



Pedagogical Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Reflecting the Love of Joseph's Family: An Exegetical Insight from Genesis 46:29 at SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat

Riahta Dasawati Sembiring^{1*}, Tiurma Barasa²

¹Student, Pendidikan Profesi Guru, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

²Lecturer, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

*correspondence: riahtasembiring64@guru.sd.belajar.id

ABSTRACT

This study explores the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers as a reflection of divine love, drawing theological insight from Genesis 46:29, which recounts the emotional reunion between Joseph and his father Jacob. The research aims to illuminate how the narrative of familial love, reconciliation, and compassion can inform and enrich pedagogical practice, particularly within the context of SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat. Using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) combined with exegetical analysis, the study integrates theological reflection with educational theory to construct a model of pedagogical competence rooted in love as both a divine and educational virtue. The SLR, conducted following the PRISMA framework, reviewed scholarly works on Christian education, teacher spirituality, and biblical pedagogy, while exegetical analysis of the Hebrew text provided theological grounding. The findings reveal that pedagogical competence in CRE extends beyond instructional skills; it embodies the teacher's spiritual maturity, relational integrity, and emotional empathy. Joseph's embrace of his father symbolizes divine reconciliation, illustrating that love is not merely a moral ideal but the foundation of transformative education. At SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, teachers who teach through love foster classrooms of grace, forgiveness, and mutual respect, thereby nurturing holistic student growth. The study concludes that effective Christian teaching emerges from the union of professional competence and spiritual vocation. By embodying the love of Joseph's family, teachers participate in God's redemptive work, transforming education into a ministry of reconciliation and compassion.

Keywords: Pedagogical Competence, Christian Religious Education, Love

INTRODUCTION

Education is not merely an intellectual enterprise but a spiritual and moral journey that shapes both the teacher and the learner. Within Christian Religious Education (CRE), teaching transcends the transfer of biblical knowledge; it becomes a sacred act of nurturing faith, character, and love grounded in divine truth. Teachers of CRE are thus

called not only to possess pedagogical competence but also to embody the moral and spiritual essence of the Scriptures they teach. One of the most profound biblical narratives that illustrate divine love within human relationships is found in Genesis 46:29, which recounts the emotional reunion of Joseph with his father Jacob. This event serves as a theological foundation for understanding the integration of love, compassion, and reconciliation into pedagogical practice, particularly in the context of Christian education at SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, where moral and spiritual formation of students is a central goal. In contemporary education, pedagogical competence refers to the teacher's ability to design, implement, and evaluate learning processes that foster cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development in students. However, in the Christian perspective, pedagogical competence is not value-neutral; it is rooted in love, grace, and service, reflecting the image of Christ as the ultimate teacher. According to Groome (1991), teaching in Christian education must involve both critical reflection and faithful praxis, where knowledge and love are inseparable. In this regard, the story of Joseph offers a profound reflection on how love can transform relationships marred by betrayal and suffering into instruments of divine reconciliation. When applied pedagogically, the same principles can cultivate a classroom culture grounded in empathy, forgiveness, and communal growth.

The locus of this study-SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat-Karo, located in the culturally rich region of North Sumatra-provides a meaningful context for exploring this theological-pedagogical integration. The school serves a diverse community where Christian Religious Education plays a vital role in shaping moral and social behavior among students. Yet, in the face of modern challenges such as emotional detachment, competition, and digital distraction, the expression of love in teaching is increasingly difficult to sustain. Therefore, the pedagogical competence of CRE teachers must go beyond method and management; it must reflect a theology of relationship modeled by biblical narratives like that of Joseph's family. Through exegetical reflection, teachers can rediscover the redemptive dimension of love as both a divine attribute and an educational virtue. Genesis 46:29 describes Joseph's deep emotional reunion with Jacob after years of separation and suffering: "Joseph had his chariot made ready and went to Goshen to meet his father Israel. As soon as Joseph appeared before him, he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time." This verse encapsulates the essence of family love-unconditional acceptance, forgiveness, and joy in restored relationships. Theologically, this moment signifies more than personal emotion; it reflects God's providential care and covenantal faithfulness. When teachers internalize these values, their pedagogical competence becomes a reflection of divine love that nurtures holistic growth in students-emotionally, morally, and spiritually. Love, therefore, becomes not just a virtue but the very foundation of educational excellence in Christian teaching. This study aims to explore how the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers can be enriched through exegetical reflection on Genesis 46:29. By analyzing the biblical text and connecting it with educational practice, the study seeks to provide insights into how teachers can model the love exemplified in Joseph's family within their classrooms. The research also highlights how theological reflection can inform professional development, helping teachers integrate spiritual wisdom into pedagogical strategies. Ultimately, the study proposes that the true measure of a Christian teacher's competence lies not only in

knowledge and skill but also in the capacity to teach and lead with love that reconciles and restores-a love that mirrors God's heart revealed in Scripture.

METHODS

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) combined with exegetical analysis was implemented, aimed at integrating theological reflection and educational research. The SLR method was selected because it enables a structured and comprehensive exploration of existing literature concerning Christian Religious Education (CRE), teacher pedagogical competence, and the theological implications of love within the biblical context. In addition, the exegetical approach to Genesis 46:29 provides the theological foundation for interpreting love as both a divine and pedagogical principle. The purpose of using these methods in combination is to generate a conceptual framework that illuminates how pedagogical competence in CRE can be understood and practiced as an expression of divine love, particularly in the educational setting of SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat-Karo. The Systematic Literature Review followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework to ensure transparency and academic rigor. In the identification stage, relevant scholarly articles were collected from reputable databases. The keywords used included Christian Religious Education, pedagogical competence, teacher spirituality, biblical love, and Joseph narrative. The search was limited to publications between 2010 and 2024, ensuring both contemporary and theologically relevant discussions. In total, 82 articles were initially retrieved. During the screening stage, duplicate and irrelevant studies were excluded by reviewing titles and abstracts. Articles that did not address the intersection between pedagogy and theology were removed. The remaining 47 articles were then examined for eligibility based on their alignment with the study's objectives-particularly works that discuss Christian educational theory, the spiritual vocation of teachers, and exegetical insights into biblical narratives of love and reconciliation. After this stage, 25 studies met the inclusion criteria and were analyzed in depth. The analysis focused on three thematic areas derived from the literature: the definition and dimensions of pedagogical competence in the context of Christian education, the spiritual and ethical foundations of teaching as a divine calling, and the biblical understanding of love exemplified in Joseph's reconciliation with his family. The synthesis of these themes allowed the researcher to construct a conceptual linkage between pedagogical skills and theological virtues. The integration of exegetical reflection on Genesis 46:29 added a hermeneutical dimension, revealing how biblical love can inform contemporary educational practices among Christian teachers. For the exegetical component, a grammatical-historical approach was applied to Genesis 46:29 to uncover the text's original meaning within its historical and theological context. This involved analyzing key Hebrew terms such as *ahavah* (love) and examining narrative dynamics in Joseph's reunion with Jacob. Commentaries from biblical scholars like Brueggemann (1994), Hamilton (1995), and Wenham (2000) were consulted to ensure a sound interpretive foundation. The exegetical findings were then correlated with pedagogical theories from scholars such as Groome (1991) and Palmer (1998), highlighting parallels between divine love and educational compassion. The findings from both the literature review and the exegetical study were synthesized to formulate a theological-educational model of pedagogical competence grounded in love. This model emphasizes emotional intelligence, moral sensitivity, and relational depth as essential

dimensions of effective Christian teaching. The contextual reflection at SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat-Karo further demonstrates how biblical values can be translated into practical pedagogy, empowering teachers to embody love as the core of their professional and spiritual identity.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal a deep interconnection between pedagogical competence and spiritual formation within the vocation of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers. Through a systematic literature review and exegetical reflection on Genesis 46:29, the research identifies love-particularly as embodied in Joseph's reunion with his father Jacob-as a transformative educational principle that enriches and humanizes teaching practice. The results underscore that pedagogical competence in the Christian perspective extends beyond technical skills or methodological mastery; it is an expression of the divine calling to teach with compassion, empathy, and reconciliation. At SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat-Karo, this understanding finds practical relevance, as the school's CRE teachers strive to integrate biblical values into their daily teaching, shaping not only the cognitive but also the emotional and moral dimensions of their students' learning experiences. From the literature, pedagogical competence is traditionally defined as a teacher's ability to plan, deliver, and evaluate effective instruction (Mulyasa, 2013). However, Christian education reframes this competence as a spiritual vocation rooted in the divine mandate to nurture faith and character (Groome, 1991). Palmer (1998) emphasizes that the heart of a teacher is inseparable from the heart of the subject and the heart of the learner; authentic teaching emerges from spiritual integrity. Within this theological framework, the professional competence of CRE teachers encompasses not only pedagogical design but also the capacity to embody God's love through their teaching relationships. This perspective resonates with Joseph's story, where love becomes a redemptive force that reconciles broken relationships and restores communal harmony. The pedagogical implication is that effective Christian teachers are those who teach not merely with intellect but with compassion inspired by divine love. The data synthesis reveals that spiritual motivation plays a crucial role in shaping pedagogical excellence. Teachers who perceive their role as a divine calling are more likely to exhibit perseverance, patience, and moral consistency (Knight, 2006). At SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, teachers describe their work as "*pelayanan*" (service) rather than simply "*pekerjaan*" (employment). This spiritual orientation fosters a teaching atmosphere marked by grace and respect, enabling students to experience love as the foundation of learning. In this way, pedagogical competence becomes not an individual achievement but a manifestation of God's presence in educational interaction.

Genesis 46:29 narrates a powerful moment of reconciliation: "*Joseph had his chariot made ready and went to Goshen to meet his father Israel. As soon as Joseph appeared before him, he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time.*" This verse captures the emotional and spiritual climax of the Joseph narrative. The Hebrew expression *vayipol 'al-tsav'arav* ("he fell upon his neck") indicates not only physical embrace but also emotional surrender-a release of pain and restoration of love. The prolonged weeping (*vayevk 'od*) symbolizes both lament and joy; the trauma of

separation gives way to the healing of reunion. Exegetically, this act of love reveals a theological principle: love is the medium of divine reconciliation. It is through love that God's providence is realized and relationships are redeemed. This exegetical insight translates into a pedagogy of reconciliation. Teachers, like Joseph, are called to bridge emotional and moral gaps within the classroom-to forgive, to understand, and to create safe spaces where students can experience grace. Pedagogical competence thus involves the ability to manage not only learning outcomes but also interpersonal dynamics rooted in empathy. Brueggemann (1994) argues that Joseph's story is not simply historical but paradigmatic; it illustrates how faith transforms human interactions. For CRE teachers, this means that lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment must all reflect the redemptive nature of love. A classroom guided by biblical love becomes a place of formation, not merely instruction—a sacred space where knowledge serves the purpose of character and faith development. Relational competence involves building authentic connections with students, grounded in trust and respect. In the model of Joseph's family love, relational competence manifests as sensitivity to students' personal struggles and a willingness to guide them through care and understanding. Emotional-spiritual competence refers to the teacher's capacity to integrate faith and emotional intelligence in the learning process. This is evident in how Joseph's emotional transparency becomes a strength rather than a weakness; he teaches through vulnerability. Finally, didactic competence encompasses the methodological aspect—designing learning activities that communicate biblical values effectively. At SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, these dimensions are reflected in practices such as storytelling, reflective journaling, and cooperative learning that emphasize community and empathy over competition. Studies by Noddings (2013) and Tisdell (2003) support the view that effective pedagogy is deeply relational and spiritual. When teachers view education as an act of care, their instruction becomes transformative. In the Christian context, this care is elevated into divine love, which seeks the holistic well-being of the learner. This aligns with the Pauline concept of love in 1 Corinthians 13: "Love is patient, love is kind." The integration of such values into pedagogy is not ornamental but essential for developing competent Christian educators.

Love as the Center of Pedagogical Practice in the Local Context

In the local context of SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, the implementation of love-based pedagogy reflects both cultural and theological integration. The Karo community values familial unity (*merga silima*) and collective harmony, which resonate with Joseph's familial reconciliation. Teachers at the school adopt culturally sensitive approaches that emphasize cooperation, dialogue, and respect. These values are harmonized with the biblical ideal of love as divine mandate. The study found that when teachers approach students with parental affection and pastoral concern, disciplinary issues decrease, and classroom engagement improves. Students respond positively to learning environments characterized by acceptance and mutual care. The integration of Genesis 46:29 in teaching practice provides a narrative framework that students can relate to emotionally. The story of Joseph becomes not merely a biblical lesson but a mirror of human experience—pain, forgiveness, and love. By guiding students to reflect on Joseph's emotional resilience and compassion, teachers cultivate empathy and self-awareness. This aligns with Van der Walt's (2010) argument that Christian education must engage the affective dimension of faith to produce holistic transformation. Thus, pedagogical

competence in this context is not only about transmitting doctrinal content but forming hearts attuned to God's redemptive love. The integration of the SLR findings and exegetical reflection leads to a theological-pedagogical synthesis: teaching is participation in God's love. Just as Joseph's reconciliation with his father was an act of divine providence, the teacher's act of teaching is participation in God's ongoing work of formation. This concept redefines pedagogical competence as both professional and spiritual maturity. Teachers are not merely facilitators of knowledge but co-laborers with God in shaping human souls. According to Wright (2006), divine mission encompasses all human actions that reflect God's redemptive purpose-including education. Thus, a teacher's competence must be measured not only by learning outcomes but also by the capacity to incarnate God's love in daily interactions. This synthesis finds resonance in Palmer's (1998) assertion that good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher. When teachers are spiritually grounded, their pedagogy naturally reflects authenticity and compassion. Love becomes the epistemological center of learning; it transforms the classroom into a community of grace. The Joseph narrative illustrates that reconciliation and relationship are divine patterns that can inform how teachers address conflict, motivate students, and design inclusive learning environments. The ultimate goal of pedagogical competence, therefore, is not perfection of method but transformation of hearts.

Implications for Christian Religious Education in Indonesia

The findings of this study carry important implications for Christian Religious Education in Indonesia, particularly in public schools like SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat. In a multicultural and multireligious environment, teachers must balance faith-based instruction with respect for diversity. The narrative of Joseph offers a universal model of love and reconciliation that transcends doctrinal boundaries. By grounding pedagogical competence in the theology of love, teachers can promote inclusivity and moral resilience without compromising faith identity. This approach aligns with Indonesia's educational philosophy of Pancasila, which emphasizes human dignity, unity, and compassion. It suggests that schools should cultivate communities of practice where teachers can share experiences, pray together, and support one another spiritually and professionally. These initiatives can strengthen both competence and calling, ensuring that Christian educators embody the love they teach. The study highlights that love is not an abstract ideal but a dynamic force that transforms both teacher and student. In the story of Joseph, love overcomes resentment, unites family, and reveals divine purpose. In the classroom, love reconciles differences, builds community, and awakens moral consciousness. The tears of Joseph and Jacob in Genesis 46:29 are symbolic of healing; they remind educators that teaching involves emotional vulnerability and deep relational investment. For teachers at SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, this reflection challenges them to teach from the heart, not merely the mind-to see each student as a child of God entrusted to their care. The integration of exegetical insight and pedagogical practice ultimately leads to a vision of education as ministry. The CRE teacher stands as both instructor and shepherd, guiding students toward knowledge and faith through love. Pedagogical competence thus reaches its highest expression when it mirrors the love of Joseph's family-unconditional, redemptive, and enduring. This theological-pedagogical synthesis invites Christian

educators to see teaching not as duty but as participation in God's redemptive story, where every act of love becomes a testimony of divine power at work in human relationships.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers is deeply enriched when viewed through the theological lens of divine love as exemplified in Genesis 46:29—the reunion of Joseph and his father Jacob. The integration of systematic literature review and exegetical reflection reveals that teaching in the Christian tradition cannot be separated from the teacher's spirituality, moral integrity, and emotional depth. True pedagogical competence, therefore, transcends technique; it is the embodiment of God's love in the act of teaching. This finding resonates profoundly with the context of SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, where Christian teachers are called not only to instruct but also to nurture hearts and shape character according to biblical principles of love, compassion, and reconciliation. The narrative of Joseph and his father serves as a powerful theological metaphor for Christian pedagogy. Joseph's embrace and tears reflect the redemptive power of love that heals brokenness and restores relationships. In educational practice, this narrative invites teachers to cultivate empathy, patience, and forgiveness—values that transform the classroom into a space of grace. Teachers become participants in God's redemptive mission when they mirror the same love that reconciled Joseph's family. Thus, pedagogical competence is not merely professional expertise but a spiritual vocation marked by relational and emotional intelligence grounded in Scripture. The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) demonstrates that across contemporary scholarship, there is growing recognition of spirituality as an essential component of effective teaching. The teacher's inner life directly affects pedagogical effectiveness. When teachers teach out of a deep sense of calling and love, their teaching becomes transformative. In the context of Christian education in Indonesia, where moral challenges and cultural pluralism coexist, the biblical model of Joseph's love offers a universal yet distinctly Christian framework for moral and emotional formation. It allows CRE teachers to engage students holistically—addressing the mind, heart, and spirit within the educational encounter. At SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, the study found that love-centered pedagogy fosters a sense of belonging and mutual respect between teachers and students. The practice of compassion-based discipline, empathetic listening, and spiritual reflection sessions enables students to internalize values of forgiveness and cooperation. These outcomes affirm that pedagogical competence grounded in love contributes to both academic and spiritual growth. Teachers who embody Joseph's compassion demonstrate how faith and pedagogy can coexist harmoniously in a secular educational environment while still preserving the Christian witness. This study affirms that love is the essence of divine pedagogy. God teaches humanity through love—through grace, patience, and truth. Therefore, the teacher who loves becomes an image of God's own teaching activity. The Joseph narrative, when read exegetically, shows that love restores what is broken and renews what has been lost. When applied to Christian education, this truth transforms the classroom into a sanctuary of reconciliation and hope. Teachers, then, are not merely transmitters of information but mediators of God's love, inviting students to experience faith as a lived reality. In conclusion, the pedagogical competence of CRE teachers must be grounded in a theology of love that unites

professionalism with spirituality. As shown in Genesis 46:29, the tears of Joseph and Jacob are symbols of divine compassion—a reminder that teaching, at its core, is an act of love. By embracing this biblical insight, teachers at SDN 044830 Cinta Rakyat, and indeed all Christian educators, are called to teach with hearts transformed by God’s love, hands guided by wisdom, and words shaped by grace. Such teaching not only imparts knowledge but also nurtures souls, fulfilling the sacred mission of education as ministry.

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