

Transformation of Teaching Concepts in Theological College

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ABSTRACT

The intellectual aspect still occupies the highest echelon in higher education, including theological schools, with other aspects neglected like stepchildren. In fact, the nation's educational ideals actually encompass the holistic and comprehensive development of human beings, encompassing a person's intellectual, moral-spiritual, and practical qualities. The article aims to provide a biblical basis that can be used as a basis for forming teaching concepts in Christian universities so that students are equipped with learning experiences that foster a balance between intellectual, moral-spiritual, and practical. Using a literature study method, it is proposed that the concept of teaching in theological colleges must be transformed, encompassing the objectives, curriculum, and learning environment. This article contributes to the world of Christian education and the management of theological colleges, ensuring a comprehensive and balanced learning environment in accordance with God's will.

Keywords: transformation; teaching concepts; theological college

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INTRODUCTION

The ideals of national education actually encompass the holistic and comprehensive development of human beings, which touches on the intellectual, moral-spiritual, and practical qualities of a person. This spirit is clearly stated in several state documents. For example, in the Preamble to the Undang-Undang Dasar 1945, in the fourth verse, which contains the phrase "to enlighten the life of the nation" as a national goal (Pembukaan Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 Alinea 4, 1945). This section shows that the intellectual quality of citizens is a serious concern for the government. Furthermore, Undang-undang No. 20 of 2003, chapter 1, verse 2, states: "National education is education based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which is rooted in religious values, Indonesian national culture and responsive to the demands of changing times" (Undang-Undang No. 20 Tahun 2003 Pasal 1 Ayat 2 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, 2003). It is clearly stated that national education cannot be separated from the spiritual aspect through religious values. Even religion is called the root of national education which implies that faith is the foundation of education. Then in Undang-undang No. 20 of 2003 chapter 3 it is written: "National education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a

dignified nation in order to enlighten the life of the nation, aiming to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble morals, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens" (Undang-Undang No. 20 Tahun 2003 Pasal 3 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, 2003). Note that the development of *skills* and personality is a function of education that produces intellectual, moral-spiritual, and practical qualities.

The Father of Indonesian Education, Ki Hajar Dewantara, had been thinking about the balance between intelligence and behavior of students long before all Indonesian education Undang-undangs emerged. He said that sharpened intelligence is indeed good because it can build good and strong character to create a personality (*persoonlijkheid*) and character (a soul based on law) so that a person is able to overcome the desires and bad habits they have (Dewantara, 2011, p. 24). History has witnessed that the educational ideas in this nation have from the beginning balanced between intellectual intelligence and moral-spiritual maturity of students.

The government has attempted to incorporate the above national education philosophy into the higher education curriculum through Undang-undang No. 12 of 2012, Chapter 35, Verse 2, and Peraturan Pemerintah No. 4 of 2022, Chapter 40, Verse 6, which mandates the inclusion of Religion, Pancasila, Citizenship, and Indonesian Language courses in the curriculum of every university (Peraturan Pemerintah No. 4 Tahun 2022 Pasal 40 Ayat 6 Tentang Perubahan Atas Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 57 Tahun 2021 Tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan, 2022; Undang-Undang No. 12 Tahun 2012 Pasal 35 Ayat 2 Tentang Pendidikan Tinggi, 2012). It is hoped that the moral-spiritual and cultural aspects of the nation will complement the intellectual aspects of students. However, in reality, the intellectual aspect still occupies the highest caste in higher education and other aspects are like stepchildren. This can be proven by the existence of awards for graduates with the highest performance index, which means that intellectuals are highly valued. Then, regarding accreditation, specifically in the Laporan Kerja Program Studi (LKPS), academic achievement and student outcomes in the Tridharma receive special assessment points. Again, intellectualism is the main thing. Atmojo argues that learning in Indonesia has tended to only prioritize the development of intellectual aspects according to the textbooks used by teachers (Atmojo, 2012, p. 115). Dewi and Putri also stated that the curriculum targets in Indonesia have created an educational context that prioritizes intellectual development, because it requires educators to simply complete the teaching material (Dewi & Putri, 2018, p. 33). Therefore, it can be said that the academic culture in higher education does not provide an equal space for moral-spiritual aspects. The implemented curriculum plays a significant role behind all of this. Theological universities in Indonesia need to be aware of conditions that can put them at a crossroads. On the one hand, they must comply with accreditation assessment standards that tend to favor intellectualism alone, but on the other hand, they must also maintain the unique philosophy of the founding of the university, which generally contains Christian values.

Brake understands this situation by stating that although today theology lecturers are confused by accreditation and government regulations, they should not only focus on the educational realm with all its management, but should also focus on good spiritual formation, namely the process of forming the character of students who consist of various backgrounds (Brake, 2015, p. 25). Therefore, theological colleges should not be fixated on increasing intellectual capacity and legality in the form of accreditation alone, but also think about how students are formed as disciples of Christ. The author is of the opinion that theological colleges must firmly maintain and instill their unique educational foundation based on the truth of Scripture to students through a well-thought-out teaching concept. This article is written with the aim of providing a biblical foundation that can be

used as a basis for forming teaching concepts in Christian colleges so that students are equipped with a learning experience that fosters a balance between intellectual, moral-spiritual, and practical.

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used in this chapter is qualitative research using a literature study method. This approach can provide comprehensive knowledge regarding Christian education. The steps taken include collecting library data, reading, comparing literature, and recording, to be reviewed and draw conclusions. The literature used is a *primary source*, namely the Bible, and *secondary sources* in the form of literature discussing teaching in general education and theological education. Reading is carried out by first reviewing the abstract or introduction of a literature to determine whether the source is relevant to the research, then understanding the concepts conveyed in the literature. The research results will be presented sequentially and systematically to provide a description of the concept of teaching in theological colleges.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Purpose of a Teacher According to Ephesians 4:11-16

The key word for this section is 'formation.' Although the ideals of state education indicate a desire to shape a person's intellectual and spirituality, there is an inconsistency as seen in the Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia No. 37 Tahun 2009 concerning Lecturers, in chapter I, chapter 1, verse 1, which reads: "Lecturers are professional educators and scientists with the main task of transforming, developing, and disseminating science, technology, and art through education, research, and community service" (Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia No. 37 Tahun 2009 Tentang Dosen, 2009). In it, it appears that science, technology, and art are the objects to be transformed, developed, and disseminated. This means that intellectuality is highlighted as the main task of a teacher. This goal is not wrong but it is not enough. In the context of theological colleges, the spirituality of students needs to be the main concern. This is based on the verse Ephesians 4:11-16. Verse 11 lists the office of teacher (διδασκάλους) among other offices. Bayes explains that the office of teacher in the context of the time was an expounder of Scripture and the traditions of Jesus, and if they functioned like Jewish teachers, then they probably offered Bible teaching to the congregation and trained others to explain Scripture as well (Bayes, 2010, p. 116). Then verses 12-16 seem to explain the purpose, because verse 12 opens with the conjunction 'for' (πρός). According to Friberg, the conjunction πρὸς has the function 'to introduce a near purpose' or introduce a near purpose (Friberg et al., 2000).

Ames explains the activity of teaching as a formation effort based on Ephesians 4:11-16 and in great detail explains that verses 12-16 not only state the objectives, but the objectives realize the targets and provide significant results. According to his observation, verse 12 explains two objectives of teaching, namely: *first*, to equip the saints to serve (12a) and *second*, to build up the body of Christ (12b); verse 13 explains four objectives of teaching, namely: *first*, achieving unity of faith in the one person of Jesus Christ (13a), *second*, having knowledge of the Son of God (13b), *third*, become a mature believer (13c), and *fourth*, reach fullness in Christ (13d); while verses 14-16 explain the results achieved from teaching activities, namely: *first*, immunity to false doctrine (14) and *second*, being like Christ (15-16) (Ames, 2014, p. 12). Ames also concluded that teaching is a ministry that sometimes seems like a job filled with piles of student assignments to be assessed, lecture hours to be prepared, and problems to be solved, but more than that, teaching is a ministry of formation so that students are

built up to be like Christ (Ames, 2014, p. 20). What Ames said is very appropriate, that the goal of theology lecturers in teaching should be to equip students to serve and build the church to be more advanced. This means that the task of a teacher must be framed in an ecclesiological perspective. The goal of teaching is not only to make students intelligent and competent, but the scriptures explain that they are to be faithful (spiritual), theologically knowledgeable (intellectual), mature (emotional), and filled with Christ (spiritual). Verse 13 covers the integration of spiritual, intellectual, and emotional aspects that must be developed in students. As a result, as Ames states in verses 14-16, students will be steadfast, not led astray by foreign doctrines, and they will be like Christ. All of these good things will be capital for students when they enter the world of ministry, helping God's congregation grow and be actively involved in ministry.

A Teacher's Curriculum Based on Proverbs 1:1-7

The key word for this section is 'balance.' However, a teacher must first understand the definition of curriculum. According to the National Education System Undang-undang No. 20 of 2003, curriculum is defined as "A set of plans and arrangements regarding the objectives, content and learning materials as well as the methods used as guidelines for organizing learning activities to achieve certain objectives" (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, 2003). The objectives of formation in teaching need to be formulated in such a way in the curriculum that will be implemented by a theological college. This is legitimate because according to Stratemeyer there are three foundations in compiling a curriculum, namely the social foundations, the psychological foundations, and the philosophical foundations (Barbara Stratemeyer, 1957, pp. 21–22). The philosophy that can be used as a foundation in curriculum development can also be taken from biblical concepts and not only from secular educational philosophy, because after all theological education must have its own philosophy built on the word of God. The Book of Proverbs is very suitable as a basis for education, because according to Milner the book of Proverbs is "*a manual for educating young men*" or a guide to educating young people (Stratemeyer, 1957, pp. 21–22). In addition, Von Rad argues that the forms in Proverbs are specifically the product of learned pedagogical circles (von Rad, 1966, p. 203). Therefore, the world of Christian education can choose the Book of Proverbs as a basis in curriculum development in each of their respective educational institutions because of the very strong educational and pedagogical nature in the book. Proverbs 1:1-7 itself provides a balance of aspects that can be applied when teaching in theological colleges.

First, the spiritual aspect (v. 7). Structurally, verse 7 is at the end of the prologue, but in terms of content, this verse deserves to be placed at the forefront as a reference for curriculum development in Christian universities. Because verse 7 reads, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." Fear of the LORD is related to one's relationship with His Creator, so it is right to say that this section speaks of the spiritual aspect. The word 'beginning' in this verse comes from the Hebrew word רֵאשִׁית (*reshit*) which can be interpreted as 'first phase' (Brown et al., 2011, p. 912). According to Horne, the word *reshit* indicates that 'fear of the LORD' is the basic foundation, the most important thing, and the principle that permeates all scopes (Horne, 2003, p. 28). Brown mentions that the word 'fear' in Hebrew יִרְאָה (*yir'a*), can be interpreted as 'piety' (Brown et al., 2011, p. 432). The Israelites at that time were reminded that the piety of faith in Yahweh was the first and foremost step before they learned wisdom and knowledge. In their context, the term 'fear of the LORD' cannot be separated from what has been taught by the Torah. According to Miller, the term 'fear of the LORD' appears quite often in the Book of Deuteronomy, for example in Deuteronomy 5:29; 6:2; 8:6; 10:12-13; 31:12-13 which can be interpreted as the act of respecting, loving, trusting and worshiping Yahweh and obeying all the

words that He conveyed through Moses (Miller, 2004, p. 39). So it is clear that the spirituality in question is a personal relationship with God in love, respect, and obedience.

Second, the intellectual aspect (vv. 2, 4, 5). There are several words in the prologue of Proverbs that relate to intellectuality. In verse 2, there are wisdom (*khokma*), instruction (*musar*), and meaningful words (*imre biyna*). The words wisdom and knowledge are often interpreted as synonyms. In verse 4, there are intelligence (*orma*), knowledge (*da'at*), and wisdom (*mezzima*). Then in verse 5, there is knowledge (*leqah*) and consideration (*tahbulot*). Horne explains that the word *musar* appears 30 times in Proverbs and always has an educational meaning, especially discipline, while the word *biyna* appears 14 times which has the meaning of 'intellectual sharpness' (Horne, 2003, pp. 25–26) or critical. The word *orma* in verse 4 is more appropriately translated as 'clever' (Holladay, 2000, p. 284) which means not only smart but also creative in thinking. Meanwhile, the word *mezzima* is more appropriately translated as 'prudence' (Holladay, 2000, p. 189) which indicates a mature analytical way of thinking before making a decision. In verse 5, the word *leqah* can also be translated as 'teaching' (Brown et al., 2011, p. 544) which refers to learning materials while the word *tahbulot* is plural which means 'wise advice' (Brown et al., 2011, p. 287). The context of verse 5 is for those who have been educated, but the author of Proverbs invites them to continue to be educated in order to add to their learning materials and obtain guiding advice. In conclusion, intellectuality in the prologue of Proverbs consists of the attitude of an intellectual, the way of thinking of an intellectual, and the source of learning of an intellectual. The attitude of an intellectual is discipline (*musar*). The way of thinking of an intellectual is critical thinking (*biyna*), creative thinking (*orma*), and analytical thinking (*mezzima*). And the source of learning of an intellectual is from learning materials (*leqah*) and verbal advice from teachers (*tahbulot*).

Third, the moral-social aspect (v. 3). What is highlighted in verse 3 is truth (*tsedeq*), justice (*mishpot*), and honesty (*mesharim*) as morality resulting from education (*musar*). The word *musar* in verse 3 is the same as *musar* in verse 2, which means 'discipline.' The fruit of continuous discipline is a person's moral quality. According to Miller, the three words in 1:3b indicate the desired outcome of education, namely doing what is right (an upright personal life), upholding what is "just" (social justice), and being just and honest (integrity in social relations) (Miller, 2004, p. 38). If it is permissible to interpret, *tsedeq* is a personal life that avoids immoral violations and strives to live uprightly according to the guidelines of the Holy Scriptures. This principle is important to uphold considering the rampant cases of promiscuity and crime committed by students. Meanwhile, *mishpot* and *mesharim* have a social dimension. This passage demonstrates that the morals produced impact not only the individual but also society and the community. This means that Proverbs seeks to shape learners whose moral integrity touches on social aspects. This makes sense, given that humans are social creatures who live side by side with others.

Fourth, the solutional aspect (v. 6). This aspect can be seen in verse 6, which reads, "to understand proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise." The Hebrew words for proverbs, parables, sayings, and riddles of the wise are *masal*, *melitsa*, *dibre hakamim*, and *khida*, respectively. As mentioned earlier, *masal* means "parable" or "proverb." The phrase *dibre hakamim* is parallel to the phrase *imre biyna* in verse 2, which refers to "critical thinking." However, the words *melitsa* and *khida* have their own uniqueness. According to Horne, these two words are related to artistic, symbolic, and metaphorical words that have *hidden* meanings (Horne, 2003, pp. 26–27). This means that Proverbs seeks to educate readers to be able to solve mysteries or riddles from difficult writings. A person is trained to solve problems and find solutions to any deadlocks that occur. Such an agenda is crucial, given that life presents unexpected surprises that require tactical solutions. The implicit

message in this Proverbs prologue should serve as food for thought for Christian universities as they design curricula that shape students as *problem solvers*, enabling them to find solutions to all the challenges they face in life. A problem-solving-based curriculum is worth considering. The learning process should also include case studies that challenge students to solve problems logically and tactically.

Learning Environment Based on Deuteronomy 6:4-9

The keyword for this section is 'creativity.' This section is adapted from the author's writing with several other colleagues in a chapter entitled "Challenges in Planning and Managing Early Childhood Education Learning Environments in the Urban Community of Manado City During the Covid-19 Pandemic" (Manoppo et al., 2021). Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is often referred to as *the shema* and is the Jewish monotheism that teaches the oneness of Yahweh (Merrill, 1994, p. 97). Merrill stated that this verse is the basis for monotheistic faith that recognizes the oneness of Yahweh. One is interpreted as oneness and uniqueness that in no way contradicts the Christian trinity. Contextually, this verse, along with other passages throughout the Book of Deuteronomy, was written by Moses to prepare the second generation of Israelites to enter the Promised Land. This second generation was expected to live obediently in the land flowing with milk and honey that they would soon enter. They were also warned not to follow in the footsteps of the first generation, who chose to rebel and died lying in the desert without ever tasting a single morsel of the land God had promised. However, several figures agree that Deuteronomy 6:4-9 can also serve as a philosophical basis for establishing a learning environment that can be applied in theological colleges (Choi, 2009; Gentry, 2012; Taylor, 2016).

First, a learning environment that is *parental participation*. The first characteristic of a learning environment is that it must be *parental participation*, namely the involvement of parents. This is based on the fact that Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is addressed to parents. Verse 7a states: "You shall teach these things to your children again and again." The use of the phrase 'your children' emphasizes that parents must take part in educating their children. Gentry also explained that in this verse, the ones receiving the command are not kings, prophets, or priests, but parents. And the education of today's children is not only the responsibility of the church, pastors, elders, or servants, but also the responsibility of parents. (Gentry, 2012, p. 8). Parental participation is very prominent with the emergence of four main verbs in verses 7-9, namely 'teach it', 'talk about it', 'bind it', and 'write it down.' The words 'teach it' and 'talk about it' come from the Hebrew words שִׁנְנָתָם (*shinnantam*) and דִּבַּרְתָּ (*dibbarta*) which are both in the form of *piel* and can be interpreted as intensive (repetitive) verbs (Gesenius et al., 2006, p. 141). The word *shinnantam* is more accurately translated as 'sharpening' which means not only conveying theory, but ensuring that children can master the material being taught. Not only that, the vital role of parents is also apparent in the phrase 'when you lie down and when you get up.' This sentence contains hyperbole that must be interpreted figuratively, where the emphasis is on the loyalty and total time of parents in educating children (Merrill, 1994, p. 99). In the context of theological colleges, lecturers certainly play the role of spiritual parents for students. Theology lecturers must be present, socialize themselves in the student community and not build thick barriers. The participation of spiritual parents is a crucial aspect in the formation of theology students.

Second, the learning environment is a *verbal-visual combination*. This characteristic indicates a combination of verbal and visual learning methods. Verses 4-9 show a combination of both. The verbal aspect appears in verse 7, namely the word דִּבַּרְתָּ (*dibbarta*) which is translated as 'talking about it.' Because the verb form is *piel*, the translation can also be 'continuously talking about it.' The intensity of the action is emphasized in this verb form (Gesenius et al., 2006, p. 141). In the verbal method, the material is conveyed through words to the

students and they listen to it. Meanwhile, the visual aspect appears in verses 8 and 9 which read: "You shall also bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as symbols on your forehead, and you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." The sign on the hand, the symbol on the forehead, and the writing on the doorposts of the house and the city gates are something visual, can be seen by everyone. Jews take it literally namely by making *tepillin* or prayer ropes containing verses from Exodus 13:1-10; 13:11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; and Deuteronomy 11:13-21, as well as installing a *mezuzah*, a small metal container on the right door frame containing Deuteronomy 6:4-9; and 11:13-21 (Merrill, 1994, p. 99). These kinds of objects can certainly be seen by children while passing by so that they memorize and understand what is conveyed through these objects. So in the Jewish context, *the shema* is taught verbally and visually simultaneously. In the context of teaching at a theological college, a lecturer needs to develop creativity in teaching and not be rigid with just one pattern.

Third, the learning environment is *multi-location*. This means that teaching and learning activities are not limited to one place. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 shows that the learning process takes place in several places. Several locations are mentioned. The first location is the home. The word 'home' appears twice, in verses 7 and 9. Verse 7 says "when you sit in *your house*" and verse 9 says "you shall write them on the doorposts *of your house*." The Hebrew word used is *בַּיִת* (*bayit*) which can be interpreted as a physical house, household, or family (Brown et al., 2011, p. 109). The second location is the road. Verse 7 says "when you are on *a journey*." The Hebrew text for this passage is *וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ* (*ub^e lekt^e ka baderek*) which is correctly translated "and as you are walking along the road." The word *דֶּרֶךְ* (*derek*) meaning 'road' is mentioned in it and it indicates the name of the location. This means that the learning process is not only done at home (*indoor*) but also in an *outdoor* area. The third location is the gate. Verse 9 says: "and at *your gate*." The Hebrew word used is *שַׁעַר* (*sha'ar*) which in the context of Israel at that time was not only an access point to the city, but also a place of public gathering (2 Kings 7:1, 7:18, 2 Sam. 23:15-16, and 1 Chronicles 11:17, 11:18) (Brown et al., 2011, p. 1044). This shows that the learning process can take place in the community, in a place where the public gathers. This section opens the minds of theology teachers to be more creative in determining learning locations and not always having to be indoors.

Fourth, a learning environment that is *style-variation*. This means that there are variations in learning styles. Verse 7 shows four different positions in learning, which include sitting (*יָשָׁב* - *yashav*), walking (*הָלַךְ* - *halak*), lying down (*שָׁכַב* - *shakav*), and getting up/standing (*קָמוּ* - *qom*). The 'sitting' position is often interpreted as a classroom-like atmosphere where there is a presentation of theory, while the 'walking' position is interpreted as a practical activity to create a learning experience for children; there is a balance of theory and practice here (Andor, 2014, p. 146; Taylor, 2012, p. 11). The 'lying' and 'getting up/standing' positions are interpreted in various ways. Some interpret it as 'learning time', namely when starting and ending the day (Andor, 2014, p. 146) others interpret it as a personal relationship with God (Taylor, 2012, p. 11). However, another aspect that the author observes in this verse is the variety of motor movements in teaching. Dynamic teaching and learning patterns are what the author wants to emphasize here. There are times when learning is like a classroom atmosphere, namely sitting and delivering material. There are times when inviting students to walk outside to mingle with the natural environment or on the streets, and let them create personal experiences in learning. There are times when learning is relaxed, even lying down to read a story. There are also times when standing, for example, demonstrating certain movements. Of course, there will be challenges in creating this kind of learning pattern.

CONCLUSION

A lecturer at a theological college needs to recognize that he or she is a servant given a beautiful position by God. Therefore, teaching activities should be under God's will, including objectives, curriculum, and the learning environment. Several things need to be transformed in a teacher's life regarding the concept of teaching. First, regarding objectives, which were originally focused solely on providing information for intellectuals, now shifting to a focus on forming students' spirituality to be like Christ. Second, regarding the curriculum, which was originally only concerned with the intellectual aspect with various forms of output such as scientific papers, now needs to be structured to demonstrate a balance between spiritual, intellectual, moral-social, and solution-oriented aspects. Third, regarding the learning environment, where a teacher usually focuses on a specific *job* and method, now must be present as a spiritual parent for students and foster creativity in determining the methods, places, and styles of teaching and learning.

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