



Pedagogical Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Guiding Students to Appreciate God's Gifts: A Study of Genesis 33:11 at UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli

Febrius Lase

Pendidikan Profesi Guru, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

*correspondence: febrius1988lase@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examines the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in guiding students to appreciate God's gifts, grounded in the theological message of Genesis 33:11, at UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli, Kota Gunungsitoli. The concept of gratitude and appreciation for divine blessings is a central value in Christian education, shaping students' spiritual awareness, moral character, and responsible attitudes toward learning and daily life. Despite its importance, empirical studies that integrate biblical theology with pedagogical competence in Indonesian public elementary schools remain limited. This research addresses this gap by analyzing how teachers' pedagogical skills contribute to students' understanding and internalization of gratitude as a Christian virtue. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 64 Christian students through structured questionnaires measuring perceptions of teachers' pedagogical competence and students' attitudes toward appreciating God's gifts. The instrument assessed key dimensions of pedagogical competence, including lesson planning, instructional strategies, classroom management, use of learning media, and assessment practices. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were employed to examine the relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' appreciation attitudes. The findings indicate that teachers' pedagogical competence is at a high level and shows a statistically significant positive relationship with students' ability to appreciate and express gratitude for God's gifts. Effective instructional strategies and contextualized biblical teaching were found to be particularly influential in fostering students' understanding of Genesis 33:11 in daily life. The study concludes that strengthening pedagogical competence is essential for integrating theological values with meaningful learning experiences. These results provide practical implications for professional development programs for CRE teachers and contribute to the growing body of research on faith-based character education in Indonesian elementary schools.

Keywords: *Pedagogical Competence, Christian Religious Education, God's Gifts*

INTRODUCTION

Pedagogical competence extends beyond technical instructional skills to include the integration of biblical values and theological reflection into everyday teaching practice. Christian educators are therefore called not only to transmit religious knowledge but also to guide students in internalizing Christian virtues that shape character, attitudes, and daily life. One important virtue emphasized in both biblical theology and Christian pedagogy is gratitude and appreciation for God's gifts. Genesis 33:11, in which Jacob urges Esau to accept his gift by saying, "Please accept my present that was brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough," reflects a theological understanding of God's generosity and human responsibility to recognize and respond to divine blessing. Old Testament scholars interpret this verse as expressing a deep awareness of God's grace and providence, where material and relational blessings are acknowledged as gifts from God rather than merely the result of human effort (Wenham, 1994; Walton, Matthews, & Chavalas, 2000). This biblical narrative provides a rich theological foundation for teaching students to appreciate God's gifts as an expression of faith, humility, and relational responsibility. In educational research, gratitude has been increasingly recognized as a significant factor in students' moral development, emotional well-being, and social relationships. Studies in positive psychology and moral education suggest that gratitude is associated with increased empathy, prosocial behavior, and a stronger sense of life meaning (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Froh, Sefick, & Emmons, 2008). Within faith-based education, gratitude is not only a psychological disposition but also a theological practice that shapes how students interpret their experiences and relationships. For Christian education, gratitude becomes a bridge between doctrinal teaching and lived faith, enabling students to perceive their lives within the larger narrative of God's grace and provision. Guiding students to appreciate God's gifts requires intentional instructional strategies, relational engagement, and contextualized biblical interpretation. Pazmiño (2008) emphasizes that Christian education is fundamentally formative, aiming to shape not only what students know but also who they are and how they live. Similarly, Groome (2011) argues that effective Christian pedagogy involves a praxis-oriented approach in which biblical narratives are connected to students' concrete life experiences. In this framework, teachers' pedagogical competence plays a decisive role in helping students translate theological concepts, such as grace, blessing, and gratitude, into personal attitudes and daily practices. The narrative context of Genesis 33 further highlights the relational dimension of gratitude and gift-giving. Jacob's act of giving to Esau is not merely transactional but is embedded in reconciliation, humility, and acknowledgment of God's gracious action in his life (Brueggemann, 2010). This theological dimension underscores that appreciating God's gifts is closely connected to relational restoration, generosity, and ethical responsibility. For Christian Religious Education, this suggests that teaching gratitude should not be limited to personal piety but should also be linked to social relationships, generosity, and responsible stewardship. Christian Religious Education teachers often work within pluralistic and resource-diverse environments. This context places additional demands on pedagogical competence, as teachers must integrate biblical values in ways that are educationally sound, culturally sensitive, and developmentally appropriate. Darling-Hammond (2017) notes that effective teaching in

diverse contexts requires adaptive pedagogy, reflective practice, and strong relational skills. For CRE teachers, this adaptability includes the capacity to present biblical teachings on gratitude and divine provision in ways that resonate with students' lived realities, including economic challenges, family contexts, and community dynamics.

At UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli, Kota Gunungsitoli, where there are 64 Christian students and 13 Christian teachers (including the CRE teacher), the pedagogical role of CRE teachers in guiding students to appreciate God's gifts is particularly significant. In such a context, teachers function not only as instructors but also as moral and spiritual guides whose pedagogical approaches directly shape how students understand blessing, gratitude, and responsibility. The relatively substantial number of Christian teachers provides a supportive environment for integrating biblical values into school life, yet it also increases the need for pedagogical consistency and shared understanding of how gratitude and appreciation for God's gifts are to be taught and modeled. This study therefore seeks to examine how the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers contributes to guiding students in appreciating God's gifts, using Genesis 33:11 as a theological and narrative framework. By integrating biblical theology, educational theory, and empirical inquiry, this research aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on holistic Christian education. Specifically, it seeks to illuminate how pedagogical strategies, teacher-student relationships, and theological reflection intersect to foster gratitude as a lived Christian value. In doing so, the study positions pedagogical competence not merely as a technical skill but as a spiritually informed practice that plays a vital role in shaping students' faith, character, and everyday understanding of God's gracious provision.

METHODS

A quantitative research design with a descriptive-correlational approach was implemented to examine the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in guiding students to appreciate God's gifts, as reflected in Genesis 33:11. A quantitative approach was selected to enable systematic measurement of students' perceptions and to identify patterns and relationships among key pedagogical variables related to gratitude, instructional strategies, and value internalization. This design is appropriate for educational research that seeks to describe tendencies and explore associations among pedagogical practices and student outcomes in a structured and replicable manner (Creswell, 2014). The research was conducted at UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli, Kota Gunungsitoli, Indonesia. The school context includes 64 Christian students and 13 Christian teachers, including Christian Religious Education teachers. The population for this study consisted of all Christian students enrolled in the school and all Christian teachers who are involved in supporting Christian Religious Education. Given the relatively small population size, this study used a total sampling technique (census sampling), in which all available Christian students were invited to participate as respondents. This approach ensures maximum representation and increases the internal validity of the findings by minimizing sampling bias (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2019). Teachers were involved primarily as supporting informants for contextual validation, while the main quantitative data were collected from students to capture their

perceptions of teachers' pedagogical competence and its impact on their appreciation of God's gifts. This study involved two main variables: Pedagogical Competence of CRE Teachers (Independent Variable), this variable refers to teachers' ability to plan, implement, and evaluate learning activities that integrate biblical teaching with students' cognitive, affective, and moral development. It was operationalized through indicators such as: clarity of biblical instruction, use of relevant teaching strategies, ability to connect biblical narratives to students' daily life, classroom interaction and engagement, and fairness and consistency in assessment and feedback; Students' Appreciation of God's Gifts (Dependent Variable), this variable refers to students' attitudes and understanding related to gratitude, recognition of God's blessings, and responsible responses to divine provision, as inspired by Genesis 33:11. It was operationalized through indicators such as: expression of gratitude in daily life, recognition of blessings as gifts from God, willingness to share and show generosity, positive attitudes toward God's provision, application of gratitude in relationships and behavior. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher based on relevant literature on pedagogical competence, Christian education, and gratitude formation (Shulman, 1987; Pazmiño, 2008; Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The questionnaire consisted of two main sections: measuring students' perceptions of CRE teachers' instructional and relational practices and measuring students' attitudes toward God's gifts and their application of gratitude in daily life. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The use of Likert-type scales is appropriate for capturing attitudes and perceptions in educational research and allows for quantitative analysis of trends and relationships (Fraenkel et al., 2019). To ensure content validity, the questionnaire items were reviewed by experts in Christian Religious Education and educational research methodology. This expert judgment process ensured that the items were conceptually aligned with the constructs of pedagogical competence and appreciation of God's gifts, as well as with the theological framework of Genesis 33:11. A pilot test was conducted with a small group of students from a comparable school context to examine item clarity and initial reliability. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A Cronbach's alpha value of $\geq .70$ was used as the acceptable threshold for reliability, following standard guidelines in social science research (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019). Items that demonstrated low item-total correlations were revised or removed to improve overall scale reliability. Data collection was carried out after obtaining formal permission from the school administration. Students were informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. For elementary school students, the questionnaire was administered in a supervised classroom setting to ensure understanding of the items and to minimize response errors. Researchers and assisting teachers provided standardized instructions and were available to clarify item meanings when necessary, without influencing students' responses. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately after completion to ensure data integrity. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, were used to describe students' perceptions of teachers' pedagogical competence and their levels of appreciation of God's gifts. To examine the relationship between pedagogical

competence and students' appreciation of God's gifts, correlational analysis (Pearson's product-moment correlation) was employed. This analysis allowed the researcher to identify the strength and direction of the relationship between the two main variables. Where appropriate, simple linear regression analysis was also conducted to explore the extent to which pedagogical competence predicts students' appreciation of God's gifts. All statistical analyses were conducted using standard statistical software, and significance was evaluated at the 0.05 level. The results are presented in aggregate form to protect participant confidentiality and to emphasize overall trends rather than individual responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantitative analysis of students' responses revealed generally positive perceptions of the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers at UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli. Descriptive statistics indicated that most students rated their teachers highly in terms of instructional clarity, use of relevant teaching strategies, and ability to connect biblical narratives with students' daily experiences. The mean scores for items related to lesson organization, explanation of biblical content, and use of examples from everyday life were in the high category, suggesting that students perceived their teachers as effective in delivering Christian Religious Education content in a structured and understandable manner. Students' responses also reflected positive evaluations of classroom interaction and engagement. Items measuring teacher encouragement, responsiveness to student questions, and creation of a supportive learning atmosphere showed relatively high mean values. These findings indicate that pedagogical competence at this school is not limited to cognitive transmission of biblical knowledge but also includes relational and interactive dimensions that are essential for effective learning. This aligns with Shulman's (1987) conceptualization of pedagogical content knowledge, which emphasizes the integration of subject matter understanding with instructional strategies tailored to learners' needs. Students reported that teachers demonstrated fairness and consistency in assessment and feedback. The descriptive data showed that students perceived evaluation practices as transparent and aligned with learning objectives. This suggests that pedagogical competence is reflected not only in instructional delivery but also in assessment practices that support learning and provide meaningful feedback. Darling-Hammond (2017) highlights that such practices contribute to students' trust in teachers and enhance the overall learning environment. These descriptive findings indicate that CRE teachers at UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli are perceived as demonstrating strong pedagogical competence across multiple instructional dimensions. This competence provides an important foundation for guiding students in internalizing Christian values, including appreciation for God's gifts as emphasized in Genesis 33:11. The analysis of the dependent variable, students' appreciation of God's gifts—also revealed generally high levels of gratitude-related attitudes and behaviors. Students reported strong agreement with statements indicating that they recognize their lives, families, education, and daily provisions as blessings from God. Items measuring awareness of God's grace, expression of thankfulness in prayer, and acknowledgment of God's role in providing material and relational blessings showed high mean scores.

Students also demonstrated positive attitudes toward sharing and generosity. Responses indicated that many students associated appreciation of God's gifts with a willingness to help others, share resources, and show kindness to peers. This suggests that students' understanding of gratitude extends beyond personal feelings of thankfulness to include relational and ethical dimensions. Such findings resonate with theological interpretations of Genesis 33:11, where Jacob's recognition of God's gracious provision is expressed through generosity and relational reconciliation (Wenham, 1994; Brueggemann, 2010). Students reported that they often connect biblical lessons on blessing and grace with their daily experiences, such as receiving support from family, succeeding in school, or enjoying friendships. These responses suggest that students are not merely memorizing biblical concepts but are beginning to integrate theological ideas into their personal interpretations of life events. From a Christian education perspective, this integration reflects a key goal of formative pedagogy, in which biblical narratives shape students' worldview and everyday decision-making (Groome, 2011; Pazmiño, 2008). The descriptive results indicate that students at UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli demonstrate a relatively strong sense of gratitude and appreciation for God's gifts. This provides empirical support for the effectiveness of CRE instruction in fostering affective and moral dimensions of faith, not only cognitive understanding.

Inferential analysis using Pearson's product-moment correlation revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' appreciation of God's gifts. The correlation coefficient indicated a moderate to strong positive association, suggesting that higher levels of perceived pedagogical competence are associated with higher levels of student gratitude and recognition of God's blessings. This finding supports the theoretical assumption that effective pedagogy plays a critical role in shaping students' affective and moral outcomes. When teachers demonstrate clarity, relevance, and relational engagement in their teaching, students are more likely to internalize theological values and translate them into personal attitudes and behaviors. This result is consistent with previous educational research indicating that teacher quality and pedagogical practices significantly influence not only academic achievement but also students' character and socio-emotional development (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Regression analysis further indicated that pedagogical competence significantly predicts students' appreciation of God's gifts. The regression model showed that pedagogical competence accounts for a meaningful proportion of variance in students' gratitude-related attitudes. This suggests that while other factors (such as family, church involvement, and personal spirituality) may also contribute to students' appreciation of God's gifts, teachers' pedagogical practices represent a substantial and measurable influence within the school context. This empirical relationship reinforces the idea that pedagogy is not a neutral or purely technical activity. Rather, pedagogy functions as a theological practice through which biblical values are mediated, interpreted, and embodied in the learning environment. Effective pedagogical competence thus becomes a key channel for translating the theological message of Genesis 33:11 into lived student experience. A closer examination of item-level responses suggests that certain pedagogical strategies are particularly influential in fostering students' appreciation of God's gifts. Students responded most positively to items related to teachers' use of concrete life examples, storytelling, and

discussion-based activities that connect biblical narratives with everyday experiences. These strategies appear to help students move beyond abstract theological concepts toward personal appropriation of biblical themes. This finding aligns with Groome's (2011) praxis-oriented model of Christian education, which emphasizes the importance of connecting faith narratives with learners' lived experiences. By situating Genesis 33:11 within students' daily realities, such as family relationships, school achievements, and material needs, teachers help students interpret their own lives through the lens of God's grace and provision. This pedagogical approach supports deeper internalization of gratitude as a spiritual and moral disposition. Students rated highly those items related to teachers' encouragement of reflection and prayer. This suggests that pedagogical competence includes not only instructional techniques but also spiritual practices integrated into the classroom. Encouraging students to pray in response to lessons on God's gifts reinforces the connection between cognitive learning and spiritual response. Such integration reflects Pazmiño's (2008) emphasis on holistic Christian education, where spiritual formation and academic learning are inseparable. The data also suggest that teachers' relational style plays a significant role in shaping students' gratitude. Items related to teacher kindness, patience, and personal attention were positively associated with students' appreciation of God's gifts. This indicates that students may interpret teachers' relational behavior as a concrete expression of God's care and grace. In this way, teachers' interpersonal conduct becomes a lived illustration of the biblical message, reinforcing the theological meaning of gratitude through everyday relationships.

The findings can be meaningfully interpreted through the theological lens of Genesis 33:11. In this verse, Jacob acknowledges that his possessions and circumstances are the result of God's gracious dealing with him. The narrative context emphasizes that gratitude is intertwined with humility, reconciliation, and generosity. This theological framework suggests that appreciation of God's gifts is not merely an internal attitude but is expressed through relational actions and ethical behavior. The quantitative results indicate that students' gratitude is similarly multidimensional. Students not only express thankfulness but also associate God's gifts with sharing, helping others, and maintaining positive relationships. This pattern reflects a pedagogical translation of the Genesis narrative into students' moral reasoning. Teachers' pedagogical competence appears to facilitate this translation by framing biblical texts in ways that highlight both personal and relational implications of gratitude. Brueggemann (2010) argues that Old Testament narratives often function as formative texts that shape community identity and ethical orientation. In this study, Genesis 33:11 functions as such a formative text, guiding students toward a theological understanding of blessing that emphasizes God's grace and human responsibility. The positive relationship between pedagogical competence and student gratitude suggests that teachers play a key mediating role in enabling this formative function of Scripture within the classroom. The specific context of UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli provides important interpretive insights into the findings. With 64 Christian students and 13 Christian teachers, the school represents a relatively supportive environment for integrating Christian values into daily educational practices. The presence of multiple Christian teachers may contribute to a broader school culture that reinforces biblical teachings and models gratitude through both formal and informal interactions. This supportive context may partially explain the generally high levels of

both perceived pedagogical competence and student appreciation of God's gifts. Students are likely exposed to consistent messages about gratitude not only in CRE classes but also through the broader school environment and teacher-student relationships. Such consistency enhances the likelihood that biblical values are reinforced across multiple contexts, supporting deeper internalization. This context also places responsibility on CRE teachers to maintain high pedagogical standards and theological coherence. The quantitative findings suggest that when pedagogical competence is strong, students' gratitude is also strong. This implies that any decline in pedagogical quality could potentially weaken the formative impact of CRE instruction. Therefore, continuous professional development in pedagogical competence remains essential, even in relatively supportive school environments.

The results of this study have several important implications for Christian Religious Education practice. The significant relationship between pedagogical competence and students' appreciation of God's gifts underscores the importance of investing in teacher professional development. Training programs for CRE teachers should emphasize not only biblical knowledge but also instructional strategies, classroom management, and relational skills that support value formation. The findings highlight the importance of contextualized pedagogy. Teachers who effectively connect Genesis 33:11 to students' real-life experiences appear to foster deeper gratitude and moral application. This suggests that CRE curricula should encourage the use of contextual examples, reflective activities, and student-centered learning approaches that make biblical teachings personally meaningful. The results emphasize the relational dimension of pedagogy. Students' positive responses to teachers' kindness, patience, and personal attention indicate that social-emotional aspects of teaching are integral to value formation. CRE teachers should therefore view relational engagement as a core component of pedagogical competence, not as an optional or secondary aspect of teaching. The integration of prayer and spiritual reflection into classroom practice appears to strengthen the connection between cognitive learning and spiritual response. This supports the inclusion of structured spiritual practices within CRE instruction as a means of reinforcing theological concepts and supporting holistic formation.

While the findings of this study provide valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study relies on student self-report data, which may be influenced by social desirability bias or limited self-awareness. Future studies could incorporate additional data sources, such as teacher self-assessments, classroom observations, or parent perspectives, to triangulate findings. The study is limited to a single school context, which may affect the generalizability of the results. Although the findings are meaningful for UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli, future research should include multiple schools across different regions to examine whether similar patterns emerge in diverse educational and cultural contexts. While the quantitative design allows for identification of relationships, it does not fully capture the qualitative processes through which pedagogical competence shapes students' gratitude. Future mixed-methods studies could explore these processes in greater depth, combining statistical analysis with interviews and observations to provide richer explanatory insights. The results and discussion demonstrate that pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers plays a significant role

in guiding students to appreciate God's gifts, as reflected in Genesis 33:11. The quantitative findings provide empirical support for theological and educational theories that emphasize the formative power of effective pedagogy in shaping students' moral and spiritual development. By integrating instructional clarity, contextual relevance, relational engagement, and spiritual practices, CRE teachers contribute meaningfully to students' understanding of God's grace and their lived expression of gratitude. The study affirms that pedagogical competence is not merely a technical dimension of teaching but a theologically informed practice that mediates biblical values into students' daily lives. The positive relationship between pedagogical competence and appreciation of God's gifts highlights the strategic role of CRE teachers in fostering gratitude as a central Christian virtue, contributing to the holistic formation of students within the educational setting.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in guiding students to appreciate God's gifts, grounded in the biblical reflection of Genesis 33:11, at UPTD SDN 074041 Lolomboli, Kota Gunungsitoli. The findings demonstrate that pedagogical competence is not merely a technical dimension of teaching but also a deeply spiritual and value-oriented practice that shapes students' understanding, attitudes, and character. Through effective lesson planning, contextual teaching strategies, appropriate assessment, and reflective classroom management, CRE teachers play a significant role in nurturing students' awareness of gratitude, humility, and responsible stewardship as expressions of appreciation for God's gifts. Quantitative results indicate a positive and significant relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence and students' appreciation of God's blessings. Students who were taught by teachers with stronger pedagogical skills, particularly in the areas of learner-centered instruction, meaningful biblical integration, and formative assessment, showed higher levels of understanding and internalization of gratitude values. This suggests that pedagogical competence directly contributes to the effectiveness of faith-based character education, especially in helping students connect biblical teachings with their daily experiences. The study highlights that the integration of Genesis 33:11 into instructional practices provides a strong theological and moral foundation for teaching gratitude. By contextualizing Jacob's expression of thankfulness and recognition of God's grace, teachers were able to facilitate reflective learning that encouraged students to see their own lives as recipients of divine blessings. This approach strengthened students' spiritual sensitivity and promoted a more holistic understanding of learning as both an academic and spiritual journey. The presence of 13 Christian teachers, including CRE teachers, within a school environment with 64 Christian students creates a supportive context for the cultivation of Christian values. This collective educational environment reinforces the impact of pedagogical competence, as consistent modeling, reinforcement, and integration of values across subjects contribute to the formation of students' character. The study therefore affirms that pedagogical competence is most effective when it is supported by a school culture that values faith-based education and character formation. This research confirms that the pedagogical competence of CRE teachers is a critical factor in guiding students to appreciate God's gifts in a meaningful and transformative way. The findings imply that continuous professional development in pedagogical skills, combined

with strong biblical integration, is essential for enhancing the quality of Christian Religious Education. Future studies are encouraged to explore longitudinal impacts and to include qualitative insights in order to deepen understanding of how pedagogical practices shape students' spiritual growth and character development over time. Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of literature that emphasizes the central role of competent, reflective, and spiritually grounded teachers in fostering gratitude and faith-based values in Christian education contexts.

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