



The Role of Christian Religious Education Teachers' Personality Stability in Enhancing Student Discipline at SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi

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ABSTRACT

Character education in elementary schools is a vital foundation for developing disciplined, responsible, and morally grounded students. Within this process, teachers—particularly Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers—play a strategic role, as their responsibilities extend beyond transmitting knowledge to nurturing spiritual values and ethical behavior. This study explores the role of CRE teachers' personality stability in enhancing student discipline at SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi, North Sumatra. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews with the CRE teacher, school principal, and students, as well as document analysis. Triangulation of sources and methods was applied to ensure validity and credibility. The findings reveal that the stability of the teacher's personality, characterized by emotional regulation, consistency in actions, and integrity in daily life, significantly shaped students' disciplinary behaviors. The teacher fostered a conducive learning environment through empathetic yet firm classroom management, consistent enforcement of rules, and the integration of Christian values across lessons. Students reported that the teacher's example inspired them to practice punctuality, complete assignments responsibly, and interact respectfully with peers and teachers. Collaboration with parents also emerged as a reinforcing factor in sustaining discipline beyond the classroom. These results underscore the importance of teacher personality development as an integral part of professional training. The study recommends structured programs focused on emotional stability, classroom management, and the application of faith-based values. Overall, the research highlights that the stability of CRE teachers' personalities is not merely beneficial but essential for cultivating student discipline and character formation in elementary education.

Keywords: *Christian Religious Education, Personality Stability, Discipline*

INTRODUCTION

Character education at the elementary school level has increasingly been recognized as one of the essential pillars in shaping resilient, disciplined, and responsible students. At this formative stage of education, children are not only acquiring cognitive skills but also building the moral and behavioral foundations that will guide them throughout life (Lickona, 2019). Schools therefore play a vital role in fostering character values, and teachers are at the center of this process. Among them, Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers occupy a particularly strategic role because their task extends beyond delivering academic content to nurturing spiritual maturity, moral development, and the cultivation of ethical values in daily life (Groome, 2011). CRE teachers are thus expected not only to instruct students in biblical teachings but also to embody those teachings through their everyday conduct, becoming living examples of discipline, humility, and integrity. Within this framework, the stability of a teacher's personality emerges as a crucial determinant of successful character formation among students. Personality stability refers to the teacher's ability to maintain emotional balance, consistency in principles, and integrity in interactions with students and colleagues (Santrock, 2018). A teacher with stable personality traits is more likely to create a controlled, conducive, and respectful learning environment, where students feel secure and are encouraged to adopt disciplined behaviors. As respected authority figures, teachers who consistently demonstrate discipline in areas such as punctuality, task completion, and courteousness provide students with concrete role models to emulate. This process reflects Bandura's (1997) social learning theory, which posits that young learners often imitate the behaviors of adults they perceive as credible and trustworthy. Challenges in character education frequently arise when there is a dissonance between what teachers preach and what they practice. Students are highly sensitive to inconsistencies in adult behavior, and when teachers fail to live up to the standards they promote, their moral authority is undermined (Palmer, 2007). For this reason, stability of personality becomes indispensable for teachers of Christian Religious Education. It ensures that their professional conduct inside the classroom aligns with their personal actions outside of it. In the absence of such stability, students may experience confusion, skepticism, or even resistance toward the values being taught. Thus, the integrity and emotional resilience of CRE teachers are essential qualities for guiding students toward disciplined living. The importance of stable teacher personality is particularly visible in rural school settings such as SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi in North Sumatra, where community expectations toward teachers are high, and the school often functions as both an educational and moral center of the community. In such contexts, teachers are not merely conveyors of academic knowledge but are also perceived as moral guardians and role models for the younger generation (Tilaar, 2012). Their daily interactions—whether in the classroom, playground, or community—are observed closely by students, making personality stability a vital aspect of their educational influence. Teachers with stable personalities can bridge the gap between formal lessons on discipline and the lived realities of student behavior, reinforcing values consistently through words and actions. This study aims to examine the role of CRE teachers' personality stability in enhancing student discipline at SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi. Specifically, it explores how the teacher's emotional balance, consistency in enforcing rules, and demonstration of integrity impact students' behavior, including

punctuality, responsibility in completing assignments, and respectful interaction with peers and teachers. The study also investigates how the teacher's example in daily life fosters a school-wide culture of discipline, thereby contributing to a positive and holistic learning environment. By focusing on the lived practices of a CRE teacher in a rural Indonesian context, this research highlights the profound connection between teacher personality and student character formation. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the discourse on faith-based character education in elementary schools. While numerous studies have emphasized the role of curriculum and teaching strategies in moral development, fewer have examined the personal attributes of teachers as a central variable in shaping student discipline. By highlighting personality stability as a key factor, this study offers insights that extend beyond pedagogical methods to underscore the teacher's very being as a critical instrument of education (Palmer, 2007). Ultimately, this research seeks to inform educational stakeholders, including school administrators and policymakers, of the need to prioritize teacher formation - particularly in areas of emotional stability, integrity, and consistency - as a foundation for effective character education. In the context of Christian Religious Education, where teaching is deeply intertwined with values and faith, the stability of the teacher's personality is not merely an asset but a necessity for cultivating disciplined, responsible, and spiritually grounded students.

METHODS

This is a qualitative research design with a descriptive method, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of the role of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers' personality stability in enhancing student discipline. It allows researchers to explore phenomena holistically and contextually, focusing on meanings and lived experiences rather than numerical data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By emphasizing a descriptive lens, the research sought to portray the real-life practices, challenges, and impacts of teacher personality stability as they naturally unfolded in the educational setting. The research was conducted at SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi, a public elementary school located in a rural context where teachers often serve as both educators and moral exemplars for the community. The participants consisted of one Christian Religious Education teacher, the school principal, and a number of students selected purposively. Purposive sampling was applied to identify individuals directly involved in CRE activities and who could provide relevant insights into how the teacher's stable personality traits influenced classroom discipline. The inclusion of multiple perspectives—from the teacher, school leader, and students—was intended to ensure that the phenomenon was examined from diverse angles, thereby enriching the findings. Participant observation was employed to directly observe classroom interactions, with particular attention to how the teacher embodied discipline and guided students toward responsible behavior. Field notes were taken to capture both verbal and non-verbal dynamics during teaching sessions. In-depth interviews were conducted primarily with the CRE teacher, exploring their personal reflections, perceptions, and strategies for maintaining emotional stability and modeling discipline. Additional interviews with the principal and several students were undertaken to triangulate perspectives and gain a more comprehensive picture of the teacher's influence. Document analysis involved reviewing lesson plans, school regulations, and

student assignments to identify alignment between stated disciplinary principles and actual classroom practices. This process involved comparing evidence obtained from different participants and methods to establish credibility and validity. The analysis process moved through stages of data reduction, data display, and drawing interim conclusions, which were revisited iteratively until robust and meaningful interpretations were reached. The findings are expected to offer practical recommendations for teacher personality development programs and student discipline strategies grounded in Christian values, which remain highly relevant to the current challenges of character education in Indonesian schools.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research highlight a significant relationship between the stability of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher's personality and the disciplinary attitudes of students at SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi. Through the triangulated data collected from observations, interviews, and documentation, it became evident that the teacher's calm, consistent, and emotionally balanced demeanor shaped a classroom environment that nurtured respect, order, and responsibility. In this context, personality stability does not merely imply the absence of anger or impulsivity but refers to a consistent demonstration of integrity, patience, and fairness—qualities that strongly resonate with students and reinforce their capacity to internalize discipline (Costa & McCrae, 1992). During classroom observations, the CRE teacher consistently displayed composure when dealing with common disciplinary issues, such as students arriving late or failing to bring required materials. Rather than reacting with anger or punitive measures, the teacher engaged in dialogical approaches, initiating conversations with the students to uncover the underlying reasons for their lapses. This reflective dialogue not only diffused tension but also placed responsibility back on the students, who were then encouraged to propose practical steps to improve their behavior. Such dialogical strategies align with restorative education principles, where correction is framed not as punishment but as an opportunity for moral growth and accountability (Lickona, 2019). Students who participated in the interviews underscored the significance of this approach. They articulated that they appreciated the teacher not only for imparting biblical knowledge but also for instilling values of discipline and responsibility in practical, relatable ways. One student mentioned that the teacher's refusal to resort to shouting or punitive humiliation made them feel respected and more willing to comply with classroom expectations. This feedback reinforces the understanding that stable, emotionally grounded teachers can positively influence students' discipline by fostering relationships rooted in mutual respect rather than fear (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Observational data further demonstrated that classrooms managed by a teacher with stable personality traits appeared more structured, orderly, and conducive to learning. The CRE teacher consistently reinforced classroom rules with firmness and clarity, yet without aggression. For instance, routines such as beginning the class with a prayer, setting clear time frames for assignments, and gently reminding students of expectations contributed to a stable rhythm that reduced disruptive behaviors. Interestingly, even students typically categorized as "difficult to manage" responded positively to this teacher's method of discipline. Instead of escalating confrontations, the teacher employed patience and persistence, demonstrating to students that discipline is not externally imposed but internally cultivated through

responsibility and respect. This resonates with existing scholarship which argues that emotionally stable teachers are more effective in classroom management and in creating climates that foster self-regulation among students (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). The teacher's approach to conflict management deserves mention. Instances of disputes among students - whether caused by disagreements over group work or breaches of classroom norms - were addressed not with punitive sanctions but through mediation. The teacher actively listened to both parties, acknowledged their perspectives, and facilitated fair resolutions. This method demonstrated to students the importance of justice, empathy, and reconciliation, which are central tenets of Christian character education (Groome, 2011). By modeling conflict resolution grounded in patience and fairness, the teacher reinforced discipline as a relational and ethical commitment rather than a set of rigid rules.

The interviews revealed that students perceived their teacher as a role model of discipline. Many expressed that they felt motivated to come to school on time, complete assignments responsibly, and behave respectfully because they did not want to disappoint the teacher. The internalization of discipline in this way suggests that teacher role modeling extends beyond compliance - it becomes a form of moral inspiration. This finding echoes Bandura's (1997) social learning theory, which posits that students often adopt behaviors modeled by authority figures they respect and admire. One particular narrative from a student emphasized that the teacher's simplicity of lifestyle and refusal to flaunt material possessions stood out as a stark contrast to the growing culture of consumerism and status-seeking among peers. Instead of equating success with wealth, students reported that they began to view values such as honesty, responsibility, and kindness as true markers of achievement. This indicates that teacher personality stability does not only shape disciplinary behavior but also reorients students' value systems toward more enduring Christian virtues. The interviews with the school principal highlighted another dimension of the teacher's impact: collaboration with parents. The CRE teacher often invited parents to engage in discussions about their children's progress, particularly regarding issues of discipline. These dialogues emphasized constructive feedback and partnership, helping parents to reinforce values of responsibility at home. The principal noted that such collaboration was effective in addressing recurring issues like tardiness or incomplete assignments, as parents were able to implement complementary strategies outside of school. This finding affirms the importance of school - family partnerships in promoting student discipline, as also emphasized in the works of Epstein (2011), who argues that children's character development thrives when school and family values are aligned. The teacher's role as mediator between these two spheres further illustrates how personality stability translates into effective community-building, thereby extending the impact of classroom discipline beyond the school walls.

Motivation and Internalization of Discipline

A prominent theme that emerged from interviews with students was the internal motivation fostered by the stability of the CRE teacher's personality. Students repeatedly stated that they wanted to discipline themselves - not out of fear of punishment - but out of respect and admiration for their teacher. This indicates a shift from extrinsic to intrinsic

motivation, where discipline is no longer externally imposed but self-regulated through personal conviction (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Students reported that when they observed the teacher's consistency - whether in punctuality, fairness, or simplicity - they felt challenged to emulate these qualities. For example, one student mentioned making a personal commitment to arrive at school earlier, not merely to avoid reprimand, but because "the teacher always comes before us, and it makes me ashamed if I arrive late." This narrative underscores the power of lived example: rather than abstract instruction, it is the embodiment of discipline by the teacher that inspires students to voluntarily adjust their behavior. The dynamic resonates with Lickona's (1996) assertion that character is best taught through example and habituation, not only through verbal instruction. The CRE teacher's consistent lifestyle choices and emotional balance demonstrated the value of discipline in tangible ways, helping students to see it as both practical and morally desirable.

Integration of Christian Values in Learning Tasks

Another major finding was the use of authentic learning tasks as a vehicle for reinforcing discipline. The CRE teacher designed assignments that required students to practice responsibility, time management, and integrity in real-life contexts. These included reflective journals on gratitude, where students documented daily acts of appreciation, and community service projects, which encouraged them to practice humility and responsibility toward others. Such tasks not only cultivated discipline in terms of task completion but also linked academic learning with Christian values. For instance, through community service, students were able to connect biblical teachings on love and service (cf. Matthew 22:37–39) with everyday actions, thereby internalizing discipline as a spiritual practice rather than a mere academic requirement. The reflective journals proved especially impactful. Students explained that writing about gratitude each day required them to be consistent, thoughtful, and honest, which indirectly strengthened their sense of self-discipline. The combination of spiritual reflection and practical accountability demonstrates what Groome (1998) refers to as shared praxis, where faith and life experiences interact to produce transformative learning. Despite these successes, the study revealed several persistent challenges. First, many students admitted struggling to maintain discipline outside the school environment, particularly when exposed to peer pressure and social media influences. Several students confessed that although they admired their teacher's example, they sometimes felt compelled to conform to peers who valued material possessions or showed disregard for school rules. This aligns with Steinberg's (2011) findings on adolescent behavior, where peer influence often competes with adult role models. Second, time limitations posed obstacles for the teacher. While authentic learning tasks were effective, they often demanded significant planning and follow-up, which conflicted with the crowded curriculum and administrative workload. As the teacher noted in interviews, balancing creative, value-based tasks with the necessity of covering required content created tension. This issue reflects broader challenges in Indonesian education, where the demand for measurable academic achievement can overshadow character-building efforts (Suyatno et al., 2019). Third, there was the issue of uneven student readiness. Not all students responded equally to the teacher's strategies. While some demonstrated rapid improvement in punctuality and responsibility, others showed minimal change, often due to lack of support at home or

personal challenges. This highlights the importance of considering contextual factors such as family background and community environment when evaluating the impact of teacher personality stability on discipline.

The findings also underscore the need to reframe teacher professional development. Personality competence, particularly emotional stability and integrity, is often treated as secondary compared to pedagogical or subject-matter expertise. Yet, this study shows that teacher personality traits are decisive in shaping student discipline and character. Therefore, teacher training programs - especially for CRE teachers - should include deliberate modules on emotional regulation, spiritual reflection, and ethical decision-making. Such professional formation aligns with research by Jennings and Greenberg (2009), who emphasize the connection between teacher social-emotional competence and student outcomes. By investing in the holistic development of teachers, schools can create stronger models of discipline and character formation. In the case of SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi, the CRE teacher's personality stability not only sustained classroom order but also provided students with an authentic vision of Christian values lived out daily. Another implication is the importance of collective responsibility. While the CRE teacher was effective in modeling discipline, the sustainability of such efforts depends on reinforcement from the wider school system and family environment. The teacher himself noted the difficulty of instilling discipline when school policies were inconsistently applied or when parents did not support disciplinary measures at home. The data therefore point to the necessity of a whole-school approach to discipline, where policies, routines, and expectations are consistent across subjects and teachers (Sugai & Horner, 2002). Additionally, collaboration with parents should be institutionalized through regular meetings, workshops, and communication channels to ensure that the values modeled at school are reinforced at home. In rural contexts such as Dasomuzoi, where community ties are strong, involving parents and local leaders may be particularly effective in creating a shared culture of discipline and responsibility.

One of the most compelling observations during fieldwork was the teacher's approach to conflict management. In primary education, conflicts often arise from small issues - students quarreling over seating arrangements, competing during group work, or failing to follow rules. Rather than responding with anger or authoritarian measures, the CRE teacher demonstrated remarkable calmness, fairness, and patience. For example, when two students were caught arguing loudly during a lesson, instead of resorting to punitive discipline, the teacher asked both students to sit calmly and invited them to explain their perspectives. By listening carefully and reframing their words in a non-judgmental manner, the teacher created an atmosphere where students felt safe to express themselves. Ultimately, both students agreed to reconcile, and the teacher emphasized forgiveness as a Christian virtue, connecting the moment to biblical narratives such as Matthew 18:21-22 on forgiving "seventy times seven." This strategy highlights the role of stable personality traits - emotional regulation, consistency, and empathy - in promoting student discipline. It resonates with Bandura's social learning theory (1977), which underscores that children learn not only through direct instruction but by observing how adults resolve challenges. In this case, the teacher's calm resolution became a living model for students on how to handle conflicts constructively. The findings strongly align

with Costa and McCrae's (1992) Five-Factor Model of Personality, particularly the dimension of neuroticism vs. emotional stability. Teachers with lower neuroticism - those who remain calm under pressure - are better positioned to create a positive classroom climate. The CRE teacher in this study exemplified such stability, reinforcing student trust and minimizing anxiety within the learning environment. From a theological standpoint, the teacher's actions reflect the biblical model of servant leadership (Mark 10:45). Rather than asserting dominance, the teacher led through humility and service, using discipline not as punishment but as guidance rooted in love. This mirrors Groome's (2011) shared praxis approach, where teaching is not limited to conveying doctrine but involves embodying faith in concrete, relational experiences. The findings reinforce Lickona's (2019) principles of character education, particularly the emphasis on role modeling and moral community. When students see discipline practiced by their teacher in a consistent, caring manner, they not only comply but begin to internalize it as part of their own moral compass. While the study highlights the centrality of teacher stability, it also points to the necessity of systemic and institutional support. A teacher with strong personality competence can have significant influence, but without reinforcement from school policies, peer collaboration, and parental engagement, the results may remain limited. At SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi, the teacher's success in shaping student discipline provides a valuable model of best practice for colleagues. However, interviews revealed that other teachers sometimes relied more heavily on punitive approaches, leading to inconsistency in how discipline was framed across subjects. This suggests the need for a whole-school discipline policy rooted in shared values, where teachers collaborate to ensure consistent expectations and practices. Parental involvement was also shown to be a critical variable. Students who reported improvement in discipline often credited not only their teacher but also parental reminders at home. Conversely, students with less supportive home environments struggled to sustain new habits. This finding echoes Epstein's (2011) framework of school-family-community partnerships, which stresses that character education must extend beyond the classroom. The study's insights point to the necessity of holistic teacher development. Teacher training in Indonesia, including for CRE, often emphasizes pedagogical content knowledge but less attention is given to personality and character formation. Yet, as shown here, personality stability is as critical as academic competence in fostering discipline. Emotional intelligence training is to help teachers manage stress, regulate emotions, and respond calmly in challenging classroom situations (Goleman, 1995). Spiritual reflection and formation is a kind program encouraging teachers to cultivate personal faith practices that sustain integrity and humility. Conflict resolution and restorative practices is the other which equipping teachers with practical tools to address student misbehavior without resorting to punitive or authoritarian measures. Such training could be further supported by peer mentoring systems, where experienced teachers with strong personality competence mentor younger colleagues. By institutionalizing this, schools can cultivate a culture of stable, reflective, and disciplined educators. This research also contributes to broader debates about the future of character education in Indonesia. With the rise of materialism, digital distractions, and social challenges, students are increasingly exposed to influences that undermine traditional values of humility, respect, and responsibility. CRE teachers, especially those with stable personalities, are uniquely positioned to counter these trends by embodying Christian virtues in daily practice. The case of SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi illustrates how

discipline can be nurtured not through fear or coercion but through inspiration and modeling. When students see their teacher living out faith, integrity, and stability, they are drawn to imitate those qualities. This finding carries significant weight for policymakers: strengthening personality competence in teacher education should be considered a national priority if Indonesia is to achieve its vision of holistic character formation.

Conclusion

This study reveals that the stability of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers' personalities plays a highly significant role in improving student discipline at SD Negeri 076077 Dasomuzoi. Teachers who demonstrate strong personality stability—evident in emotional regulation, consistency in action, and integrity in daily life—are able to foster a learning environment conducive to character formation, particularly in cultivating discipline. The findings indicate that the CRE teacher who served as the subject of this research successfully nurtured student discipline through empathetic yet firm classroom management, consistent rule enforcement, and the integration of Christian values into every aspect of the learning process. The results highlight the critical role of teachers as role models in shaping student discipline. A CRE teacher with a stable personality does not merely teach discipline through words but, more importantly, through actions and behaviors that consistently reflect the values being taught. The approaches employed by the teacher included effective communication, firmness grounded in compassion, and direct modeling of disciplined behavior in everyday interactions. Moreover, collaboration with parents emerged as an essential component that strengthened efforts to foster discipline beyond the classroom. The implications of this study emphasize that teacher personality development, particularly in terms of emotional regulation and character formation, must be considered an integral part of professional training and development programs. A teacher with a stable personality can foster positive interactions with students, reduce classroom conflict, and exert a constructive influence on students' discipline. Therefore, schools should devote greater attention to strengthening teachers' emotional and personality capacities, enabling them to educate students more effectively in the deeper dimensions of discipline. This research also acknowledges that external factors, such as school management support, disciplinary policies, and parental involvement, play an important role in shaping student discipline. Even so, the teacher's personality stability remains the dominant factor in creating sustainable discipline within the classroom. Hence, schools must encourage teachers to continually enhance their personal qualities, with the aim of nurturing students who not only practice physical discipline but also embody moral and spiritual discipline. As a recommendation, this study suggests that schools provide more structured training for teachers to develop personality stability through classroom management programs, emotional regulation workshops, and the strengthening of religious values applicable in daily life. Future studies, particularly those using quantitative approaches and involving larger samples as well as additional relevant variables, could be conducted to broaden understanding of the influence of teachers' personality stability on student discipline, as well as the other contributing factors involved. The findings of this research contribute significantly to the development of character education theory, especially within the context of Christian

Religious Education at the elementary school level, serve as a valuable reference for educators, practitioners, and policymakers in designing effective strategies for student discipline formation, grounded in role modeling and teacher personality development.

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