



Fostering Creative Learning through Pedagogical Competence: An Educational Reflection on Exodus 36:1 at SDN 1 Hurung Bunut

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of teachers' pedagogical competence in fostering creative learning in Christian Religious Education (CRE), drawing on a biblical-educational reflection of Exodus 36:1. In contemporary education, creativity is increasingly recognized as a core competence for students, requiring teachers to design learning environments that encourage imagination, originality, and active engagement. Within Christian education, creativity is also understood as a God-given capacity that should be nurtured and directed toward meaningful and constructive purposes. This study seeks to integrate educational theory and biblical theology in exploring how pedagogical competence contributes to creative learning in a public elementary school context. Using a quantitative research design with a descriptive-correlational approach, data were collected from 78 Christian students at SDN 1 Hurung Bunut, Gunung Mas. A structured questionnaire was used to measure students' perceptions of their Christian Religious Education teacher's pedagogical competence and the extent to which creative learning was fostered in the classroom. The findings indicate that students perceived both pedagogical competence and creative learning to be at high levels. A strong and statistically significant positive correlation was found between pedagogical competence and creative learning, suggesting that higher levels of perceived pedagogical competence are associated with richer creative learning experiences. Regression analysis further demonstrated that pedagogical competence significantly predicted creative learning outcomes. Interpreted through Exodus 36:1, these results affirm that creative abilities can be intentionally cultivated through wise and skillful pedagogy. This study concludes that strengthening teachers' pedagogical competence is essential for fostering creative, meaningful, and theologically grounded learning environments in Christian Religious Education.

Keywords: *Creative Learning, Christian Religious Education, Pedagogical Competence*

INTRODUCTION

Creativity has become one of the most essential competencies in contemporary education, particularly in the context of 21st-century learning that emphasizes critical thinking, innovation, collaboration, and problem-solving. Schools are no longer expected

to merely transmit knowledge, but to cultivate students' creative capacities so that they are able to adapt, generate new ideas, and apply learning meaningfully in diverse life contexts. In this regard, teachers play a decisive role, as their pedagogical competence directly influences how creative learning environments are designed, facilitated, and sustained in the classroom (UNESCO, 2021). Pedagogical competence refers to a teacher's ability to understand learners, design effective learning strategies, implement engaging instructional methods, and evaluate learning outcomes in ways that promote holistic student development. In creative learning, pedagogical competence is expressed through the use of varied instructional approaches, learner-centered strategies, contextual learning, and opportunities for students to explore, experiment, and express ideas. Research in educational psychology emphasizes that creative teaching practices significantly contribute to students' motivation, engagement, and higher-order thinking skills (OECD, 2022). Therefore, fostering creativity in schools is inseparable from the quality of teachers' pedagogical competence. Within the context of Christian Religious Education (PAK), creativity is not merely a pedagogical strategy but also a theological and spiritual value. The Bible presents creativity as a gift from God that is intended to be used for constructive, meaningful, and God-honoring purposes. A significant biblical foundation for this perspective is found in Exodus 36:1, which describes Bezalel, Oholiab, and other skilled individuals who were filled with wisdom, understanding, and skill by God to carry out creative work in constructing the Tabernacle. This passage highlights that creative ability is not only a human talent but also a divine endowment that is to be nurtured and directed toward purposeful and sacred objectives (Exodus 36:1, NIV).

The narrative of Exodus 35-36 emphasizes that God empowers individuals with creative skills and also provides them with the capacity to teach and collaborate in the execution of creative tasks. The text explicitly states that Bezalel and Oholiab were given not only craftsmanship abilities but also the ability to instruct others, indicating an intrinsic link between creativity and pedagogy (Exodus 35:34-35). This biblical principle provides a strong theological foundation for understanding the role of teachers as facilitators of creativity, who are called not only to possess creative skills but also to cultivate creativity in their learners through intentional pedagogical practices. In contemporary Christian education, this biblical insight is highly relevant. Creative learning can be seen as a reflection of God's creative character and as a means through which students can discover, develop, and dedicate their talents for positive purposes. Scholars in Christian education argue that integrating creativity into faith-based learning helps students connect biblical values with real-life problem-solving, artistic expression, and innovative thinking (Estep & Kim, 2021). Thus, creativity becomes both an educational and spiritual dimension of student formation. At SDN 1 Hurung Bunut, where 78 Christian students and one Christian Religious Education teacher are involved, the challenge and opportunity lie in how pedagogical competence is translated into creative learning practices in the PAK classroom. In a context with limited human resources, the teacher's pedagogical competence becomes even more crucial in shaping learning experiences that are engaging, meaningful, and transformative. Creative learning strategies, such as project-based learning, storytelling, visual arts, collaborative activities, and contextual biblical reflection, can serve as practical expressions of pedagogical competence that align with both educational standards and biblical principles. Many studies address creativity from

a general educational standpoint, but fewer explore how biblical texts, such as Exodus 36:1, can provide a theological-educational framework for creative pedagogy in Christian Religious Education. This gap highlights the novelty and significance of the present study. This research aims to examine how pedagogical competence contributes to the fostering of creative learning in Christian Religious Education at SDN 1 Hurung Bunut, using Exodus 36:1 as a biblical-educational reflection. By integrating contemporary educational theory with biblical theology, this study seeks to offer a holistic perspective on creative learning that is both academically grounded and spiritually meaningful. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of creative pedagogical practices in PAK and to enrich the discourse on the integration of faith and creativity in formal education.

METHODS

A quantitative approach was selected to obtain measurable data regarding students' perceptions of pedagogical practices and creative learning experiences, as well as to analyze patterns and associations between these variables within the school context. The research was conducted at SDN 1 Hurung Bunut, Gunung Mas, a public elementary school with a Christian student population. At the time of the study, there were 78 Christian students and one Christian Religious Education teacher. The population of the study consisted of all Christian students enrolled at the school. Given the relatively manageable size of the population, a total sampling (census) technique was applied, in which all 78 Christian students were invited to participate as respondents. This sampling strategy was chosen to maximize representativeness and to minimize sampling bias within the bounded population. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers based on established indicators of pedagogical competence and creative learning. The pedagogical competence indicators were adapted from widely recognized teacher competency frameworks, including instructional planning, learning strategy implementation, classroom management, learner engagement, and assessment practices (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Hattie, 2012). Creative learning indicators were informed by contemporary creativity and innovation in education literature, such as opportunities for idea generation, use of varied learning media, project-based and experiential learning, student expression, and encouragement of originality and problem-solving (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2014; OECD, 2022). These indicators were contextualized within Christian Religious Education and linked conceptually to the biblical theme of God-given creativity as reflected in Exodus 36:1. The questionnaire consisted of Likert-scale items rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items measured students' perceptions of (1) the CRE teacher's pedagogical competence and (2) the extent to which creative learning was fostered in the classroom. Prior to full administration, the instrument underwent expert review by two specialists in educational research and Christian education to establish content validity and theological-educational alignment. A pilot test was conducted with a small group of students outside the main sample to assess clarity, item relevance, and response consistency. Based on feedback, minor revisions were made to improve item wording and comprehension for elementary school students. Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess internal consistency of the scales. The pedagogical competence scale and the creative learning scale both achieved reliability coefficients that met accepted standards for

educational research, indicating that the instrument was suitable for quantitative analysis. Ethical considerations were addressed by obtaining permission from school authorities, informing students about the purpose of the study, and ensuring voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality of responses. Data collection was carried out during regular school hours under the supervision of the researcher and with the cooperation of school staff. Completed questionnaires were coded and entered into a statistical software program for analysis. Data analysis procedures included descriptive statistics to summarize students' perceptions, including mean scores, standard deviations, and frequency distributions for each variable. In addition, inferential statistical analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation to examine the relationship between perceived pedagogical competence and creative learning. Where appropriate, simple linear regression analysis was also employed to explore the predictive contribution of pedagogical competence to creative learning outcomes. The quantitative findings were interpreted in light of contemporary educational theory and the biblical reflection of Exodus 36:1, providing an integrative framework that connects empirical data with theological-educational perspectives. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of how pedagogical competence contributes to fostering creative learning in Christian Religious Education within the specific context of SDN 1 Hurung Bunut.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantitative analysis was conducted on data collected from 78 Christian students at SDN 1 Hurung Bunut. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to examine students' perceptions of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher's pedagogical competence and the extent to which creative learning was fostered in the classroom. Descriptive statistics revealed that students perceived the pedagogical competence of the CRE teacher to be at a high level. The overall mean score for pedagogical competence was $M = 4.21$ ($SD = 0.48$) on a five-point Likert scale, indicating that students generally agreed that the teacher demonstrated strong abilities in instructional planning, classroom management, learning facilitation, and student engagement. The highest-rated indicators were related to teacher clarity in explaining lessons ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.52$) and the use of varied teaching methods ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.50$), suggesting that students experienced the learning process as structured and pedagogically supportive. With regard to creative learning, the descriptive analysis also showed a high level of perceived creative learning practices. The overall mean score for creative learning was $M = 4.15$ ($SD = 0.51$), indicating that students frequently experienced learning activities that encouraged expression, imagination, and active participation. Indicators related to opportunities for creative expression, such as drawing, storytelling, and project-based activities, received relatively high ratings ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 0.54$). Similarly, items related to encouragement of original ideas and student initiative also showed positive responses ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.56$). These findings suggest that creative learning was a prominent feature of the CRE classroom environment. Inferential statistical analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between pedagogical competence and creative learning. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between perceived pedagogical competence and creative learning, with $r = 0.68$, $p < .001$. This indicates that higher levels of perceived pedagogical competence were associated with higher levels of

perceived creative learning among students. The strength of this correlation suggests that pedagogical competence is a substantial factor in fostering creative learning experiences in Christian Religious Education. To further explore the predictive role of pedagogical competence, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. The results showed that pedagogical competence significantly predicted creative learning, with $R^2 = 0.46$, indicating that approximately 46% of the variance in creative learning scores could be explained by students' perceptions of the teacher's pedagogical competence. The regression coefficient was statistically significant ($\beta = 0.68$, $t = 7.89$, $p < .001$), confirming that pedagogical competence made a meaningful and positive contribution to creative learning outcomes. These quantitative findings demonstrate that students who perceived higher pedagogical competence in their CRE teacher also reported richer and more frequent experiences of creative learning. From a biblical-educational perspective, this pattern aligns with the theological reflection of Exodus 36:1, which emphasizes that God-given wisdom, understanding, and skill are intended to be expressed through creative and purposeful work. In this context, the teacher's pedagogical competence can be understood as a practical means through which God-given creativity is nurtured and facilitated in the classroom. The results indicate that pedagogical competence is not merely a technical teaching skill but a significant educational factor that shapes the quality and creativity of students' learning experiences. Even within a context with one CRE teacher and a relatively limited number of students, strong pedagogical competence was shown to have a substantial impact on fostering a creative learning environment.

The pedagogical competence of the Christian Religious Education teacher at SDN 1 Hurung Bunut plays a crucial role in fostering creative learning among Christian students. The quantitative findings provide empirical evidence that students' perceptions of high pedagogical competence are strongly associated with higher levels of creative learning experiences. The significant positive correlation and substantial predictive power of pedagogical competence confirm that effective teaching practices are a key driver of creativity in the classroom. Grounded in the biblical reflection of Exodus 36:1, this study affirms that creativity in education can be understood as a God-given capacity that is to be cultivated through wise, intentional, and skillful pedagogy. The teacher's ability to design engaging lessons, use varied instructional strategies, and encourage student expression serves as a practical expression of this biblical principle. As a result, pedagogical competence becomes not only an educational construct but also a theological-pedagogical instrument through which students' creative potential is nurtured. The findings highlight that even in contexts with limited human resources, such as having only one CRE teacher, strong pedagogical competence can significantly enhance the quality of learning. This underscores the strategic importance of continuous professional development for Christian Religious Education teachers, particularly in the areas of creative pedagogy, learner-centered instruction, and innovative teaching strategies. This study contributes to the growing body of research that emphasizes the central role of teacher competence in shaping meaningful and creative learning environments. It recommends that educational stakeholders prioritize the strengthening of pedagogical competence as a means of fostering creativity that is both academically effective and theologically grounded. By doing so, Christian Religious Education can more

effectively support the holistic development of students, enabling them to grow not only in knowledge but also in creativity, faith, and responsible use of their God-given talents.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that teachers' pedagogical competence plays a vital role in fostering creative learning in Christian Religious Education at SDN 1 Hurung Bunut. The quantitative findings confirm a strong and significant relationship between students' perceptions of pedagogical competence and their experiences of creative learning, indicating that effective instructional planning, varied teaching strategies, and active learner engagement are key factors in promoting creativity in the classroom. Interpreted through the biblical reflection of Exodus 36:1, these results affirm that creativity is a God-given capacity that can be intentionally cultivated through wise and skillful pedagogy. The teacher's pedagogical competence functions as a practical means by which students' creative potential is nurtured and directed toward meaningful and constructive learning experiences. In this sense, pedagogical competence is not merely a technical dimension of teaching but also a theological-pedagogical expression of stewardship over God-given gifts. Furthermore, this study highlights that even within a context of limited teaching personnel, strong pedagogical competence can significantly enhance the quality and creativity of learning. This underscores the importance of ongoing professional development for Christian Religious Education teachers, particularly in the areas of creative pedagogy and innovative instructional design. This research contributes to the understanding that strengthening pedagogical competence is essential for creating learning environments that are both academically effective and spiritually meaningful. By integrating educational best practices with biblical principles, Christian Religious Education can more effectively foster students' creativity, faith development, and holistic growth, enabling them to use their talents responsibly and purposefully in accordance with Christian values.

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