice patience, emotional restraint, and integrity act as modern reflections of the Pauline *didaktikos*. Their capacity to guide without hostility, to correct with gentleness, and to mentor with compassion transforms classrooms into communities of moral formation rather than mere spaces for vocational training. This theological insight bridges the gap between empirical data and spiritual reflection. The correlation between teachers’ personality competence and student character formation is not

accidental; it is the natural consequence of the biblical principle that “a good tree bears good fruit” (Matthew 7:17). In Christian education, character is not taught by instruction alone but by imitation and relational influence grounded in divine truth (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Teachers’ Personality Competence as the Foundation of Character Education

The results affirm the theoretical premise that teacher personality is a cornerstone of effective character education. Thomas Lickona (1991) describes character education as a process requiring three essential components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Teachers play a decisive role in integrating these components through personal example and classroom relationships. When teachers display honesty, empathy, and discipline, students observe these virtues and gradually internalize them. At SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua, teachers’ influence extends beyond formal instruction. They guide students in extracurricular and faith-based activities such as devotional gatherings, community service, and church participation. These activities reinforce social values such as cooperation, humility, and mutual care. The data suggest that when teachers lead by example—arriving on time, maintaining respectful communication, and demonstrating patience—students mirror these behaviors in peer interactions. Emotional stability emerged as a strong predictor of character growth. Teachers who remain calm during conflict convey the message that authority and empathy are not opposites but complementary virtues. According to Sanderse (2013), moral exemplarity in teaching requires emotional maturity; teachers’ capacity to respond rather than react is itself a form of moral instruction. In Tuhemberua’s context, where community life is close-knit and culturally diverse, this maturity fosters harmony both in and beyond the classroom.

Integration of the Didaktikos Principle into Modern Pedagogy

The biblical model of *didaktikos* provides a timeless pedagogical framework for integrating spiritual and emotional intelligence into teaching. Modern pedagogical theories, such as Bandura’s (1986) social learning theory, argue that modeling behavior is the most effective means of shaping learners’ moral and social conduct. The *didaktikos* principle enhances this understanding by rooting modeling in divine love and wisdom. At SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua, this integration is seen in three pedagogical patterns: Teachers encourage students to reflect on moral dilemmas and relate them to Christian values. This method transforms moral instruction into collaborative reflection; Teachers function as mentors rather than supervisors, guiding students in faith and discipline through relational proximity; Classroom learning is linked with community service, reinforcing responsibility and empathy through lived experience. The results indicate that these pedagogical approaches, consciously or unconsciously influenced by *didaktikos*, nurture both academic and moral excellence. Students perceive learning as part of spiritual growth, not merely a means to vocational success. Teacher development programs should incorporate spiritual formation and character reflection as integral components of professional training. Workshops on emotional regulation, ethical decision-making, and servant leadership could strengthen the moral resilience of teachers. Schools can adopt a reflective learning framework where teachers and students

engage in shared reflection on real-life moral issues in light of biblical principles. This aligns with Paul's pastoral mentorship model with Timothy, where instruction is accompanied by personal guidance. A mentorship system modeled after the Paul-Timothy relationship could be institutionalized. Teachers serve as personal mentors who cultivate not only cognitive skills but also virtues such as humility, diligence, and compassion. Character development should be integrated into assessment systems. Instead of focusing solely on academic performance, evaluations could include behavioral indicators-respect, cooperation, honesty-that reflect holistic learning outcomes. The school's Christian identity must be reinforced through regular devotional activities, community service, and peer fellowship programs. These initiatives sustain an atmosphere of faith-based learning and mutual accountability. Through these strategies, SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua can continue cultivating a generation of technically competent and morally upright graduates who embody the spirit of *didaktikos*-teachable, disciplined, and compassionate.

The findings resonate with previous research emphasizing the influence of teacher character on student moral development. For instance, Lickona (1991) asserted that moral education thrives where teachers model ethical behavior. Similarly, Narvaez and Lapsley (2008) found that moral exemplars within educational settings significantly influence students' pro-social behavior. In an Indonesian context, Suyanto (2016) highlighted that teacher personality competence is a determinant of moral discipline in vocational schools. The distinct contribution of this study lies in integrating the biblical perspective of *didaktikos* as a theological foundation for personality competence. Whereas earlier studies focused primarily on psychological or sociological dimensions, this research grounds moral education in the Christian understanding of teaching as both instruction and pastoral care. The Tuhemberua context adds cultural nuance: in a Nias community setting that values kinship and faith, moral influence flows through relationship and shared identity, mirroring the communal ethos of early Christian pedagogy. This study therefore extends the scope of educational character research by linking quantitative findings with theological anthropology-affirming that human formation is central to education. The teacher, as image-bearer and imitator of Christ, becomes both messenger and medium of transformation (Eph. 5:1-2). The correlation between teachers' personality competence and students' character growth illustrates the incarnational nature of Christian education. Teaching becomes a sacramental act-an outward expression of inward grace. As *didaktikos* teachers embody Christ-like patience and moral integrity, they become living testimonies that truth is best conveyed through life, not mere words (Bonhoeffer, 2005). This synthesis calls for a reorientation of Christian pedagogy: from teaching about virtue to teaching through virtue. Character growth among students is not the result of moral indoctrination but of relational imitation inspired by authentic mentorship. In this regard, *didaktikos* is not simply a biblical label for "good teachers"; it is a theological vision for transformative education. While the study confirms a strong positive correlation, it acknowledges certain limitations. The sample size was relatively small (n = 90), limited to one institution. Further research could expand to multiple vocational schools to examine cultural and denominational variations. Additionally, longitudinal studies could assess whether teacher personality competence produces long-term character stability in students beyond school life. Qualitative follow-

up through interviews and narrative inquiry would also enrich understanding of how *didaktikos* manifests in real pedagogical interactions. Future research might explore how institutional culture, curriculum design, and parental involvement interact with teachers' personality traits in influencing student character. A comparative theological analysis across Christian and secular institutions could also reveal how universal moral values intersect with faith-based virtues in shaping 21st-century vocational ethics. There is a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.05$) between teachers' personality competence and students' character growth. The most influential dimensions are exemplary life (mean = 4.58), moral integrity (mean = 4.47), and emotional stability (mean = 4.41). The *didaktikos* principle emphasizes that being "able to teach" entails embodying moral patience, wisdom, and humility. Teachers at SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua act as both instructors and mentors, shaping students' moral consciousness through relational influence. Integrating the *didaktikos* model into teacher training can strengthen faith-based character education across Indonesian vocational schools. The empirical evidence from SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua demonstrates that personality competence is not a peripheral quality but the very heart of effective Christian education. When teachers exhibit moral integrity, emotional stability, and exemplary conduct, they fulfill the biblical call of *didaktikos*-to be "able to teach" in both word and deed. Such teachers become agents of moral transformation, fostering character formation that aligns with Christian virtues of faith, love, and self-control. Therefore, enhancing teachers' personality competence is not merely a professional necessity but a spiritual vocation. The classroom becomes a sacred space where cognitive learning and spiritual growth converge-where the Word becomes flesh in the life of the teacher, and through that embodiment, students encounter the living Christ in their educational journey.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that teachers' personality competence plays a decisive role in shaping students' moral and spiritual development within vocational education, particularly at SMK Negeri 2 Tuhemberua. The statistical results showing a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.05$) underscore that teachers who demonstrate integrity, emotional stability, and exemplary conduct significantly foster character growth among their students. These findings validate the principle that education is not merely a transfer of cognitive knowledge but a relational process rooted in moral exemplarity and spiritual authenticity. In a context marked by rapid digitalization and shifting social values, the teacher's personality becomes the stabilizing force that nurtures students' discipline, empathy, and faith. From a theological perspective, the biblical concept of *didaktikos*-"able to teach" (2 Timothy 2:24)-provides an interpretive lens for understanding the moral dimension of teaching. The term encompasses both intellectual competence and Christlike character, suggesting that true educators must integrate the ability to communicate knowledge with the capacity to live it out. A *didaktikos* teacher models humility, patience, and love, transforming the classroom into a community of grace and moral formation. In this light, the teacher becomes not only a professional educator but also a pastoral presence who guides students toward spiritual maturity through example and relationship. The study thus reinforces the theological assertion that the ministry of teaching is inherently incarnational-truth is not merely spoken but embodied. The implications of this research

extend beyond the confines of one institution. Strengthening teachers' personality competence must be viewed as both a professional and spiritual imperative. Teacher training programs should include modules on emotional regulation, ethical decision-making, and reflective theology to cultivate a holistic understanding of vocation. Furthermore, the integration of the *didaktikos* principle into Christian pedagogy can renew faith-based education in Indonesia by emphasizing teaching through virtue rather than merely about virtue. Ultimately, this research demonstrates that character formation thrives where teachers' lives mirror the values they teach. The classroom, when inhabited by *didaktikos* teachers, becomes a sacred space where learning and discipleship converge. In this sacred encounter between teacher and student, knowledge becomes wisdom, faith becomes action, and education becomes a living expression of divine truth.

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