



Pedagogical Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Instilling the Value of Spiritual Victory: A Reflection on Genesis 32:28 at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe

Karya Wati Ndruru

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

*correspondence: karyawatindruru3@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examines the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in instilling the value of spiritual victory based on Genesis 32:28 among students at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe, South Nias. Pedagogical competence plays a crucial role in shaping students' understanding of biblical teachings and their application in daily life. In the context of Christian education, teachers are expected not only to deliver religious knowledge but also to guide students toward spiritual maturity and character formation. The concept of spiritual victory reflected in Genesis 32:28, which describes Jacob's struggle with God and his transformation into Israel, provides a theological foundation for teaching perseverance, faith, and spiritual resilience. This research employed a quantitative descriptive approach involving the entire Christian school community as respondents, consisting of 84 Christian students and 18 Christian teachers. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a Likert scale to measure perceptions of teachers' pedagogical competence and students' understanding of the value of spiritual victory. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to identify patterns in respondents' perceptions. The findings indicate that Christian Religious Education teachers demonstrate generally strong pedagogical competence in understanding students' characteristics, designing contextual learning activities, and implementing interactive teaching strategies. The study concludes that pedagogical competence significantly contributes to the successful internalization of biblical values among students. By integrating effective teaching strategies with theological reflection on Genesis 32:28, Christian Religious Education teachers can foster students' spiritual growth and help them develop a resilient faith in the midst of contemporary challenges.

Keywords: *Pedagogical Competence, Christian Religious Education, Spiritual Victory*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are not only responsible for delivering academic knowledge but also for guiding students toward spiritual maturity and moral integrity. The success of this process is strongly influenced by the pedagogical competence of teachers. Pedagogical competence

refers to the ability of teachers to understand students' characteristics, design effective learning strategies, implement meaningful teaching, and evaluate learning outcomes in a way that supports students' holistic development. According to Shulman (1987), effective teaching requires the integration of subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge so that learning becomes meaningful and transformative for students. In Christian education, this integration also involves the ability to relate biblical teachings to the real-life experiences of learners. Christian Religious Education aims to help students understand biblical truths and apply Christian values in their daily lives. One important biblical value that can shape students' spiritual character is the concept of spiritual victory. This concept is illustrated in the narrative of Jacob wrestling with God in Genesis 32:28, where Jacob receives the new name Israel after persevering in his struggle. The passage states that Jacob has "struggled with God and with humans and has overcome." This story reflects the theological meaning of perseverance, transformation, and divine encounter. According to Brueggemann (2010), the transformation of Jacob's identity in this passage symbolizes the spiritual process through which individuals encounter God through struggle and ultimately experience renewal and blessing. Thus, Genesis 32:28 provides a powerful theological foundation for teaching students about resilience, faith, and spiritual triumph. In the contemporary educational context, students are confronted with various challenges that affect their character formation and spiritual development. The rapid growth of digital technology, social media, and global cultural influences has created new pressures that often lead to confusion about identity, values, and purpose. Adolescents, in particular, are at a crucial stage of personal and spiritual development where they seek meaning and direction in life. Fowler (1981) explains that during adolescence individuals begin to develop a more reflective and personal understanding of faith. At this stage, guidance from teachers becomes essential in helping students interpret religious teachings and integrate them into their daily experiences. Therefore, Christian Religious Education teachers must possess strong pedagogical competence so that biblical values can be communicated effectively and contextually.

The value of spiritual victory derived from Genesis 32:28 is especially relevant for students who face various academic, social, and emotional challenges. Spiritual victory does not merely refer to physical success or external achievement but rather to the ability to remain faithful and steadfast in the midst of life's struggles. Wright (2004) emphasizes that biblical narratives often communicate theological truths through stories of struggle and transformation, encouraging believers to trust in God's guidance and perseverance. When teachers effectively explain such narratives, students can develop deeper spiritual awareness and resilience. Therefore, pedagogical competence is necessary to transform biblical stories into meaningful lessons that inspire students to develop strong faith and moral character. Teacher competence has also been widely recognized as one of the most significant factors affecting educational quality. Research on teacher effectiveness shows that competent teachers can create learning environments that foster motivation, engagement, and character development among students. Darling-Hammond (2006) argues that teachers who possess strong pedagogical skills are better able to design learning experiences that respond to students' needs and encourage active participation. In the context of Christian Religious Education, this competence includes the ability to interpret scripture, connect biblical teachings with contemporary life, and facilitate

reflective discussions that deepen students' understanding of faith. The educational context of SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe in South Nias provides an interesting setting for examining the role of pedagogical competence in Christian Religious Education. The school community includes 84 Christian students and 18 teachers who share the same religious background, creating an environment where Christian values can be integrated into the learning process. However, despite the presence of a supportive religious environment, the effectiveness of biblical teaching still depends on how teachers communicate and contextualize spiritual messages for students. Teachers must be able to translate theological concepts into practical lessons that resonate with students' experiences and challenges. Although many studies have examined teacher competence in general education, relatively few studies specifically explore how pedagogical competence contributes to the teaching of biblical values in Christian Religious Education. This gap highlights the importance of examining how teachers apply pedagogical strategies to instill spiritual values derived from scripture. Therefore, this study seeks to analyze the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in instilling the value of spiritual victory based on Genesis 32:28 among students at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe, South Nias. By examining the teaching practices and learning experiences within this context, the study aims to provide insights into how effective pedagogy can support the spiritual formation of students in Christian educational settings.

METHODS

Quantitative research was selected because it enables researchers to measure educational phenomena through numerical data and analyze patterns using statistical procedures. Quantitative approaches are widely used in educational research to examine relationships between teaching practices and learning outcomes in a systematic and objective manner (Creswell, 2014). The research was conducted in the educational environment of SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe, a vocational high school located in South Nias, Indonesia. The population of this study consisted of all Christian members of the school community who were directly involved in the process of Christian Religious Education. The population included 84 Christian students and 18 Christian teachers, resulting in a total population of 102 participants. Considering that the number of participants was relatively manageable, the study applied a total sampling technique, in which all members of the population were included as research respondents. Total sampling is appropriate when the entire population can be reached and when researchers aim to obtain comprehensive data representing the whole group (Sugiyono, 2017). Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure two main aspects: the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers and the effectiveness of teaching in instilling the value of spiritual victory derived from Genesis 32:28. The questionnaire was constructed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), to strongly agree (5). Likert-scale instruments are commonly used in social and educational research to measure perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs because they allow respondents to express varying degrees of agreement toward specific statements (Likert, 1932). The questionnaire items were developed based on indicators of pedagogical competence in education. These indicators included teachers' ability to understand students' characteristics, plan learning

activities, implement contextual teaching methods, encourage active participation, and evaluate learning outcomes effectively. In addition, several items measured students' understanding and internalization of the value of spiritual victory, including perseverance in facing difficulties, trust in God during challenges, and personal transformation inspired by biblical teachings. The conceptual framework of pedagogical competence used in this study refers to the work of Shulman (1987), who emphasized that effective teaching involves the integration of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to create meaningful learning experiences. Before the instrument was used in the field, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the quality of the research instrument. Content validity was examined through expert judgment involving scholars in Christian Religious Education and educational research methodology. This process aimed to determine whether the questionnaire items accurately represented the constructs being measured. Reliability testing was conducted using internal consistency analysis to determine the stability and consistency of the instrument. Reliability is essential in quantitative research because it indicates the extent to which a measurement instrument produces consistent results under similar conditions (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). The data collection process was carried out by distributing questionnaires directly to respondents during scheduled school activities. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were informed about the purpose of the research and were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Ethical considerations were emphasized to ensure voluntary participation and honest responses from all participants. After the data were collected, they were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including the calculation of mean scores, percentages, and categorical interpretations. Descriptive statistics allow researchers to summarize large amounts of data and identify patterns or tendencies within the responses of participants (Field, 2013). The results of the analysis were then interpreted to determine the level of pedagogical competence demonstrated by Christian Religious Education teachers and how effectively the value of spiritual victory based on Genesis 32:28 was instilled among students. Through this methodological approach, the study aims to provide empirical insights into how pedagogical competence contributes to the spiritual formation of students in Christian Religious Education. The findings are expected to offer valuable perspectives for improving teaching strategies that integrate biblical values with effective pedagogical practices.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study regarding the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in instilling the value of spiritual victory based on Genesis 32:28 among students at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe, South Nias. The analysis focuses on how pedagogical competence is demonstrated in the teaching process and how students respond to the integration of biblical values within the classroom learning environment. The discussion integrates statistical interpretation with theological reflection to explain how the value of spiritual victory can be effectively communicated through pedagogical practice. The respondents in this study consisted of 102 participants from the school community, including 84 Christian students and 18 Christian teachers. These respondents represent the entire Christian population within the school environment, allowing the research findings to reflect the general educational dynamics of Christian Religious Education at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe. The inclusion of both

students and teachers provides a broader perspective regarding how pedagogical competence is perceived and implemented within the learning process. Students participating in this research are generally adolescents who are in a crucial stage of psychological and spiritual development. According to Fowler (1981), adolescence is a critical stage in which individuals begin to construct personal faith and seek meaning in religious teachings. During this stage, students require guidance from educators who can help them interpret religious messages in ways that are relevant to their daily lives. Therefore, the role of teachers becomes highly significant in facilitating spiritual understanding and character formation.

One important indicator of pedagogical competence is the ability of teachers to understand students' characteristics, including their learning styles, emotional conditions, and spiritual needs. The data collected from the questionnaire indicate that most respondents agreed that Christian Religious Education teachers demonstrate an adequate understanding of students' characteristics. The majority of respondents selected "agree" or "strongly agree" for statements related to teachers' sensitivity toward students' learning difficulties, emotional challenges, and spiritual questions. This finding indicates that teachers attempt to approach students not only as learners but also as individuals who are experiencing complex developmental processes. Effective teachers recognize that students learn in different ways and therefore require varied teaching strategies. Shulman (1987) explains that pedagogical competence involves the ability to transform subject matter into forms that are understandable and meaningful for learners. In the context of Christian Religious Education, this transformation includes explaining biblical narratives in ways that resonate with students' experiences. The narrative of Jacob wrestling with God in Genesis 32:28 provides a meaningful example for students who are struggling with challenges in their lives. Teachers who understand students' personal struggles can relate the biblical story to students' real-life experiences, such as academic pressures, family difficulties, or peer relationships. By doing so, the biblical message becomes relevant and inspiring rather than abstract or distant from everyday life.

Another indicator of pedagogical competence examined in this study is teachers' ability to design learning activities that effectively integrate biblical values. The questionnaire results show that most respondents perceive that Christian Religious Education teachers prepare their lessons carefully and attempt to incorporate scriptural teachings into classroom discussions. Effective learning planning involves selecting teaching methods, learning materials, and evaluation strategies that support students' understanding. According to Darling-Hammond (2006), teachers who demonstrate strong pedagogical competence are able to design learning experiences that promote critical thinking, reflection, and active engagement among students. In Christian Religious Education, this process also includes selecting biblical passages that communicate meaningful spiritual values. Genesis 32:28 was used in this study as a central biblical reference to teach the value of spiritual victory. The story describes Jacob's struggle with a divine being, which ultimately results in his transformation and the granting of a new identity. Brueggemann (2010) explains that this narrative illustrates the profound spiritual reality that transformation often occurs through struggle and perseverance. When teachers present this narrative in the classroom, students are encouraged to reflect on their own struggles

and consider how faith can provide strength and guidance. Teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe reportedly integrate this narrative into their teaching by encouraging students to discuss personal experiences of overcoming difficulties. Through such discussions, students are able to connect the biblical message with their own life situations. This approach reflects an important aspect of pedagogical competence, namely the ability to contextualize religious teachings within the lived experiences of learners.

The effectiveness of Christian Religious Education also depends on the teaching strategies used by teachers during classroom instruction. The findings indicate that teachers often employ interactive methods such as discussions, group reflections, and question-and-answer sessions. These strategies encourage students to participate actively in the learning process rather than simply receiving information passively. Interactive teaching methods are particularly important in religious education because spiritual values are best understood through reflection and dialogue. Wright (2004) emphasizes that biblical narratives invite believers to engage in interpretive reflection, allowing them to discover deeper meanings within the text. When teachers facilitate open discussions about biblical stories, students have the opportunity to express their thoughts, doubts, and personal insights. In the case of Genesis 32:28, students were encouraged to reflect on the meaning of "spiritual victory." Many students interpreted this concept as the ability to remain faithful despite challenges or failures. Some students associated spiritual victory with overcoming personal weaknesses, such as fear, discouragement, or negative influences from peers. These interpretations demonstrate that students are capable of understanding biblical teachings in ways that are relevant to their daily lives. The use of participatory teaching methods also fosters a sense of community within the classroom. Students feel more comfortable sharing their experiences and supporting one another in their spiritual journeys. This collaborative learning environment strengthens students' sense of belonging and encourages them to develop deeper relationships with their peers and teachers.

The data analysis indicates that students generally demonstrate a positive understanding of the value of spiritual victory. Many respondents agreed that the teaching of Genesis 32:28 helped them realize that struggles and challenges are part of spiritual growth. Students also expressed agreement with statements indicating that faith in God can provide strength to face life's difficulties. This finding reflects the effectiveness of contextual biblical teaching. When biblical narratives are explained in ways that connect with students' experiences, they become powerful tools for character formation. According to Wright (2004), the ethical teachings of the Old Testament often emerge from narratives that illustrate human struggle and divine faithfulness. These narratives encourage believers to trust God even in difficult circumstances. For students in a vocational school environment, the concept of spiritual victory can also be related to perseverance in academic and professional development. Vocational education often involves practical challenges that require discipline, patience, and resilience. The story of Jacob's perseverance can inspire students to approach these challenges with determination and faith.

The findings of this study confirm that teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' spiritual character. Pedagogical competence enables teachers to create learning experiences that encourage reflection, moral development, and spiritual awareness. Teachers who demonstrate empathy, creativity, and strong biblical understanding are more likely to influence students positively. Darling-Hammond (2006) emphasizes that effective teachers contribute not only to academic achievement but also to students' personal and moral development. In Christian Religious Education, this responsibility becomes even more significant because teachers are expected to serve as role models who demonstrate Christian values in their attitudes and behavior. At SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe, teachers who consistently demonstrate integrity, patience, and compassion provide powerful examples for students. These personal qualities reinforce the biblical messages taught in the classroom and strengthen students' trust in their teachers. When students observe authentic Christian character in their teachers, they are more likely to internalize the values being taught.

The results of this study highlight several important implications for the development of Christian Religious Education. Pedagogical competence must remain a priority in teacher development programs. Teachers require ongoing training and professional support to improve their ability to communicate biblical teachings effectively. The integration of biblical narratives with students' real-life experiences should be emphasized in Christian Religious Education. Stories such as Jacob's struggle in Genesis 32:28 provide powerful opportunities for students to reflect on their own spiritual journeys. Teachers should encourage students to explore the personal meaning of these narratives rather than merely memorizing biblical information. Interactive and participatory teaching methods should continue to be promoted in religious education classrooms. Discussions, reflections, and collaborative learning activities create opportunities for students to engage deeply with biblical teachings and develop critical thinking skills. Christian Religious Education should emphasize character formation alongside cognitive learning. The ultimate goal of religious education is not merely the acquisition of theological knowledge but the transformation of students' attitudes and behavior. By focusing on values such as perseverance, faith, and spiritual resilience, teachers can help students develop strong moral foundations that will guide them throughout their lives.

One of the most significant contributions of this study is the demonstration of how pedagogy and theology can be integrated within Christian Religious Education. Pedagogical competence provides the methodological framework through which biblical teachings can be communicated effectively, while theology provides the spiritual content that shapes students' character and worldview. The narrative of Genesis 32:28 serves as a powerful example of this integration. The story illustrates the transformative encounter between humanity and God, highlighting the importance of perseverance and faith. When teachers present this narrative using effective pedagogical strategies, students are able to grasp its theological meaning and apply it to their own lives. This synthesis of pedagogy and theology represents an essential dimension of Christian education. Teachers must not only understand biblical teachings but also possess the pedagogical skills necessary to communicate these teachings in ways that inspire and transform students.

The findings of this study indicate that the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe plays a significant role in instilling the value of spiritual victory among students. Teachers demonstrate an ability to understand students' characteristics, design contextual learning experiences, and employ interactive teaching strategies that encourage active participation. Students respond positively to these teaching approaches and demonstrate an increased awareness of the importance of perseverance, faith, and spiritual resilience. The integration of Genesis 32:28 into classroom instruction provides a meaningful framework for discussing the challenges and struggles that students encounter in their lives. These findings suggest that effective Christian Religious Education requires both strong theological understanding and well-developed pedagogical competence. When these elements are combined, teachers can create transformative learning experiences that nurture students' spiritual growth and prepare them to face the challenges of contemporary life with faith and resilience.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in instilling the value of spiritual victory based on Genesis 32:28 among students at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe, South Nias. The findings demonstrate that pedagogical competence plays a crucial role in shaping students' understanding of biblical values and their application in daily life. Teachers who possess strong pedagogical abilities are able to design meaningful learning experiences, connect biblical narratives with students' real-life challenges, and foster an environment that encourages reflection, participation, and spiritual growth. The results indicate that Christian Religious Education teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Hilisalawa Ahe generally demonstrate adequate pedagogical competence in several important aspects, including understanding students' characteristics, planning contextual learning activities, implementing interactive teaching strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. These competencies enable teachers to communicate biblical teachings effectively and make them relevant to students' personal experiences. As a result, students are able to engage more deeply with the message of Scripture and develop a clearer understanding of the value of spiritual victory. The narrative of Genesis 32:28 provides a powerful theological foundation for teaching students about perseverance, faith, and transformation. The story of Jacob wrestling with God illustrates that spiritual victory often emerges through struggle and persistence. When this narrative is explained through effective pedagogical approaches, students are encouraged to reflect on their own challenges and recognize that difficulties can become opportunities for spiritual growth. This contextual interpretation helps students understand that spiritual victory is not merely about external success but about maintaining faith and resilience in the midst of life's trials. The study highlights that interactive teaching methods, such as classroom discussions and reflective dialogue, contribute significantly to students' engagement and comprehension. These methods allow students to express their thoughts, ask questions, and connect biblical teachings with their personal experiences. Such learning environments promote deeper understanding and encourage students to internalize Christian values more effectively. Another important finding is that the personal example of teachers plays a significant role in the process of spiritual character formation. Teachers who demonstrate integrity, patience, and compassion serve as living examples of the values they teach. This authenticity strengthens students'

trust and motivates them to adopt similar attitudes in their own lives. Therefore, pedagogical competence in Christian Religious Education should not only involve instructional skills but also the embodiment of Christian character. Based on these findings, this study suggests that the development of pedagogical competence among Christian Religious Education teachers should remain a priority in educational institutions. Continuous professional development programs are needed to enhance teachers' ability to integrate biblical theology with effective pedagogical strategies. Such training can equip teachers with innovative teaching methods that make religious education more engaging, relevant, and transformative for students. In conclusion, the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education teachers significantly influences the success of biblical value formation among students. Through effective teaching strategies and contextual interpretation of Scripture, teachers can help students understand and internalize the value of spiritual victory as taught in Genesis 32:28. By fostering perseverance, faith, and resilience, Christian Religious Education can contribute to the development of students who are spiritually strong and morally grounded, enabling them to face the challenges of contemporary life with confidence and trust in God.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brueggemann, W. (2010). *Genesis: Interpretation: A Bible commentary for teaching and preaching*. Westminster John Knox Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. Jossey-Bass.
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Fowler, J. W. (1981). *Stages of faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning*. Harper & Row.
- Kerlinger, F. N., & Lee, H. B. (2000). *Foundations of behavioral research* (4th ed.). Harcourt College Publishers.
- Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 140, 1–55.
- Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1–22.
<https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.57.1.j463w79r56455411>
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode penelitian pendidikan: Pendekatan kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Wright, C. J. H. (2004). *Old Testament ethics for the people of God*. InterVarsity Press.