

Exploring Jesus' Teaching Methods: Effective Strategies for 21st Century Education

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ABSTRACT

21st-century education is a process of enhancing both the quantity and quality of overall talent or potential, empowering individuals to develop better personal character so that the knowledge gained can be applied in their lives. This paper aims to explore how Jesus' teaching methods can be applied as an effective strategy for 21st-century education. 21st-century education encourages educators to utilize technology as a medium for learning, where the learning process and outcomes focus not only on the results achieved but also on the classroom learning process. This study employs a qualitative research method based on a literature review to analyze the issues the author wishes to investigate. The findings of the research indicate that educators should emulate and adopt Jesus' teaching methods by utilizing technology as a means of delivering education to students, particularly in the field of Christian religious education. This approach can effectively transfer knowledge about Christian teachings, thereby enhancing students' faith and spirituality to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Therefore, educators must strive to educate students to keep up with the developments of the 21st century, fostering critical thinking, creativity, communication skills, all based on the Word of God and the fear of God.

Keywords: Jesus' Learning Method, 21st Century Education, Educators, Students, Strategies.

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INTRODUCTION

This research is founded on an urgency stemming from the shift towards 21st-century education and the adaptation and implementation of Jesus' teaching methods in a fully digital 21st-century education system. Indonesia, like other societies, must adapt to this era where digitalization coexists with humans to foster positive developments. Therefore, it is crucial to study and master digital technology as a supportive tool in 21st-century education. The 4.0 era is characterized by intelligent humans who can integrate or combine the virtual and real worlds, enabling them to face challenges by leveraging digitalization as various activities are centered around technology (Johanes Waldes Hasugian et al., 2022). In this era, technology is increasingly relied upon to develop a fully digital learning process that makes it easier to find teaching materials.

21st-century education is one that can apply what is learned during the learning process, such as knowledge, skills, courtesy, and mastery of digital technology. Moreover, it not only applies but also upgrades knowledge for

oneself and shares it with the surrounding community (Arum Banarsari, Deviana Nurfadilah, 2023). 21st-century education demands that schools transform and habituate the learning process from being teacher-centered to student-centered. One aspect of learning in 21st-century education continuously implements new innovations, updates teaching methods, and of course, engages in a technologically-driven learning process (Arum Banarsari, Deviana Nurfadilah, 2023), making Jesus' disciples mature, mature in faith (Nendissa, J, 2021). According to the authors, 21st-century education is not just taught to students to learn and master competencies but also to enhance their quality towards metacognitive skills or high-level critical thinking. It prepares, delivers, trains, presents, and results in comprehensive learning outcomes to achieve the objectives, materials, methods, and evaluations of learning. Therefore, 21st-century learning needs to be supported by a blend of quality human resources and technology to produce individuals capable of critical and creative thinking.

As times evolve, humans must adapt to new and creative learning methods. However, in this paper, the authors explain the teaching methods taught by Jesus based on the Bible. In the Bible, Jesus used teaching methods, teaching His disciples and many people. Jesus even employed more than one method. In this regard, Jesus, as an educator, had a caring and gentle heart to transform His people's lives (Tuju, 2021). Jesus did not just present material; He understood and taught in any situation to convey His teachings to His disciples (Maywan Sinaga, Nancy Sinaga, 2022). Jesus' teaching methods were unique, such as investigating, parables, lecturing, questioning, using activities, and discussing when explaining good teachings to His disciples. This cannot be separated from the interpretation of biblical texts, namely the Gospels. Jesus used teaching methods to be closer to His disciples and build communication (Araro, 2023). It must be acknowledged that the effort to embody various Christian values in daily life is the greatest challenge (Pangaribuan, R., & Rumetor, 2024). Thus, Jesus was very familiar with His disciples' characteristics because He used deep illustrations, events, and exploration as teaching media.

The authors found previous research such as Daniel Pesah's study on Combining Joyce-Weil Learning Models and Jesus' Biblical Learning Models in Congregational Spiritual Life (Daniel Pesah Purwonugroho, 2023). Daniel's study aimed to describe Jesus' teaching model as a teacher in the four Gospels and enhance the spiritual growth of the congregation to always rely on Jesus in daily life. Another study by Hana and Yonatan examined Jesus' Teaching Strategies: The Sermon on the Mount as a Reflection for Modern Teachers (Hana & Arifianto, 2023). This research contributed to modern teachers' ability to practice Jesus' effective teaching strategies from the Sermon on the Mount, enabling them to create a comfortable learning environment and have precise assessment criteria. Another study by Septiana and Yublina explored the Strategies of Christian Religious Education Teachers and Christian Parents in Overcoming Students' Learning Difficulties in 21st-century Learning (Septiana Christi Gulo, 2023). This research explained that Christian religious education teachers and parents must have strategies to help students achieve good learning outcomes and excel in 21st-century education.

The previous studies mentioned above focused only on combining learning models, Jesus' teaching strategies through the Sermon on the Mount, and strategies of Christian religious education teachers and parents in 21st-century learning. These focuses are different from the research the authors will investigate. Previous studies have not analyzed Jesus' teaching methods and effective strategies to apply them in 21st-century education. This gap is what the authors will examine, making it a distinct study from the previous topics.

RESEARCH METHOD

The author uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is considered part of the humanities, although it is not excluded from being used in the exact sciences (Fitriani Widiyani Roosinda, 2021). Qualitative research is understood as a scientific activity conducted in stages, starting with determining the topic, collecting data, and analyzing the data, ultimately leading to an understanding and comprehension of the topic as a (Conny Semiawan, 2010). This qualitative research will be supported by a literature study approach, which means studying reference books, journals, and articles related to the research topic (Rukin, 2021). In relation to additional references, the author will seek and read writings related to the topic of Jesus' teaching methods in the 21st century. Therefore, with the qualitative research method and literature study approach, it is expected that this paper can gather clear and accurate data to achieve good results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Learning Methods

Learning methods refer to the presentation models used by educators in teaching, both individually and in groups, to effectively convey learning materials. The role of learning methods is crucial in the interaction process of teaching and learning. An educator can act as a motivator for students, as their active involvement can inspire other students (Nur Hamiyah & Jauhar, 2014). These methods provide a systematic approach to conducting effective teaching processes for students (Dadang Sunandar Iskandarwassid, 2008). Furthermore, learning methods can include patterns in utilizing various educational principles and are supported by resources to ensure the learning process is ingrained in the students (Joko Tri Prasetya & Ahmadi, 2005). The patterns mastered by educators are packaged and presented in the form of teaching processes, enabling students to comprehend the lessons (Abdaurrahman Ginting, 2008). According to the author, learning methods are essential in every face-to-face interaction and educating students to secure a bright future in their education, making them useful members of the church and society.

Jesus' Teaching Methods

Jesus' teaching methods are uniquely distinctive. Through His teachings, Jesus could capture people's attention, becoming a source of motivation for them. Jesus' teachings had authority, power, a firm stance, and the ability to transform the hearts of those who obeyed Him (Binsen Samuel Sidjabat, 2011). Jesus' teaching methods played a crucial role in the lives of His followers, encouraging them to follow, obey, and increasingly trust in Him who gave them life (Drost, 1998). Thus, Jesus' teaching methods are a learning process grounded in the vision and mission of Biblical teachings. Jesus' teaching methods positively influence His followers' lives on earth, especially in terms of spirituality and strong faith, helping them to know Jesus better, adopt good character, practice love, and receive His teachings about salvation.

Objectives of Jesus' Teaching Methods

The author outlines several objectives of Jesus' teaching methods:

1. Jesus' teaching methods reflect a transformation in knowledge and foster understanding towards others.
2. They aim to bring about changes in social life aspects such as emotions, attitudes, and behaviors.

3. These methods seek to develop quick-response skills, enabling individuals to act realistically in daily life (Binsen Samuel Sidjabat, 2011).

The above objectives are meant to help Jesus' disciples, including us, to recognize Jesus as a helper and savior who guides His followers to the path of truth. Additionally, Jesus' teaching methods aim to make His followers witnesses of Christ in building relationships, behaving, and possessing characteristics like Jesus, becoming the salt and light of the world.

Types of Jesus' Teaching Methods

Demonstration as a Teaching Method

Jesus used the demonstration method effectively and assertively, employing objects around Him like birds, grass, and flowers to illustrate God's care for His people (Matthew 6:25-31). He used objects like a child to teach humility (Matthew 18:6), a fig tree to demonstrate faith (Matthew 21:18-22), a coin to teach obedience to the government (Mark 12:13-17), and a ripened field to emphasize the importance of preaching the Gospel (John 4:35-39). The vine and branches demonstration taught about relationships with the Father and His people (John 15:1-8). Jesus' miracles also served as demonstrations of His power and divinity (Matthew 15:31 and Mark 8:25) (Bobbi De Potter, Mark Reardon, 2007). Demonstrations make verbal teachings clearer and more directed.

Drama as a Teaching Method

Jesus' teaching methods could involve drama, especially in worship activities. For instance, pastors might use poetic intonations when reading the Bible. This approach can stimulate thoughts about social conditions and be used in seminars. Dramatic methods can also be utilized in worship services to preach the Gospel, designing the service, setting the stage, and choosing appropriate tones and materials to engage students' attention (Sentot Sadono, 2006). Dramatic methods, such as Jesus driving out traders from the temple (Matthew 21:12-16), can convey specific messages, often with social critiques (Sahardjo, 2021).

Storytelling as a Teaching Method

Jesus' storytelling involved parables familiar to His followers, like the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son. These stories were used to capture attention, as Jesus knew short, clear narratives were more engaging and effective than long-winded ones (Kistemaker, 2003). Educators, like teachers or pastors, should use storytelling to ensure the material is engaging and creatively presented, making it easier for students to absorb and practice.

Lecturing as a Teaching Method

Jesus' lecturing required careful preparation to provide structured and innovative lessons during face-to-face interactions. His voice and intonation needed to be clear and understandable (Luke 19:47). Jesus delivered many lectures, including the longest one about the end times and final judgment in Matthew 24 and 25. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and the farewell discourse (John 14-17) are well-known examples (Kistemaker, 2003). Lecturing is essential as it allows educators to share Jesus' teachings effectively.

Questioning as a Teaching Method

Jesus began using the questioning method at age 12 in the temple (Luke 2:46). He used it not only with religious leaders but also with His listeners, asking 154 questions in the Gospels, including 100 different ones (Laufer, 1986). This method promotes critical thinking and helps students remember and understand the material better. Educators should encourage students to ask questions, fostering a reciprocal learning relationship.

Discussion as a Teaching Method

Jesus employed discussion in a formal setting, providing important conceptual insights. He discussed with the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-42), Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), and two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). These discussions were deep and included Q&A, making them effective teaching methods (Wilbert McKeachie, 2005). According to the author, Jesus' discussion-based teaching method can serve as a reference for a comprehensive structured teaching process. The author emphasizes the importance of reciprocal interaction in discussions to critically derive the main points or answers. Additionally, by using Jesus' discussion-based teaching method, it is hoped that students will be active and meaningful in expressing their opinions, thereby enhancing the quality of thought.

21st Century Education Concept

21st-century education is a learning approach that emphasizes learning skills, creativity, innovation, quick access to information, and mastery of media and technology. This educational model encourages students to develop critical thinking skills. Moreover, 21st-century education is heavily influenced by technology, which supports students in achieving high-quality, creative, and critical success, enabling them to compete at national and international levels (Arum Banarsari, Deviana Nurfadilah, 2023). Therefore, 21st-century education can be designed and developed to enable students to think critically when solving problems, enhance creativity, and improve communication with others (Syaputra & Sariyatun, 2020). Educators need to develop aspects of implementing 21st-century education, including: focusing the educational center on students who are guided towards critical thinking, directing the learning process to be student-centered, emphasizing the importance of collaboration or idea exchange in education, and connecting schools with the surrounding community (Puspa et al., 2023). According to the authors, the concept of 21st-century education is essential today due to the rapid development of technology, and thus 21st-century education and technology must progress rapidly together.

The 21st-century education concept enhances students' cognitive and psychomotor skills. Such a concept emphasizes the quality and capabilities of human resources, making information openness and interpersonal relationships highly significant. 21st-century education is not limited and provides open access to important information through technology as a rich source of references (Hasanah & Haryadi, 2022). Consequently, 21st-century education is inseparable from digital media technology because the educational concept in the 21st century emphasizes digitalization.

Applying Jesus' Teaching Methods in 21st Century Education

In this section, the author discusses three important points for educators in applying Jesus' teaching methods in 21st century education for students:

Educators Emulating Jesus

Educators are individuals with the ability to teach, guide, and provide learning processes to students, making the profession highly regarded in society. Not everyone can become an educator without a desire and talent for teaching students (Santosa et al., 2020). Educators have the task of creating new, intelligent generations, resulting in human resources with a high level of critical intellectual intelligence. The author refers to educators as those who believe in Jesus as their savior. An educator can motivate, bring about change in students, enhance their spiritual faith, and foster an intense relationship between students and Jesus Christ.

Educators Teaching Effectively

Upon reviewing the literature, the author found that the learning process is often ineffective for students in grasping the material presented. In schools, teaching materials should not only be based on the Bible but also approach life's meaning and social relations with fellow humans (Johanes Waldes Hasugian, 2016). Moreover, educators need to be effective not only in preparing materials but also in implementing them (Harls Evan Rianto Siahaan, 2016). Therefore, educators need to prepare themselves for teaching tasks so that the material presented can be understood by the students.

The above explanation emphasizes that educators should design the learning process or methods maximally to ensure reciprocal interaction between educators and students. The goal is for students to actively participate in learning, enhancing and activating learning quality in the 21st century. Jesus previously employed effective teaching methods, using visual aids so that students could absorb the material presented. According to the author, effective teaching by educators can train students to concentrate when paying attention to the material presented.

Educators Teaching by Example

Educators are the extension of Jesus, proclaiming God's truth in students' lives. Educators play a role in fulfilling Jesus' great commission, as written in Matthew 28:19-20: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Dwiraharjo, 2019). According to the author, Jesus' example in the verse provides a guideline for educators, emphasizing the quality of life. Being a role model is also a responsibility in shaping, guiding, and equipping students by enhancing their faith.

Challenges of Jesus' Teaching Methods in the 21st Century

In this section, the author wants to explain the various challenges of applying Jesus' teaching methods in the 21st century, including students' lives and educators' adaptation to digital changes:

Digitization

In the 21st century, Jesus' teaching methods face challenges from the use of technology. Technology should be utilized positively by humanity, such as seeking additional information related to teaching materials, but nowadays, it is misused to spread hoaxes, violating Jesus' teachings to His followers.

Differing Opinions

Differing opinions become a challenge in applying Jesus' teaching methods in the 21st century. This happens because today's students are too focused on their hedonistic and secular lifestyles, causing a lack of interest in spiritual themes.

Erosion of Student Character

This occurs because moral, character, and ethical education is no longer favored by students. Therefore, Jesus' teaching methods in the 21st century face challenges in not affecting the character and moral behavior of students.

Shift in Student Interests

In the 21st century, Jesus' teaching methods, closely related to Christian religious education, experience a shift in interest. Students prioritize subjects that offer long-term knowledge based on digital skills to adapt to the 21st century. Hence, this challenge is significant for both educators and students.

The four challenges of Jesus' teaching methods in the 21st century are common among students because religious attitudes and Christian religious education materials are neglected. Furthermore, educators are not yet highly skilled in using digital technology as a medium for 21st-century learning. The shift from Jesus' teaching methods to the 21st century presents heavy challenges due to the highly digitalized education world, requiring educators to learn extensively to apply teaching materials using technology to make them engaging.

Opportunities for Jesus Learning Methods in the 21st Century

1. The first opportunity is for educators to strengthen the foundation of moral thinking based on faith. Educators explain 21st century education that is guided by the Bible so that it can instill Christian values in the lives of students.
2. Educators can optimize information technology as a great opportunity to educate students creatively and diverse innovations so that it is not monotonous in the learning process in developing science.
3. Other opportunities through the teaching of Jesus' learning methods can educate the character and mindset and actions of students through Christian religious education so as to change thinking for the better.
4. Through the Jesus learning method can educate students through strong Christian religious education because it has its own strength in overcoming the negative impact due to the emergence of technology that is increasingly developing.

Effective Learning Strategies of Jesus in the 21st Century

Guidance Strategy

The strategy used by Jesus for learning methods was to teach rules based on Faith or practical aspects by providing specific guidance to those who listened to Him. This is clearly written in the book of Matthew 10, which describes detailed directions for evangelizing within a community in the city. Jesus' instruction was to call His disciples and give them power to cast out evil spirits and heal all diseases. Therefore, the disciples were sent not to stray into the way of other nations but to go and visit the lost sheep of Israel and perform healing through Prayer

for the sick, cast out evil spirits, cleanse lepers, and raise the dead. Furthermore, the instruction was not to bring gold, silver, copper, provisions, or two coats because Jesus would provide blessings for the ministry work performed.

The guidance strategy used by Jesus is clearly seen in firmly and purposefully guiding His disciples in performing ministry at a time when the church was just beginning and not many people were following Jesus. Therefore, guidance was needed for them to carry out evangelism. This guidance strategy of Jesus is found in John 3:1-21 through the conversation between Jesus and a teacher of the law named Nicodemus. Jesus' guidance also took the form of sermons about the kingdom of God and being born again.

Through Jesus' guidance-based learning strategy, it is very effective in the 21st century because in this digital age, it is important for educators to provide guidance to learners so that they are not fixated on cell phones and rampant online games, allowing them to focus on education based on the teachings or learning of Jesus.

Memorization Strategy

The instruction to memorize was practiced by Jesus for His disciples by assigning them the task of memorizing teaching texts that were passed down from Jewish tradition, as it was common in the past to memorize the Torah or Pentateuch orally. The memorization strategy is clearly seen in the Book of Acts, including Paul who quoted verses from the Bible, particularly from his letters to the congregations. This memorization strategy is widely used by educators because they memorize the concepts of the teaching material, but when not utilized, students automatically fall behind in their lessons.

Parable Strategy

In the Bible, Jesus frequently used storytelling methods for teaching through parables, recognizing that His people in Palestine came from diverse ethnicities, tribes, and nations, and that their social life involved much storytelling using parables. Parables were used because they made it easier for many people to hear the testimonies and sermons He delivered.

The uniqueness of Jesus' parables lies in their simplicity and clarity in everyday life. The parables Jesus told resonate deeply with the everyday lives of many people, but they require further study as they need to be contextualized for Indonesia. It would be beneficial to employ this parable strategy with learners to proclaim the Gospel in a specific and contextual manner.

Cooperative Strategy

The cooperative learning strategy of Jesus is evident in the division of groups, namely 12 disciples and 70 disciples. Therefore, the implementation of the sermons received in daily life is for collaboration, discussion, and prayer.

Contextual Strategy

The contextual learning method strategy can motivate students to understand the concepts of the teaching materials provided while relating them to everyday contexts so that students' social relations apply the knowledge gained to problem contexts. Jesus used contextual strategies to engage the psychomotor aspects of the students to capture their attention during His sermons or teachings. Contextual strategies can be found in the Gospels when

Jesus used parables based on the everyday life of His time that were easily understood contextually by the people of Israel.

The five teaching method strategies of Jesus will be effective in the 21st century; alongside the advancement of technology, these strategies serve as guidelines for educators to teach students so that they do not miss the teaching materials and are able to absorb and apply the knowledge acquired in their daily lives. According to the author, Jesus' teaching method strategies can be effective when compared to common and monotonous teaching methods because the five strategies above must be learned by educators to upgrade the learning activities based on the teachings of Jesus, thereby fostering the faith of the students and their perseverance in Him and having a positive impact on others. The intended impact is that students come to know Jesus the Savior, learn and apply the truths of God's Word, possess qualities and character that reflect Jesus, implement spiritual and religious values, and become witnesses of Christ in this world.

CONCLUSION

Applying the effective teaching methods of Jesus in the 21st century requires first studying and understanding the shifts of the times from both positive and negative perspectives so that educators can adapt their teaching activities for maximum effectiveness. Educators can apply the teaching methods of Jesus in the 21st century based on the Bible, thereby instilling Christian values in students. Therefore, educators should model Jesus as an example in teaching, transforming, and imparting the noble task, aiming to achieve optimal learning and enhance students' thinking quality. The teaching methods of Jesus can minimize the influence of rapidly developing technology on students, allowing them to focus on learning.

Effective teaching strategies of Jesus in the 21st century can captivate students' interest. Jesus employed strategies such as demonstrations, drama, storytelling, lectures, question-and-answer sessions, and engaging discussions as the core of his teaching. These teaching strategies of Jesus can be emulated by educators to teach their students. Such engaging strategies can create a pleasant experience for students. Therefore, using uninteresting teaching strategies can lead to students feeling lazy and bored during the learning process. The goal of the effective teaching strategies of Jesus in the 21st century is to develop critical, communicative, creative, and proficient technologies as they can create students capable of competing in this 21st century.

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