



The Significance of SWOT Analysis in Enhancing Christian Religious Education: A Comprehensive Examination

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Abstract

Education stands as a dynamic force in human and societal development, continually evolving to meet shifting demands and needs. In this modern era marked by rapid transformations, the importance of keeping education abreast with the times cannot be overstated. One effective tool for rejuvenating and advancing education is the SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis, encapsulating Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, transcends its traditional business applications to offer profound insights in diverse domains, including education. In the realm of Christian Religious Education (CRE), a critical aspect of the educational landscape, SWOT analysis unveils avenues for both refinement and growth. This paper explores the application of SWOT analysis in the context of CRE, acknowledging its pivotal role in shaping individual character, values, and spiritual beliefs. Tracing the historical trajectory of CRE from ancient churches to contemporary times, the analysis underscores the foundational principles upon which CRE stands. Within the framework of CRE, SWOT analysis serves as a potent tool to discern existing dynamics and chart future trajectories. By identifying internal strengths such as robust faith traditions and biblically grounded curricula, opportunities for enriching CRE education emerge. Simultaneously, weaknesses such as resource constraints and technological integration challenges highlight areas ripe for improvement. Furthermore, SWOT analysis illuminates potential opportunities for CRE advancement, including technological integration and policy shifts. However, it also unveils threats such as societal value shifts and information overload that impede effective CRE delivery. In navigating these dynamics, effective educational management emerges as paramount. Without strategic oversight and management, the pursuit of excellence in CRE remains elusive. Hence, this study delves into the pivotal role of educational management in fostering the quality and efficacy of CRE. Utilizing an analytical methodology, this research delves deep into existing literature and textual sources to unravel insights and generate new knowledge. Through systematic analysis and interpretation, this study seeks to enrich the discourse on CRE and underscore the imperative of strategic planning and management. In conclusion, SWOT analysis emerges as a cornerstone in the enhancement of CRE. By systematically evaluating internal dynamics and external trends, SWOT analysis paves the way for informed decision-making and strategic interventions. Thus, this paper advocates for the systematic integration of SWOT analysis in CRE, heralding a new era of excellence and relevance in religious education.

Keywords: SWOT Analysis, Christian Religious Education, Examination

INTRODUCTION

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Education is one of the most dynamic aspects of human and societal development. It is not merely a process but also a journey that constantly evolves with the changing times and human needs. In the modern era, filled with challenges and transformations, it is crucial for education to stay "up to date" and continuously evolve to avoid falling behind. One tool that can be used to refresh and develop education is SWOT analysis (Wilson & Foster, 2018).

SWOT analysis, which stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, is not only used in business contexts but has also proven beneficial in various fields, including education. By identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in an educational context, we can design more effective strategies to enhance the quality and effectiveness of education (Tyagita & Iriani, 2018).

One educational field that can be analyzed using the SWOT approach is Christian Religious Education (CRE). As a crucial component in the education system, CRE plays a significant role in shaping the character, values, and spiritual beliefs of individuals. However, like other fields of education, CRE also faces various challenges and opportunities that need to be thoroughly analyzed. The history of Christian Religious Education spans a long period, starting from the era of ancient churches. Initially, ancient churches were based on a strong spirit of Christian fellowship, with a foundation of faith drawn from Jewish religious traditions. They believed in and acknowledged the miraculous deeds performed by God among the people of Israel, as reflected in the writings of the Old Testament. The early church leaders steadfastly defended and transmitted their faith to the next generations, laying a solid foundation for the development of Christian Religious Education. (Gericke, 2013)

In the context of Christian Religious Education, SWOT analysis can provide valuable insights into the current state and potential future development. By identifying internal strengths such as strong faith traditions, curriculum based on Biblical teachings, and actively engaged communities, we can leverage these assets to enhance the quality of Christian religious education. On the other hand, identifying weaknesses such as lack of resources or challenges in integrating modern technology can serve as starting points for improvement and innovation (Kristyana, 2021).

Moreover, SWOT analysis also opens up opportunities to explore various development potentials in Christian Religious Education. By leveraging technological advancements, changes in education policies, or opportunities for collaboration with other institutions, we can create a more dynamic and relevant learning environment that meets the demands of the times (Lal et al., 2023).

However, like other fields of education, Christian Religious Education also faces various threats that need to be addressed. Challenges such as changes in socio-cultural norms, uncontrolled information flow, or shifts in societal values can hinder the effectiveness of Christian religious education. Therefore, it is important for policymakers and education practitioners to identify and anticipate these threats and design appropriate strategies to address them (Nurprasetyaningsih, 2020).

In this context, educational management plays a crucial role in guiding and managing Christian Religious Education. Without effective management, efforts to develop and

improve the quality of Christian religious education will be difficult to achieve. Educational management provides the necessary framework to design, implement, and evaluate Christian religious education programs effectively (Siburian, 2022).

This research will further explore the important role of educational management in the context of Christian Religious Education. We will analyze internal and external factors influencing Christian religious education, and design appropriate strategies to enhance its quality and effectiveness. Thus, this article is expected to make a valuable contribution to the development of Christian religious education and provide a better understanding of the importance of educational management in shaping a better future for Christian religious education.

METHODS

The method utilized in this study is the analytical method. The analytical method is characterized by the process of exploration, observation, and interpretation based on existing texts, supported by relevant literature. In other words, the analytical method is akin to "Library Research" or library-based inquiry, which involves reading books and investigating texts related to the subject matter of this academic work. The analytical method involves a systematic approach to examining texts and extracting meaningful insights. Researchers employing this method delve deeply into existing literature, scrutinizing various sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic under investigation. By critically analyzing and synthesizing information from multiple texts, researchers can identify patterns, themes, and trends within the data. Furthermore, the analytical method emphasizes the importance of interpretation and critical thinking (Arikunto, 2020). Researchers are encouraged to question assumptions, challenge prevailing theories, and offer new perspectives on the subject matter. Through careful analysis and interpretation of textual evidence, researchers aim to generate new knowledge and contribute to the existing body of literature on the topic. The analytical method also relies on the availability of relevant literature to support the research findings. Researchers consult a wide range of scholarly works, including books, journal articles, and other academic publications, to gather evidence and contextualize their findings within the existing literature. By integrating insights from various sources, researchers can strengthen the validity and credibility of their research findings. The analytical method employed in this study involves a systematic and rigorous examination of existing texts to uncover insights and generate new knowledge. By employing critical analysis and interpretation, researchers aim to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their respective field of study. The method underscores the importance of thorough research and scholarly inquiry in producing robust and credible research outcomes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The concept of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, which delves into an institution's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, serves as a common tool in strategic educational planning, proving effective in identifying an institution's potential. SWOT analysis can be divided into two elements: internal analysis,

which focuses on the institution's own achievements, and environmental analysis. Conducting a SWOT analysis is a complex task as it involves strategic alternatives. Failure to analyze it means failing to find the relationships and common ground between strategic factors within the internal and external environments while also relating them to the mission, objectives, and educational goals. It also signifies a failure to prepare a sound strategic decision. Sound strategic decisions can only be made through SWOT analysis. According to Sharplin, as cited in Sagala, incorporating SWOT analysis helps identify the strengths and weaknesses within education while simultaneously monitoring the opportunities and challenges it faces. SWOT analysis constitutes one stage in strategic management, representing an environmental analysis approach. The assessment process of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats typically references the business world as a SWOT analysis.

SWOT analysis provides educational decision-makers with information to lay the foundation for decision-making and actions. If applied effectively, these decisions can enable education to achieve its goals. Environmental analysis involves studying the "strengths" and "weaknesses" as internal elements and the "opportunities" and "challenges" as external elements of education, both present and potentially emerging in the future, as data/materials for establishing and preparing for future strategic educational planning. Environmental analysis consists of two elements: external environmental analysis and internal environmental analysis (educational analysis) in the form of internal educational potentials. External environmental analysis involves identifying and evaluating social, cultural, political, economic, and technological aspects and trends that may affect education. These trends are often factors that are difficult to predict or have a high degree of uncertainty. The outcome of external environmental analysis is a set of opportunities that education must exploit and threats that must be prevented or avoided. Internal environmental analysis involves determining a realistic perception of all the strengths and weaknesses education possesses.

SWOT analysis in educational administration can assist in allocating resources such as budgets, facilities, human resources, educational facilities, environmental potential, and more effectively (Ariawan, 2023). SWOT analysis in educational programs can be conducted by creating a SWOT matrix. This matrix consists of cells listing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the implementation of educational programs. To achieve educational quality, strategies such as SO (using strengths and exploiting opportunities), WO (improving weaknesses and taking advantage of opportunities), ST (using strengths and avoiding threats), and WT (overcoming weaknesses and avoiding threats) can be implemented. When considering the external environment of education, steps or efforts to gather relevant information systematically and evaluate it are necessary. This information can then be used to consider further policy determinations. SWOT analysis allows education to exploit future opportunities while combating challenges and issues and making strategic discoveries in competencies and specific strengths. The entire strategic management process conceptually becomes a SWOT analysis. This is because a SWOT

analysis may suggest other changes in the mission, objectives, policies, and educational strategies.

By utilizing effective strategic planning, it becomes possible to find the intersection between three essential elements. In this regard, questions that need to be answered include: "Is the vision/mission of education clear?" "Does the vision/mission align with what is needed and required by stakeholders, especially the consumers being served?" "Does education have sufficient resources and capabilities to carry out what is needed?" If not, how can this be addressed? Available opportunities may not always support existing visions/missions. If there are points of intersection, education can indeed create a very advantageous and satisfying strategy. Miles and Snow, as cited in Theresia, define the intersection point as a process, an assertion, namely, a dynamic investigation that attempts to integrate or merge education with its environment and to arrange internal resources to support that integration. In practical terms, the integration mechanism underlying this is strategy, while internal arrangements are education structure and management processes. This concept is still macroscopic because further analysis is needed to determine where the mutually beneficial and alleviating factors intersect. The intersection point should not be narrowly understood but in the sense of suitability and compatibility between strategic factors, namely between external factors, internal factors, and the vision/mission of education. This concept of the intersection point will never be perfect due to fluctuating changes in the environment.

To become a successful educational institution in the effort to improve educational quality, many things need to be done to achieve this. One of them can be seen from the achievement of the average national exam scores over three consecutive years, which have consistently increased, as well as the achievements obtained, both academically and non-academically. The development of strategies for analyzing education involves two activities:

- a. Identifying the strategies used by education now in relation to the educational environment by questioning the basis of assumptions and predictions of the environment that form the basis of current strategies.
- b. Predicting the future environment by questioning the basis of assumptions and predictions of the environment that will form the basis of future strategies. The rapid development of science and technology today and the increasingly conducive economic and security conditions need to be addressed together by educational stakeholders.

Christian Religious Education (CRE) can be developed through the perspectives of experts in Christian Religious Education. G. Homrighausen stated, "Christian Religious Education is rooted in the fellowship of God's people. In the Old Testament, fundamentally, the foundations are found in ancient sacred history, that Christian Religious Education begins since the calling of Abraham as the ancestor of God's chosen people, even resting on God himself because God becomes a learner for his people."

1. Warner C. Graedorf defines CRE as "The teaching and learning process based on the Bible, centered on Christ, and dependent on the Holy Spirit, guiding each individual

at all levels of growth through present-day teaching towards the understanding and experience of God's plan and will through Christ in every aspect of life, and equipping them for effective ministry, centered on Christ the Great Teacher and the command that matures disciples."

2. Hieronimus (345-420) stated that CRE aims to educate souls to become the temple of God (Matthew 5:48).
3. Augustine (345-430) stated that CRE aims to teach people to "see God" and "live happily."
4. Martin Luther (1483-1548) stated that CRE is education that involves congregation members in orderly and disciplined learning to become increasingly aware of their sins and rejoice in the Word of Jesus Christ that liberates.
5. His glory as a symbol of their gratitude who are chosen in Jesus Christ.

Meanwhile, the objectives of CRE can be observed through the views of Reformation figures such as Martin Luther and Calvin (Grudem, 2016).

- a. Marthen Luther, in Boehlke (2002:340), states that the aim of Christian education according to Martin Luther is to involve all congregation members, especially the young, in orderly and disciplined learning to become increasingly aware of their sins and rejoice in the Word of Jesus Christ that liberates them, while also equipping them with sources of faith, especially prayer experiences, written Word, the Bible, and various cultures, so that they are able to serve others, including society and the state, responsibly in the Christian fellowship, namely the Church.
- b. John Calvin (1509-1664) stated that CRE aims to educate all sons and daughters of the church so that they: Engage in intelligent study of the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Participate in worship and understand the unity of the church, Be equipped to choose ways to manifest devotion to God the Father and Jesus Christ in their daily work and live responsibly under God's sovereignty.
- c. J.M. Nainggolan stated that the main objective of CRE is to bring learners to experience a meeting with Christ, to love God sincerely, to live in obedience, and to be able to practice their faith in daily life. The standard term in Indonesia for this is Christian Religious Education (CRE).
- d. Government Regulation Number 55 of 2007 Objective of CRE: a. To produce individuals who can understand the love of God in Jesus Christ and love God and others. b. To produce Indonesians who can live out their faith responsibly and have noble character in a pluralistic society. Christian Religious Education in education is presented in two aspects, namely the aspect of the Triune God and His Work, and the aspect of Christian Values. Holistically, the development of Core Competencies and Competencies.

Then the Function of Christian Religious Education as a means, method, foundation, guide, and technique for teaching, innovating, integrating, educating, facilitating, and transferring knowledge, understanding, and skills of Christianity. Furthermore, CRE functions as a means to facilitate the knowledge, understanding, and skills of recognizing God through his work, facilitate encounters with God, facilitate understanding so that those who participate

in CRE are able to realize faith values in the form of social responsibility both in the family and in society (Pakpahan, et al., 2021).

The importance of SWOT analysis in Christian Religious Education (CRE) encompasses several aspects:

Strengths in Content Standards include a commitment to implementing curriculum based on BSNP standards, enhancing the quality of graduates based on national exams (UN), and providing enrichment for students. Local content includes ICT development and personal development provided through counseling guidance, skill development clubs (such as theater, scouting, etc.).

Weaknesses in Content Standards involve the curriculum framework still using minimal standards from BSNP (lacking improvement and development), KKM (minimum completeness criteria) for each field of study not all aligned with BSNP standards, teacher teaching loads not all meeting BSNP requirements (24 hours), and frequent changes in lesson schedules during ongoing learning processes.

Strengths in Process Standards include complete teaching tools for each field of study, conducting workshops at the beginning of each academic year for the development of teaching tools (syllabus, lesson plans, assessment systems), adequate learning facilities (books, classrooms, libraries, etc.), varied and increased use of CRE learning resources, CRE teachers allocating time according to the semester program, enrichment programs implemented in all fields of study with supervision regulations in place.

Weaknesses in Process Standards involve incomplete CRE learning media, not all students being able to develop themselves according to talents and interests, some teachers lacking ICT competencies, suboptimal use of available teaching media by teachers, absence of standardized teaching and learning processes, suboptimal role of committees in developing teaching and learning standards, suboptimal implementation of student learning result reports every two months, and inadequate socialization of KBM supervision rules to students.

Competency Achievement Standards, Strengths: Exam material specifications are jointly developed by the CRE subject teacher team at the school, efforts to improve the quality of learning outcomes and competency achievements.

Competency Learning Standards, Weaknesses: Assessing student character and learning achievements.

Education and Personnel Standards, Strengths: Examining the strengths of CRE teacher competencies and supporting education personnel in the CRE learning process. Also, researching weaknesses including teacher and educational staff achievements, approaches, strategies, methods, and techniques used by teachers and educational staff.

Management Standards to be analyzed through SWOT involve strengths in education management, the use of media and CRE learning facilities. Weaknesses are assessed based

on whether an appropriate learning system has been found in CRE, the implementation of remedial actions, and learning strategies.

Assessment Standards analyze the strengths and benefits of monthly and semester evaluations in CRE learning, whether they adhere to accreditation systems, are fair, and are appropriate for the development of CRE students.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the SWOT analysis plays a significant role in the context of Christian Religious Education (CRE). This analysis aids in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses within the process of CRE learning. Through SWOT analysis, areas requiring improvement in CRE learning can be identified. Therefore, to achieve significant progress, CRE must adhere systematically to the rules, structures, and educational criteria established in accordance with relevant educational management. Thus, the SWOT analysis provides a robust foundation for continuous improvement and development in the CRE learning process.

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