

## Pedagogical Perseverance and Resilience in Christian Religious Education: An Exegetical Study of Matthew 5:10-12 at SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame

Inovali Rajagukguk

Pendidikan Profesi Guru, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

\* correspondence: [inovali19rajagukguk@gmail.com](mailto:inovali19rajagukguk@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the significance of pedagogical perseverance and resilience among Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers through an exegetical and educational analysis of Matthew 5:10-12 within the contextual setting of SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame, where one CRE teacher serves 32 Christian students. As rural schools often operate with limited resources, high teacher workload, and complex socio-emotional demands, CRE teachers must sustain long-term commitment grounded in spiritual conviction and pedagogical adaptability. This research adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as its primary methodological foundation, synthesizing scholarly works on teacher resilience, faith-based pedagogy, spiritual formation, and biblical ethics. A brief complementary interview with the local CRE teacher provides contextual insight into lived experiences, challenges, and coping strategies. Exegetical analysis of Matthew 5:10-12 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake" reveals a theological framework in which perseverance is understood not merely as endurance but as faithful participation in God's mission despite adversity. The findings indicate that resilient CRE teachers consistently cultivate spiritual disciplines, maintain a strong sense of vocational calling, and embody Christ-centered virtues that sustain their pedagogical commitment. The study also shows that resilience emerges through adaptive teaching strategies, relational care, and the ability to transform challenges into opportunities for deeper learning and character formation. Additionally, school culture and community support significantly influence the teacher's capacity to persevere. The study concludes that integrating biblical conviction, spiritual maturity, and reflective pedagogy equips CRE teachers to navigate adversity with joy and purpose, fostering a transformative learning environment that shapes students' faith, character, and moral courage.*

**Keywords:** *Pedagogical Perseverance, Christian Religious Education, Resilience*

### INTRODUCTION

The formation of perseverance and resilience within Christian Religious Education (CRE) has become increasingly important in contemporary pedagogical discourse, particularly in contexts where Christian learners must navigate complex cultural, social, and moral

pressures. As global and local societies shift toward rapid digitalization, heightened competitiveness, and growing individualism, students face significant challenges that require not only academic competencies but also spiritual strength, emotional stability, and ethical steadfastness. Within this landscape, the teacher of Christian Religious Education plays a critical role as a spiritual mentor who embodies and nurtures perseverance grounded in biblical faith. Pedagogical perseverance, defined as the teacher's capacity to teach consistently, patiently, and faithfully despite obstacles, is an essential component for shaping students' spiritual resilience. This competence becomes even more crucial in rural school environments where resources are limited, Christian community support varies, and teachers often serve multiple roles in guiding students' growth.

SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame in Samosir, a region deeply rooted in Batak Christian tradition, presents a unique educational context for exploring pedagogical perseverance. The school has 32 Christian students and one Christian Religious Education teacher who bears the primary responsibility for building students' spiritual understanding and moral character. With only one teacher serving as both an instructor and a pastoral figure, the task of cultivating resilience in students requires intentional pedagogical strategies as well as profound spiritual commitment. In such settings, the teacher's perseverance does not merely reflect professional discipline; it becomes an embodiment of Christian discipleship expressed through teaching. The challenges encountered, ranging from limited learning resources, diverse student abilities, socioeconomic pressures, and varying levels of parental involvement, necessitate a pedagogy shaped by endurance, hope, and unwavering dedication. Matthew 5:10-12 offers a rich theological foundation for understanding perseverance and resilience in Christian education. As part of the Beatitudes, these verses highlight the blessing bestowed upon those who endure persecution for the sake of righteousness. Jesus teaches, *"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* Exegetically, the phrase "persecuted because of righteousness" (*diōkomenoi heneka dikaiosynēs*) emphasizes the virtue of remaining steadfast in moral integrity despite facing hardship. For educators, this theological framework illuminates the spiritual dimension of perseverance: remaining faithful to one's teaching mission even when confronted by resistance, discouragement, and limitations. The call to "rejoice and be glad" in verse 12 invites believers to reinterpret trials as opportunities for spiritual growth and deeper reliance on God. When applied pedagogically, these teachings suggest that resilience in educational contexts is not merely psychological endurance but a faith-driven commitment to nurturing God's truth in students.

Christian education literature increasingly affirms that resilience is not only taught through curriculum but is formed through modeling. Students are more likely to develop persistence, hope, and moral courage when they observe these virtues consistently embodied by their teachers. A Christian teacher who demonstrates emotional stability, calmness under pressure, and a steadfast commitment to teaching the gospel becomes a living example of the Beatitudes in action. Within the context of SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame, where the lone CRE teacher serves as a central figure in students' spiritual development, such modeling is indispensable. The teacher's perseverance directly influences students'

capacity to confront difficulties in learning, interpersonal relationships, and personal faith. The integration of Matthew 5:10-12 into the pedagogical framework of Christian Religious Education provides a compelling lens for examining perseverance and resilience. The Beatitudes articulate a theological vision of endurance that is deeply relevant to the educational challenges faced in rural Indonesian schools. By exploring these biblical teachings alongside the lived experiences of the CRE teacher at SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame, this study aims to contribute to the understanding of how exegetical insight can inform pedagogical practice. The analysis highlights that perseverance in Christian education is not only a professional competency but a spiritual calling, one that shape students into resilient, faithful, and morally grounded individuals.

## **METHODS**

A qualitative research design rooted in a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as the primary methodological approach, complemented by limited semi-structured interviews was implemented to provide contextual grounding. The SLR method was selected to construct a robust theoretical and theological framework on pedagogical perseverance, resilience, and biblical interpretations of Matthew 5:10-12 within Christian Religious Education (CRE). Considering the rural educational context of SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame, where one Christian Religious Education teacher serves 32 Christian students, the qualitative SLR approach enabled a comprehensive synthesis of existing scholarship while allowing the integration of lived experiences through interview data. In the identification stage, academic databases were searched using combinations of keywords. The search was limited to publications within the last 10-15 years to ensure relevance, although foundational theological works were included when necessary to support exegetical analysis. A total of 156 sources were initially identified. In the screening stage, publications that were duplicated, lacked peer review, or were unrelated to Christian pedagogical contexts were excluded. After applying inclusion criteria, peer-reviewed status, relevance to biblical pedagogy, explicit discussion on perseverance or resilience, and connection to Christian teaching, 43 sources remained for full-text analysis. These sources were then reviewed in-depth, focusing on theoretical models of resilience, ministerial endurance, teacher vocation, and exegetical interpretations of the Beatitudes. Special attention was given to works addressing moral courage, spiritual formation, and the impact of teacher character on student development. To complement the SLR, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the sole PAK teacher at SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame and two Christian students representing different grade levels. The interviews served a supporting function, providing lived experiences, classroom realities, and examples of pedagogical perseverance that could not be captured through literature alone. Interview questions focused on the teacher's experiences with instructional challenges, emotional and spiritual resilience, strategies for nurturing student perseverance, and reflections on the meaning of Matthew 5:10-12 in daily teaching. Student interviews explored their perceptions of the teacher's resilience, encouragement during difficulties, and how spiritual values were integrated into learning. This allowed for a strengthened interpretation of how perseverance and resilience manifest in the specific school context and ensured that the exegetical findings were grounded in practical educational realities. Ethical considerations were upheld by obtaining informed consent, ensuring anonymity, and preserving confidentiality. This combined SLR-interview method

provided a comprehensive and multilayered understanding of pedagogical perseverance and resilience in Christian Religious Education, integrating global scholarship with contextual evidence from SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion of this study, which primarily synthesizes evidence from a systematic literature review (SLR) and supplements that synthesis with brief, context-specific interview data from SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame in Samosir, reveal a coherent and multi-layered picture of how pedagogical perseverance and resilience are conceptualized, enacted, and experienced in Christian Religious Education (CRE) when interpreted through the theological lens of Matthew 5:10-12. Across the body of literature analyzed in the SLR, three recurrent clusters emerge that are particularly salient: the theological grounding of endurance as a formative virtue, the pedagogical practices that operationalize resilience in constrained educational environments, and the psychosocial and institutional factors that either support or undermine sustained teacher perseverance. Matthew 5:10-12 frames perseverance not simply as secular grit but as a vocationally charged endurance embedded within the Beatitudinal ethic: those who are “persecuted for righteousness’ sake” are declared blessed, and are invited to interpret hardship as an occasion for rejoicing because of the transcendent reward and God’s sustaining presence. This theological framing shapes the way Christian educators who participated in or are represented in the literature narrate their professional identity: teaching becomes a form of discipleship in which trials are integrated into meaning and mission rather than merely obstacles to be eliminated. The SLR demonstrates that when resilience is understood as an expression of faith, rooted in biblical promises and communal spiritual practices, teachers are more likely to reinterpret adversity as opportunities for pedagogical creativity, moral witness, and deeper relational ministry. The interview with the lone PAK teacher at SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame affirmed this pattern in a local, concrete way: the teacher described recurring challenges, scarcity of teaching materials, multitasking across grade levels, administrative burdens, and occasional social pressure in a pluralistic local context, but consistently narrated these challenges within a framework of vocation, prayerful reflection, and the conviction that faithful endurance matters for the spiritual formation of the thirty-two Christian students in his care. This confluence between global literature and local testimony suggests that theological reframing functions as a significant psychological and motivational resource that helps teachers sustain engagement over time. Putting theology into conversation with pedagogical practice, the synthesized findings reveal several practical modalities through which perseverance is enacted in CRE classrooms. Adaptive lesson design emerges as a pervasive strategy: resilient teachers plan lessons that are intentionally flexible, modular, and oriented to multiple learning pathways so that they can pivot when resources or time are constrained. In the SLR, educators with high resilience routinely used storytelling, role-play, community-linked examples, memory-work, and small-group peer learning as means to maintain continuity of learning when conventional resources were absent. The PAK teacher at Huta Dame echoed this repertoire, reporting frequent use of oral narratives, local cultural analogies, and student-led dramatizations to translate Beatitudinal themes into palpable experiences for children whose primary cognitive

modalities often favor story and praxis over abstract lecture. Relational pedagogy is highlighted repeatedly: perseverance is not solitary but social; resilient teachers cultivate mutual trust, model appropriate vulnerability, and mobilize informal support networks, parents, church volunteers, and other teachers, to buffer stressors and sustain programmatic continuity. The data indicate that teachers who invest relationally in students and their families often receive reciprocal moral and logistical support, which in turn reinforces the teacher's capacity to continue faithful instruction. Reflective spiritual practice surfaces as a critical sustaining mechanism: personal disciplines such as prayer, scripture meditation, spiritual journaling, and participation in local worship communities were consistently associated with lower burnout scores and higher job satisfaction in the empirical literature, and the interviewed teacher confirmed that regular devotional rhythms provide not only consolation but ethical clarity when curriculum and policy pressures might otherwise push pedagogy toward mere compliance or technicalism. These practices anchor teachers' sense of meaning, reorient attention from short-term frustrations to long-term mission, and therefore support steady pedagogical perseverance. Fourth, professional intentionality, understood as the capacity to articulate clear aims for moral formation, to sequence learning experiences toward character outcomes, and to align assessment practices with spiritual goals, distinguishes resilient practitioners. The SLR finds that teachers who conceptualize CRE as integrative formation rather than discrete knowledge transmission are more likely to persist through difficulty because their goals are relational, identity-focused, and resistant to purely instrumental metrics. At Huta Dame, the PAK teacher's lesson plans and interview responses demonstrate this integrative vision: lessons are designed not merely to transmit Bible content but to cultivate practical dispositions—courage, compassion, integrity—that correspond to the Beatitudes' ethic. The conjoined evidence therefore suggests that perseverance in CRE is pedagogically productive when it is disciplined by intentionality and integrated with an overarching moral telos. However, the study also surfaces structural and contextual constraints that complicate sustained resilience. The literature reviewed highlights recurrent systemic issues, insufficient professional development tailored to faith-based pedagogy, limited access to culturally appropriate instructional materials, heavy administrative loads that reduce planning time, and policy ambivalence in secular educational systems that can create tension for teachers whose convictions inform their pedagogy. These constraints were not merely theoretical in the Huta Dame context: the interviewed teacher reported that time devoted to administrative reporting, national testing preparation, and non-teaching duties often infringes on the capacity to prepare spiritually rich, contextually adapted lessons. The social ecology of a public school in a pluralistic setting sometimes generates subtle pressures to minimize overtly confessional content; navigating this constraint requires pedagogical discretion, teachers must hold to doctrinal integrity while also exercising cultural sensitivity and legal awareness. The SLR underscores that resilience under such conditions depends both on internal resources (faith, reflective practice) and on external scaffolds (institutional recognition, peer networks, and material support). The discussion thus moves to implications for practice and policy: one implication is the need for targeted professional learning opportunities that combine pedagogical skill-building with theological reflection. Resilience is not simply a private virtue to be cultivated through personal piety; it can be fostered systematically by in-service programs that provide teachers with tools for

adaptive lesson design, community-based resource mobilization, reflective supervision, and strategies for culturally appropriate faith integration. Another implication concerns the role of church-school partnerships: literature and the local case both suggest that cooperative arrangements, volunteer mentoring, shared resource banks, and mutual care networks, substantially mitigate the isolating effects of single-teacher responsibilities in rural schools. At the level of curriculum design, the findings support embedding themes of perseverance and spiritual resilience into learning outcomes, so that students and teachers co-construct a culture where enduring for righteousness' sake is normalized and pedagogically supported rather than imposed ad hoc. Theoretically, this study contributes to an integrative model that situates pedagogical perseverance at the intersection of theology, vocational identity, and adaptive pedagogical competence: Matthew 5:10-12 supplies the normative horizon that motivates endurance; reflective spiritual practices supply the intrapersonal capacities that regulate affect and preserve purpose; and contextualized pedagogy operationalizes perseverance in the classroom through concrete routines, relational strategies, and locally relevant content. Importantly, the combined SLR and interview data suggest that perseverance yields discernible educational goods: students in settings where teachers consistently reproduce this integration tend to exhibit higher levels of moral courage, perseverance in learning tasks, and a willingness to engage in prosocial behaviors under peer pressure-outcomes reported across multiple studies and echoed in informal testimonies from students at Huta Dame. The analysis acknowledges limitations and calls for further research: the SLR, while comprehensive, privileges published scholarship and may under-represent grassroots practices that are not documented formally; the interview component was intentionally limited and therefore cannot supply broad generalizability about local practices; future mixed-methods and longitudinal research should investigate causal linkages between teacher resilience training, specific pedagogical interventions, and measurable student outcomes over time. By triangulating exegetical insight, synthesized scholarship, and local testimony, the present study offers a robust, practice-oriented account of how pedagogical perseverance and resilience operate within CRE and how Matthew 5:10-12 can be read not only as a text of consolation for teachers but as a strategic resource for shaping resilient, formation-centered pedagogy in contexts like SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame, where one committed teacher's endurance has disproportionate influence on the spiritual formation of a small but significant community of learners.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that pedagogical perseverance and resilience in Christian Religious Education (CRE) are deeply shaped by the theological vision of Matthew 5:10-12, which frames endurance not merely as coping with difficulty but as faithful participation in God's redemptive mission. By integrating insights from a systematic literature review with contextual interview data from SD Negeri 2 Huta Dame, the research shows that resilience in CRE is sustained through an interplay of biblical conviction, vocational identity, adaptive pedagogy, and relational commitment. The Beatitudes provide a spiritual grammar that reorients teachers to view challenges, whether resource limitations, administrative pressures, or socio-religious tensions, as meaningful opportunities for witness, character formation, and pedagogical creativity

rather than as threats to professional identity. The findings affirm that resilient PAK teachers consistently anchor their pedagogical practices in spiritual disciplines such as prayer, biblical reflection, and communal worship. These practices cultivate emotional stability, ethical clarity, and long-term purpose, enabling teachers to respond constructively to pressures that might otherwise lead to discouragement or burnout. Moreover, the research underscores that resilient pedagogy is inherently adaptive: teachers design flexible lessons, integrate culturally grounded illustrations, and mobilize supportive networks to maintain the continuity and integrity of learning. In rural contexts such as Huta Dame, where one PAK teacher carries significant spiritual and instructional responsibility, this adaptability becomes a critical determinant of sustained student engagement. At the same time, the study recognizes that external structures, school leadership, community partnerships, resource availability, and policy environments, either strengthen or hinder perseverance. Therefore, supporting teacher resilience requires not only personal spiritual formation but also institutional scaffolding. Schools, churches, and educational authorities should collaborate to provide formative professional development, accessible teaching resources, and relational support systems that empower teachers to embody the Beatitudinal vision of courageous, joyful endurance. This study concludes that pedagogical perseverance and resilience in CRE flourish when teachers internalize the biblical promise that faithfulness amid adversity is seen, honored, and sustained by God. Such conviction not only strengthens the teacher's inner life but also shapes a learning environment where students witness a lived example of steadfast faith, an example that forms their character, nurtures their moral courage, and prepares them to persevere in their own journeys of discipleship.

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