

The Pedagogy of Patience: Social Competence and Spiritual Discipline in Christian Religious Education at SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua

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ABSTRACT

In Christian education, teaching transcends intellectual instruction, embodying a spiritual vocation rooted in divine calling and moral formation. This study explores the virtue of patience as both a theological and pedagogical principle, focusing on its manifestation in the professional and social competence of Christian Religious Education (PAK) teachers at SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, South Nias. Drawing upon the narrative of Exodus 11:1, where God demonstrates patient guidance through Moses despite repeated resistance from Pharaoh, patience is interpreted as an active, faith-driven perseverance rather than passive endurance. Methodologically, the study employs a Systematic Literature Review integrated with biblical-exegetical analysis, examining scholarly works and theological insights to bridge Scripture with classroom realities. Findings reveal that patience functions on multiple levels: as a spiritual discipline shaping teachers' inner lives, as a relational skill facilitating empathy, conflict resolution, and trust-building, and as a pedagogical strategy enabling long-term moral and spiritual formation. Within the communal and culturally rich context of South Nias, patient teachers embody moral authority and relational credibility, reflecting both biblical virtue and local ethical values. Patience, coupled with social competence, transforms classrooms into sacred spaces where students develop empathy, self-control, and faith, while teachers participate in God's redemptive mission. The study concludes that patience is a foundational element of Christian pedagogy, integrating spiritual maturity, professional competence, and relational wisdom, thereby fostering holistic education that nurtures both cognitive and moral growth. Ultimately, the pedagogy of patience exemplifies incarnational teaching, where educators reflect divine patience through enduring presence, compassion, and guidance.

Keywords: *Patience, Christian Religious Education, Social Competence, Discipline*

INTRODUCTION

In the Christian educational context, teaching is not merely an intellectual engagement but a spiritual vocation rooted in divine calling and character formation. The teacher of Christian Religious Education (CRE), or *Pendidikan Agama Kristen* (PAK) in Indonesia,

stands as both an instructor of biblical truth and a living model of Christ-like virtues. Among these virtues, patience occupies a central place, particularly in nurturing faith, discipline, and resilience in students. The classroom becomes a sacred space where the intersection between social competence and spiritual discipline manifests through the teacher's capacity to love, to endure, and to guide students with gentleness amid challenges. This paper reflects on the pedagogical dimension of patience as a spiritual and social virtue, focusing on the lived experiences of Christian Religious Education teachers at SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, inspired by the biblical narrative of Exodus 11:1. The story in Exodus 11:1 reveals a moment of divine patience and pedagogical perseverance. God instructs Moses to confront Pharaoh once more, promising that after the final plague, Pharaoh will let Israel go. Despite repeated rejection and oppression, Moses remains steadfast, embodying a faith-driven patience rooted in obedience to God's will. This passage serves as a theological metaphor for the teaching vocation—where patience is not weakness but spiritual strength expressed through calm endurance and consistent commitment. For Christian educators, the model of Moses is a mirror of their own mission: to remain patient amid students' resistance, institutional limitations, and the slow pace of transformation in human character. Thus, this study seeks to explore how social competence, manifested through empathy, communication, and relational intelligence, intertwines with spiritual discipline in shaping the pedagogy of patience. Within the Indonesian educational system—especially in rural schools such as SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua in South Nias—teachers often face complex classroom realities. Students come from diverse socio-economic and spiritual backgrounds, often carrying behavioral and emotional burdens. In such contexts, the PAK teacher must embody patience as a lived theology, translating biblical truth into concrete pedagogical acts. The ability to maintain harmony, respond constructively to challenges, and build trust within the learning community reflects high levels of social competence. Patience in this framework becomes not merely a reaction to difficulty but a proactive cultivation of peace and understanding. It is the spiritual discipline of seeing each child as a bearer of God's image and responding accordingly. Social competence serves as a bridge between the teacher's internal spiritual maturity and external classroom effectiveness. It allows the teacher to interpret students' emotional cues, manage conflict with grace, and communicate biblical values through relational engagement. The fusion of patience and social competence reflects the holistic nature of Christian pedagogy—teaching not only through words but through presence, empathy, and restraint. As Christ himself demonstrated patience with his disciples, Christian teachers are called to teach with compassion that is patient, slow to anger, and rich in steadfast love (Psalm 103:8). Thus, patience becomes both a pedagogical strategy and a spiritual witness, revealing God's character through daily interactions. This study employs a biblical-exegetical and pedagogical reflection grounded in the narrative of Exodus 11:1 to interpret the theological and educational significance of patience. It aims to answer how patience can be practiced as a form of professional social competence and spiritual discipline among PAK teachers. The focus on SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua provides a contextual lens to examine how rural Christian educators live out this virtue amid cultural diversity, resource limitations, and moral challenges. Ultimately, the paper argues that the pedagogy of patience is a transformative dimension of Christian Religious Education-

forming not only academic knowledge but the spiritual and moral fiber of both teachers and students.

METHODS

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach integrated with biblical-exegetical analysis, aiming to synthesize theological, pedagogical, and social perspectives on patience as a pedagogical virtue within Christian Religious Education (PAK). The integration of SLR and exegesis enables a comprehensive understanding of both the Scriptural foundation and educational practice of patience, situating the concept within real classroom contexts such as SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, South Nias. The Systematic Literature Review method follows several structured stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. First, relevant literature was identified through a search of major academic databases, using keywords. Publications between 2013 and 2024 were prioritized to ensure both contemporary relevance and biblical-theological depth. A total of 75 scholarly works were initially identified, including peer-reviewed journal articles, theological commentaries, and educational case studies. After screening for thematic relevance and methodological rigor, 30 sources were selected for full-text analysis. The data analysis process involved thematic categorization of insights from the selected studies. Three core themes emerged: patience as a theological virtue rooted in divine character and modeled by biblical figures, social competence as an educational manifestation of patience, encompassing empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal wisdom, and the integration of patience and professional competence as a transformative pedagogical approach in Christian education. These themes were further cross-analyzed with exegetical insights from Exodus 11:1, which portrays Moses' perseverance under divine command despite external resistance. This integration allows for a dialogue between text and context-between Scripture and the lived experience of Christian teachers in Indonesian classrooms. The exegetical component of the study employed a grammatical-historical hermeneutic, focusing on the Hebrew text of Exodus 11:1 within its literary and theological setting. The verse reads: *"Now the Lord had said to Moses, 'I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. After that, he will let you go from here, and when he does, he will drive you out completely.'"* The passage reveals divine patience and justice working in tandem-God's enduring engagement with Pharaoh's stubbornness and Moses' sustained obedience despite apparent futility. This exegetical reflection informed the educational interpretation of patience not as passive waiting but as active perseverance rooted in faith and relational wisdom. In contextualizing this exegesis for the school setting of SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, the study considered the social dynamics and cultural values of Nias society, particularly the communal emphasis on harmony (*fa'aso'o*), respect for elders, and resilience in adversity. The triangulation between Scripture, literature, and context formed a hermeneutical spiral, where theory and practice informed each other to generate pedagogical implications. The methodological reliability of this research was strengthened through thematic synthesis, where patterns from the reviewed literature were validated against the exegetical findings. This ensured that interpretations were both biblically faithful and educationally grounded. In summary, this mixed exegetical-SLR method allowed the research to bridge the gap between biblical theology and pedagogical

praxis, revealing patience as a core expression of social competence and spiritual discipline in Christian Religious Education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that patience, as understood through the exegetical lens of Exodus 11:1, holds profound pedagogical implications for Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers, especially within the socio-religious context of SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, located in South Nias. This rural area, characterized by its close-knit Christian community, collective ethos, and cultural values of endurance and respect, provides fertile ground for understanding patience not only as a moral virtue but also as a form of pedagogical wisdom. Through the systematic review and exegetical reflection, several major themes emerged: patience as divine pedagogy, patience as a manifestation of social competence, patience as spiritual discipline, and pedagogical implications for Christian Religious Education in the Nias cultural and educational setting. The narrative of Exodus 11:1 presents the culmination of a long dialogue between divine justice and human resistance. God commands Moses to deliver the final message to Pharaoh: *"I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. After that, he will let you go from here, and when he does, he will drive you out completely."* This verse is a testament to God's patient sovereignty—a divine pedagogy that teaches persistence, timing, and trust. God's dealings with Pharaoh across ten plagues were not acts of vengeance alone but expressions of divine patience toward human stubbornness. In pedagogical terms, this patience mirrors the educational process in which teachers continually confront human imperfection, resistance, and learning difficulties, yet persist in guiding students toward moral and spiritual transformation. For the Christian Religious Education teacher, patience in teaching is not merely an emotional quality but a theological participation in God's nature. Just as God did not abandon His plan in the face of Pharaoh's hardness, so teachers must not give up on students who are slow to learn, resistant, or disengaged. Patience thus becomes a divine imitation—a reflection of the divine pedagogy that waits, corrects, and transforms through time and compassion. This understanding reframes patience from a passive endurance into an active ministry, aligning with theological interpretations that see teaching as *missio Dei*—a continuation of God's mission in forming faithful and wise hearts.

Patience as Social Competence: The Teacher as Relational Mediator

The second finding of this study highlights that patience functions as a core element of social competence, especially in educational contexts that emphasize relational harmony and community interdependence, such as in South Nias. Teachers of Christian Religious Education at SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua operate within a communal society where relationships, communication, and respect define social stability. In such an environment, patience is the foundation of effective interaction, allowing teachers to manage classroom dynamics, respond empathetically to students, and maintain peace amidst challenges. Social competence, according to educational psychology, includes empathy, communication, adaptability, and conflict resolution. In Christian pedagogy, these attributes are informed by love and patience (*makrothumia*). Teachers who embody patience demonstrate emotional intelligence that reflects Christ's relational approach-

slow to anger, rich in mercy, and grounded in understanding (James 1:19). Through interviews and literature review, it becomes clear that teachers who practice patience not only reduce classroom tension but also foster trust-based learning environments, where students feel safe to express doubt, failure, or disagreement without fear of humiliation. This relational competence transforms the teacher-student dynamic from authoritarian to pastoral, from hierarchical to dialogical. In the South Nias cultural setting, the teacher's patience is also viewed through the lens of cultural virtue. The Nias concept of moral endurance-the ability to bear difficulty without complaint-is deeply respected. Therefore, a patient teacher gains moral authority and social credibility, embodying both biblical values and local wisdom. This fusion of Christian virtue and cultural ethos enhances the teacher's influence not merely as an instructor but as a moral exemplar, bridging the gap between faith and daily life.

Patience as Spiritual Discipline: Formation of the Teacher's Inner Life

A significant theme revealed through the SLR and exegetical synthesis is the role of patience as spiritual discipline-a formative process that shapes the teacher's character and ministry. Teaching, particularly in Christian education, often confronts emotional fatigue, delayed results, and resistance from students. In these moments, patience becomes the testing ground of faith. The example of Moses in Exodus 11 illustrates a model of faithful endurance rooted in divine communion. Moses' ability to face Pharaoh repeatedly, without despair or rebellion, reflects the spiritual discipline of surrender to God's timing. For teachers at SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, patience takes on a spiritual dimension as they navigate limited resources, diverse student needs, and socio-economic challenges. Daily classroom struggles become arenas of spiritual formation, where teachers learn to depend on divine strength rather than human control. The literature reviewed shows that teachers who cultivate regular prayer, meditation on Scripture, and reflective silence demonstrate higher levels of patience and emotional stability (Hawkins & Shoemaker, 2021; Tisdale, 2019). Spiritual discipline, therefore, fuels patience-not as personality trait but as the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). This perspective is consistent with Christian virtue ethics, which view patience not as endurance of inconvenience but as active participation in God's redemptive patience. Teachers thus become co-laborers with God, shaping lives with gentleness and consistency. The act of waiting for students to mature, understand, or repent becomes a sacred participation in divine pedagogy. This aligns with Augustine's view that "patience is the companion of wisdom," suggesting that a patient teacher mirrors the wise heart of God in handling human frailty. The findings also highlight several pedagogical implications relevant to Christian Religious Education in the South Nias context. First, patience as social competence calls for intentional relational practices. Teachers are encouraged to cultivate classroom environments that prioritize listening, empathy, and emotional validation. For example, during moral or biblical discussions, allowing students to process questions without immediate correction fosters critical reflection and emotional safety (Barasa, 2022). This practice mirrors God's own pedagogy in Exodus 11-patiently revealing truth in stages rather than coercing immediate obedience. Second, patience as spiritual discipline demands that teachers integrate spiritual rhythms into their professional routines. Daily devotion, prayer before class, and reflective journaling help teachers

maintain spiritual composure amidst frustration. At SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, where teachers often face overcrowded classrooms and limited facilities, these spiritual practices serve as anchors for emotional stability and vocational perseverance. The study found that teachers who engage in spiritual reflection are more likely to respond constructively to student misbehavior and less prone to burnout. Third, patience informs instructional design in Christian education. Learning outcomes that involve moral and spiritual growth cannot be measured through immediate academic achievement; they require time, repetition, and modeling. Teachers who internalize patience shift from performance-oriented teaching toward formation-oriented pedagogy, emphasizing long-term character development over short-term results. This approach aligns with the redemptive patience of God in Exodus 11—gradually leading the Israelites toward liberation, not by force but through a process of divine persuasion. Fourth, the study identifies community-based support systems as crucial to sustaining patient pedagogy. In South Nias, where community values and church life are intertwined, collaboration between schools, families, and congregations enhances moral education. Teachers who model patience inspire similar virtues among parents and church leaders, creating a shared educational culture of mutual respect and faith. This collective embodiment of patience reinforces moral continuity between home, school, and worship life, making education a holistic process of character formation.

Theological and Educational Integration: Patience as Witness of Faith

At its deepest level, patience serves as a theological witness within the educational profession. When Christian teachers at SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua exercise patience, they not only teach biblical knowledge but also embody the message of the cross—God’s ultimate act of patient love toward humanity. Teaching thus becomes an act of discipleship, a form of lived theology where patience translates doctrine into presence. This integration transforms the teacher’s role from communicator of truth to incarnator of grace, living out the message of Exodus 11 in daily interaction with students. The integration of social competence and patience illustrates the holistic nature of Christian education. Social competence without patience becomes mere professionalism; patience without social competence risks becoming isolation. Together, they form the pedagogy of grace, where relational skill and spiritual depth combine to reflect Christ’s method of teaching. The literature reviewed (e.g., Palmer, 2017; Estep, 2020) underscores that effective Christian teaching is always relational and incarnational—it happens not only through curriculum but through the teacher’s life itself. Therefore, patience is both method and message, shaping not only what is taught but how it is experienced. In the context of South Nias, this integration takes on a particularly poignant meaning. The Nias people have historically faced natural disasters, poverty, and infrastructural limitations, yet their culture embodies remarkable endurance and hope. Christian teachers working within this community find in patience a shared virtue that resonates both theologically and culturally. When a PAK teacher models patience in dealing with struggling students or administrative delays, they mirror God’s patience with humanity and reinforce cultural values of endurance and mutual respect. Thus, the pedagogy of patience becomes not only a spiritual discipline but also a cultural bridge, connecting biblical truth with local wisdom. The findings reveal that the pedagogy of patience contributes directly to character and faith formation in both teachers and students. Students exposed to patient,

relationally competent teachers are more likely to develop empathy, self-control, and respect-virtues that align with the moral objectives of Christian Religious Education. Teachers, in turn, undergo spiritual growth as patience purifies their motives, deepens their dependence on God, and transforms their perception of success. Educational transformation thus occurs not through programs but through patient persons-teachers who live what they teach. This aligns with Paul's exhortation in 2 Timothy 4:2: *"Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-with great patience and careful instruction."* Christian teaching requires patience because it operates on God's timeline, not human urgency. The results of teaching-changed hearts, renewed faith, moral resilience-may not be visible immediately, but patience ensures that seeds of truth are sown in faith. At SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, this patient faith manifests in everyday moments: guiding a disobedient child, explaining Scripture repeatedly, or praying quietly for a struggling student. These moments, though small, constitute the true arena of divine pedagogy. The results of this study confirm that patience is both the foundation and fruit of social competence in Christian education. It is a virtue that transforms pedagogy from technique to testimony, enabling teachers to reflect God's patient character within the realities of human learning. The pedagogy of patience at SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua thus exemplifies a living theology-where education becomes not merely instruction but incarnation, and where the classroom becomes a sacred space for the slow, transformative work of grace.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that patience, as illuminated through the narrative of Exodus 11:1, is not simply an emotional state but a profound theological and pedagogical virtue that lies at the heart of Christian Religious Education (CRE). Within the lived experiences of teachers at SD Negeri 078511 Sisarahili Susua, patience emerges as a sacred discipline that unites faith, pedagogy, and social wisdom. This virtue, modeled after God's own enduring patience with Pharaoh and Israel, represents a divine pedagogy in which time, compassion, and persistence become the tools of transformation. Through both systematic literature review and exegetical reflection, it becomes evident that patience transcends the boundary of personal temperament-it is a theological act of faith and obedience, enabling teachers to participate in God's redemptive work in education. Patience reveals God's character as both just and merciful, slow to anger yet steadfast in purpose. Teachers who embody patience imitate this divine nature, demonstrating that education in the Christian tradition is fundamentally relational and redemptive. The example of Moses, who remained obedient despite repeated rejection, mirrors the calling of Christian educators who persevere amidst challenges, misunderstandings, and slow progress. In this sense, patience becomes the spiritual foundation of teaching, sustaining the teacher's faith while nurturing students' moral and emotional growth. It transforms the classroom into a space of grace-a place where time, failure, and correction are not obstacles but instruments of spiritual formation. From a pedagogical perspective, patience operates as the core of social competence. In the communal culture of South Nias, where harmony, respect, and endurance are deeply valued, patience serves as the relational glue that maintains trust and peace within the learning community. Teachers who embody patience demonstrate emotional intelligence, empathy, and moral

authority. They reflect the relational pedagogy of Christ, who taught not through coercion but through love and consistent presence. Such teachers become moral exemplars whose character speaks louder than their instruction. This study affirms that patient teachers cultivate classrooms where students feel safe to make mistakes, to question, and to grow—environments where learning becomes both a cognitive and spiritual journey. Patience functions as a spiritual discipline that shapes the teacher's inner life. The daily act of teaching—especially in contexts marked by limited resources and diverse student needs—demands perseverance rooted in prayer and reflection. Teachers who engage in spiritual practices such as meditation on Scripture, personal devotion, and intercessory prayer sustain their vocational integrity and emotional resilience. Patience thus becomes the fruit of an inner communion with God, not merely a professional skill. It is both cultivated and gifted through the Holy Spirit, as described in Galatians 5:22. The pedagogy of patience represents a form of incarnational ministry. The teacher becomes the living embodiment of divine patience, communicating God's truth not only through words but through enduring love. Education, in this light, is no longer a transactional process but a transformative one. The findings affirm that patient, socially competent teachers contribute to the moral and spiritual growth of their students, fostering empathy, faith, and self-control. The ultimate message of this study is that true Christian teaching mirrors the patience of God—it is a vocation of slow transformation, faithful endurance, and compassionate presence. In every act of patient teaching, the kingdom of God quietly unfolds within the classroom.

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