



## **Pedagogical Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Teaching Obedience: A Reflective Study of Exodus 39:42-43 at SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study investigates the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in teaching obedience through a reflective analysis of Exodus 39:42-43 within the educational context of SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir. The passage emphasizes Israel's faithful compliance with God's commands in constructing the tabernacle, culminating in Moses' blessing. This research seeks to determine how the pedagogical competence of the CRE teacher contributes to students' understanding of obedience as a theological and practical virtue. Using a quantitative descriptive method with a correlational approach, the study involved all 10 Christian students enrolled at the school as respondents. Data were collected through a structured Likert-scale questionnaire measuring two variables: teacher pedagogical competence and students' comprehension of obedience in Exodus 39:42-43. The instrument was validated by educational experts and tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Descriptive statistics and Pearson Product-Moment correlation were employed to analyze the data. The findings indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between the teacher's pedagogical competence and students' understanding of obedience. Students demonstrated stronger conceptual and applicative comprehension when instruction was characterized by clear lesson planning, contextualized biblical interpretation, interactive teaching strategies, and formative feedback. The results suggest that effective pedagogy functions as a mediating bridge between biblical text and character formation, enabling learners to interpret obedience not merely as passive compliance but as intentional faithfulness expressed in daily school life. This study concludes that strengthening pedagogical competence among CRE teachers is essential for cultivating theological literacy and moral development, particularly within minority Christian learning contexts.*

**Keywords:** *Pedagogical Competence, Christian Religious Education, Obedience*

## INTRODUCTION

Obedience is a central theological motif in the Old Testament, particularly within the covenantal framework that structures Israel's relationship with God. In Exodus 39:42-43, the narrative records that the Israelites completed the tabernacle "just as the Lord had commanded Moses," and Moses inspected the work, blessing them upon confirming their faithful compliance. The text emphasizes precision, attentiveness, and wholehearted adherence to divine instruction. Obedience in this context is not passive submission but active, disciplined participation in God's redemptive plan. According to Brevard S. Childs (1974), the tabernacle narrative underscores Israel's vocation to embody covenant faithfulness through concrete acts of conformity to God's revealed will. Likewise, Terence E. Fretheim (1991) argues that obedience in Exodus is relational rather than mechanical; it reflects trust in God's presence dwelling among His people. Within Christian Religious Education (CRE), teaching obedience involves more than transferring doctrinal content. It requires cultivating disciplined character, moral responsibility, and spiritual attentiveness among learners. In pedagogical discourse, competence refers to the integrated ability to plan instruction, implement effective strategies, assess learning outcomes, and adapt teaching to contextual needs. Lee S. Shulman (1987) introduced the concept of pedagogical content knowledge, emphasizing that effective teaching demands mastery not only of subject matter but of the methods required to communicate it meaningfully. In the context of CRE, pedagogical competence includes the ability to interpret biblical texts accurately, contextualize them for contemporary learners, and design instructional experiences that shape both cognition and character. The importance of teacher competence in shaping student learning outcomes has been consistently affirmed in educational research. John Hattie (2009), through meta-analytic synthesis, identifies teacher effectiveness as one of the most influential factors in student achievement. While Hattie's work broadly addresses academic performance, its implications extend to faith-based instruction, where the teacher's clarity, feedback, and relational engagement directly affect value internalization. In Christian education, obedience must be framed not as authoritarian control but as faithful response to divine initiative. Therefore, the pedagogical approach employed by the CRE teacher significantly influences whether students perceive obedience as joyful covenant participation or burdensome regulation.

At SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir, the context of this study, Christian students represent a minority within a broader public school environment. The school includes 10 Christian students and 3 Christian teachers, including the CRE teacher. Such a setting presents unique pedagogical challenges. Teaching obedience in a pluralistic public institution requires sensitivity, clarity, and contextual adaptation. The CRE teacher must design learning experiences that respect institutional diversity while remaining faithful to biblical theology. In this context, Exodus 39:42-43 offers a constructive paradigm: obedience expressed through careful, responsible work that results in communal blessing. Research often concentrates on administrative, professional, or social competence. Pedagogical competence, particularly in relation to biblical character formation, remains less thoroughly examined in empirical studies. This gap is significant because pedagogy mediates theology. A teacher may possess strong doctrinal understanding, yet without effective instructional design and classroom strategy, the transformative intent of the text

may not reach students. The tabernacle narrative illustrates a process-oriented obedience: instructions are received, executed with precision, evaluated, and affirmed. Such a pattern parallels the instructional cycle in education, planning, implementation, assessment, and feedback. This study seeks to analyze the pedagogical competence of the CRE teacher in teaching obedience through a reflective examination of Exodus 39:42–43 at SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir, Kotawaringin Timur. By involving 10 Christian students and considering the collaborative presence of 3 Christian teachers, the research aims to explore how instructional planning, classroom strategy, assessment practice, and feedback mechanisms influence students' understanding of obedience as covenant faithfulness. Ultimately, this study contributes to the academic discourse on Christian pedagogy by demonstrating that obedience, when taught through sound pedagogical competence, becomes a formative dimension of holistic character education rather than a mere doctrinal abstraction.

## METHODS

A quantitative descriptive design with a correlational approach was used to examine the relationship between the pedagogical competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher and students' understanding of obedience as reflected in Exodus 39:42-43 at SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir. A quantitative approach was selected because it enables systematic measurement of instructional variables and statistical analysis of the association between teacher competence and student learning outcomes (Creswell, 2014). The correlational design was considered appropriate to determine whether and to what extent the pedagogical competence demonstrated by the CRE teacher is associated with students' cognitive and moral comprehension of biblical obedience. The population of the study consisted of 10 Christian students enrolled in the school during the academic year in which the research was conducted. Given the small and manageable population size, total sampling was applied, meaning that all 10 students participated as respondents. Although the school includes 3 Christian teachers (including the CRE teacher), the primary data source was the students, since the research objective was to assess students' perceptions of the teacher's pedagogical competence and their own understanding of obedience in Exodus 39:42-43. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire constructed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The instrument consisted of two principal variables. The first variable measured the pedagogical competence of the CRE teacher, including indicators such as lesson planning clarity, alignment between objectives and activities, use of varied instructional strategies, classroom management effectiveness, clarity of explanation, contextualization of biblical content, use of formative assessment, and provision of constructive feedback. These indicators were formulated based on established pedagogical theory and teacher competence frameworks (Shulman, 1987; Mulyasa, 2013). The second variable measured students' understanding of obedience in Exodus 39:42-43, including their ability to explain the narrative context of the tabernacle construction, interpret obedience as faithful adherence to God's command, distinguish between voluntary covenant obedience and forced compliance, and apply the concept of obedience in daily school life. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by two experts in Christian Religious Education and educational methodology. A limited pilot test was conducted with students

outside the research sample to evaluate clarity of wording and internal consistency. Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or above considered acceptable for social science research (Creswell, 2014). Data collection was conducted during scheduled CRE instructional time with formal approval from the school administration. Students completed the questionnaire anonymously to encourage honest responses and minimize social desirability bias. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine mean scores and standard deviations for each variable. Inferential analysis was conducted using Pearson Product-Moment correlation to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between pedagogical competence and students' understanding of obedience. Statistical significance was tested at the 0.05 level. Through this methodological procedure, the study sought to generate empirical evidence regarding how pedagogical competence functions as a mediating factor in shaping students' theological and moral comprehension of obedience within the CRE classroom context.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the pedagogical competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher at SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir significantly contributes to students' understanding of obedience as reflected in Exodus 39:42-43. Based on descriptive statistical analysis of responses from the 10 Christian students involved through total sampling, the overall mean score for the pedagogical competence variable was categorized in the high range. Students generally perceived that the CRE teacher prepared lessons systematically, explained biblical material clearly, connected scriptural narratives with daily life, used varied instructional strategies, and provided feedback that helped them understand mistakes constructively. Although the sample size was relatively small, the consistency of responses across multiple indicators suggests a stable perception pattern. This indicates that pedagogical competence in this context is not incidental but operationally visible in classroom practice. Several indicators within the pedagogical competence variable deserve closer analysis. Students rated highly the clarity of learning objectives and the structured progression of lessons. They reported that before discussing Exodus 39:42-43, the teacher explained the broader narrative of the tabernacle construction and its theological significance within Israel's covenant journey. This sequencing reflects effective lesson planning, where historical context precedes doctrinal emphasis. The pedagogical implication is significant: when students understand the narrative framework, obedience is interpreted as covenant participation rather than isolated moral command. In Exodus 39:42-43, the Israelites complete their work "just as the Lord had commanded Moses," and Moses inspects and blesses their obedience. The CRE teacher's structured approach enabled students to perceive this obedience as communal faithfulness expressed through careful workmanship.

The use of varied instructional strategies also received strong agreement. Students indicated that the teacher employed storytelling, guided questioning, group discussion, and short reflective exercises rather than relying solely on lecture. This diversity of methods appears to have supported differentiated learning styles. In elementary education, particularly with a small class of 10 students, interactive strategies can

significantly enhance engagement. The results show that students who felt actively involved in the lesson demonstrated stronger comprehension of obedience as voluntary faithfulness. Pedagogically, this supports the view that instructional variation fosters deeper cognitive processing. Instead of perceiving obedience as rigid rule-following, students interpreted it as deliberate and responsible action undertaken with understanding. The clarity of explanation emerged as another highly rated component. Students reported that the teacher explained key theological terms, such as “command,” “blessing,” and “faithfulness,” in age-appropriate language. In Exodus 39:42–43, obedience results in Moses’ blessing, signifying divine approval mediated through leadership. The teacher reportedly emphasized that obedience is relational—it strengthens trust between God and His people. By simplifying complex theological concepts without reducing their meaning, the teacher demonstrated effective pedagogical content knowledge. This competency allowed students to connect ancient Israelite practices with contemporary experiences, such as completing school assignments responsibly or following classroom agreements willingly. On the dependent variable, students’ understanding of obedience also showed a high overall mean score. Most respondents were able to describe the narrative context of Exodus 39:42-43 accurately. They recognized that the Israelites followed God’s detailed instructions in constructing the tabernacle and that Moses verified their work. Importantly, students demonstrated awareness that obedience in this text is not blind compliance but attentive, careful execution of entrusted tasks. Several questionnaire items measuring interpretive understanding—such as distinguishing between forced obedience and willing obedience—received positive agreement. This suggests that the pedagogical process facilitated conceptual differentiation. Students learned to distinguish obedience grounded in fear from obedience grounded in trust. Inferential analysis using Pearson Product-Moment correlation revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between pedagogical competence and students’ understanding of obedience. The correlation coefficient indicated a moderate-to-strong association, meaning that higher perceptions of teacher pedagogical competence corresponded with higher levels of theological comprehension. While the small sample size limits generalizability, the statistical significance within this context suggests meaningful internal consistency. This finding aligns with broader educational research asserting that instructional clarity, feedback quality, and structured lesson design are directly related to student learning outcomes. In this case, the data demonstrate that effective pedagogy influences not only cognitive retention but moral interpretation.

Regression analysis further indicated that pedagogical competence contributed substantially to variance in students’ understanding of obedience. Although other influences, such as family religious background, church participation, and personal disposition, undoubtedly affect comprehension, the classroom instructional process appears to play a decisive role. The CRE teacher’s ability to align lesson objectives, teaching strategies, and assessment practices created a coherent learning environment in which biblical obedience could be explored systematically. This coherence mirrors the structure of Exodus 39:42-43 itself, where instruction, execution, inspection, and blessing form a unified sequence. The parallel between narrative structure and pedagogical design likely reinforced students’ internalization of the theme. Another notable finding concerns

formative assessment and feedback. Students indicated that after discussing obedience, the teacher provided reflective questions and short written exercises that encouraged personal application. Feedback was described as constructive rather than punitive. When students misunderstood aspects of the text, the teacher clarified rather than reprimanded. This approach models obedience as growth-oriented rather than fear-based. In the biblical narrative, Moses inspects the work and blesses the people; similarly, the teacher's evaluative process culminated in affirmation rather than condemnation. Such pedagogical mirroring strengthens thematic coherence between content and method. The contextual setting of SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir adds further interpretive depth. As a public elementary school in Kotawaringin Timur with only 10 Christian students and 3 Christian teachers (including the CRE teacher), the CRE classroom represents a minority faith context within a broader pluralistic institution. Teaching obedience in such a setting requires careful framing to avoid perceptions of exclusivism or authoritarianism. The findings suggest that the CRE teacher successfully framed obedience as disciplined responsibility rather than rigid control. Students agreed that obedience involves fulfilling commitments faithfully and contributing positively to community life. This interpretation aligns with civic educational goals and demonstrates pedagogical sensitivity to the broader institutional environment.

The high student agreement regarding the application of obedience to daily school responsibilities is particularly noteworthy. Many respondents indicated that after studying Exodus 39:42-43, they felt motivated to complete assignments accurately, follow classroom agreements voluntarily, and respect school rules not merely out of obligation but as expressions of integrity. This indicates transfer of theological concept to behavioral intention. Pedagogical competence appears to have facilitated this transfer by connecting biblical narrative with practical scenarios familiar to elementary learners. Without contextualization, obedience might remain an abstract virtue; with contextualization, it becomes actionable discipline. The discussion also reveals that students valued opportunities to participate in question-and-answer sessions. They reported feeling comfortable asking why detailed obedience was necessary in the tabernacle narrative. The teacher reportedly explained that precision symbolized reverence for God's presence. This dialogical engagement strengthened comprehension by addressing potential misconceptions. Obedience was not presented as arbitrary rule enforcement but as meaningful response to divine initiative. Such clarification reflects high pedagogical awareness of student cognitive development and conceptual curiosity.

While the overall results are positive, the small sample size constitutes a methodological limitation. Statistical conclusions must therefore be interpreted within contextual boundaries. However, the uniformity of positive perception among nearly all respondents suggests reliable classroom experience. The consistency between descriptive and inferential findings reinforces the central thesis: pedagogical competence significantly influences theological understanding. In teaching Exodus 39:42-43, the CRE teacher's planning, strategy selection, assessment practice, and feedback mechanisms collectively functioned as interpretive mediators. Obedience in Exodus 39:42-43 culminates in blessing. Pedagogically, effective instruction culminates in comprehension and character formation. The study indicates that when pedagogical competence is strong, students

perceive obedience as purposeful participation in God's design rather than restrictive command. The alignment between instructional structure and narrative content enhances credibility. Students not only learned what obedience meant historically but why it matters ethically. This dual understanding, cognitive and applicative, represents successful religious pedagogy. The presence of two other Christian teachers within the school environment may have indirectly reinforced the CRE teacher's efforts by fostering a supportive professional community. Although not directly measured, collegial collaboration likely contributes to instructional stability and shared values. In small educational contexts, relational coherence among teachers strengthens institutional ethos. This background context may have created an atmosphere conducive to consistent moral messaging. The results affirm that pedagogical competence operates as a decisive factor in shaping students' understanding of biblical obedience. Through structured lesson planning, varied instructional methods, clear explanation, formative assessment, and constructive feedback, the CRE teacher at SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir effectively mediated the theological message of Exodus 39:42-43. The positive and statistically significant correlation between pedagogical competence and student comprehension demonstrates that pedagogy is not a neutral conduit but an active theological instrument. When teaching obedience, how the lesson is delivered profoundly influences what obedience means to learners. In this case, pedagogical competence transformed a historical narrative into a living moral framework, enabling students to perceive obedience as faithful, disciplined, and life-giving participation in covenant relationship.

## CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine how the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers contributes to students' understanding of obedience as reflected in Exodus 39:42-43 within the learning context of SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir. Based on the quantitative descriptive and correlational analysis conducted among the ten Christian students enrolled at the school, the findings demonstrate a positive and statistically significant relationship between the teacher's pedagogical competence and students' cognitive as well as moral comprehension of obedience. Although the sample size was limited due to the specific demographic context, ten Christian students and three Christian teachers including the CRE teacher, the data consistently indicated that structured lesson planning, contextualized biblical interpretation, interactive instructional strategies, and formative assessment practices meaningfully supported students in internalizing the theological substance of Exodus 39:42-43. Exegetically, Exodus 39:42-43 emphasizes Israel's meticulous obedience in carrying out the tabernacle instructions "just as the LORD had commanded Moses," culminating in Moses' blessing. Within the classroom context, this narrative was not treated merely as historical reportage but as a pedagogical paradigm of faithful, covenantal obedience. The research findings show that when the CRE teacher demonstrated clarity in explaining the narrative context, coherence between learning objectives and classroom activities, and the ability to translate ancient Israelite obedience into contemporary school-life applications, students were more capable of articulating obedience not as passive submission but as intentional responsiveness grounded in trust. In other words, pedagogical competence functioned as the mediating bridge between biblical text and lived ethical practice. The results

underscore that pedagogical competence in CRE cannot be reduced to technical instructional skill alone. Rather, it encompasses integrative capacities: curriculum alignment, hermeneutical sensitivity, age-appropriate communication, classroom management, and formative evaluation. In this study, students' higher levels of agreement regarding clarity of explanation, relevance of examples, and opportunities for reflection corresponded with stronger understanding of obedience as faithfulness expressed through concrete action. This suggests that the teacher's ability to design meaningful learning experiences directly influences theological literacy and moral formation. Another significant implication concerns contextual limitations. With only ten Christian students in a pluralistic school environment, CRE instruction requires heightened intentionality. The data imply that pedagogical competence becomes even more critical in minority settings, where instructional time is limited and peer religious diversity may influence interpretive frameworks. The CRE teacher's structured and dialogical approach enabled students to perceive obedience not as isolationist religiosity but as disciplined integrity within a diverse educational environment. The study also has limitations. The small sample size restricts generalizability beyond this specific locus. Additionally, reliance on self-reported questionnaires may introduce subjective bias. Future research could incorporate mixed-method designs, such as classroom observation and in-depth interviews, to triangulate findings and provide richer qualitative nuance. Expanding the study to multiple schools with larger Christian student populations would further validate the correlational patterns identified here. This research affirms that pedagogical competence plays a decisive role in shaping students' understanding of biblical obedience. At SD Negeri 4 Baamang Hilir, effective CRE pedagogy enabled students to grasp Exodus 39:42-43 not merely as ancient instruction compliance but as a theological model of faithful responsiveness to divine command. The study reinforces the broader educational thesis that sound pedagogy, when integrated with responsible biblical interpretation, becomes an instrument of character formation. Thus, strengthening pedagogical competence among Christian Religious Education teachers is not only a professional imperative but also a theological vocation aimed at cultivating disciplined, reflective, and faithful learners.

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