

## Professional Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Teaching the Value of Hope amid Adversity: A Study Based on Genesis 50:24 at SMA Negeri 1 Satu Atap Pulau Simuk

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the role of professional competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in cultivating the value of hope amid adversity, grounded in Genesis 50:24, at SMA Negeri 1 Satu Atap Pulau Simuk. The research involved 58 Christian students guided by one CRE teacher and employed a qualitative case study design integrated with a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to theological understanding, pedagogical strategy, teacher modeling, and student hope formation. Findings reveal that the teacher's professional competence-comprising theological mastery, pedagogical skill, ethical integrity, and reflective practice-enabled the effective integration of biblical principles into classroom instruction. Genesis 50:24 was presented as a theological foundation of hope, emphasizing trust in God's covenantal faithfulness despite hardship. The integration of empirical findings with SLR confirms that hope formation is most effective when pedagogical competence combines theological clarity, contextual adaptation, and relational authenticity. Despite challenges such as large class size and limited instructional resources, professional competence proved capable of fostering meaningful hope among students. This study contributes theoretically by connecting Old Testament exegesis with contemporary Christian pedagogy and offers practical guidance for CRE teachers in remote or resource-constrained educational settings, emphasizing the importance of integrating faith, teaching skill, and pastoral care in forming resilient, hope-filled students.*

**Keywords:** Professional Competence, Christian Religious Education, Value of Hope

### INTRODUCTION

Hope is a fundamental spiritual virtue that enables individuals to endure suffering, face uncertainty, and continue trusting in God amid life's adversities. In the context of education, especially Christian Religious Education (CRE), the value of hope is not merely a theological concept to be explained but a formative spiritual disposition that must be

intentionally cultivated through competent pedagogy. Adolescents today face multiple vulnerabilities, including economic hardship, family instability, academic pressure, and the psychological impact of digital culture. These conditions often generate anxiety, despair, and a weakened sense of purpose. Within this reality, the professional competence of CRE teachers becomes a decisive factor in shaping students' capacity to sustain hope amid adversity (Groome, 2011; Knight, 2006).

Professional competence refers to a teacher's mastery of subject matter, pedagogical skills, ethical responsibility, and continuous professional development, enabling effective and responsible teaching practice (Creswell, 2014; Slavin, 2018). In Christian education, professional competence also includes theological literacy, spiritual integrity, instructional adaptability, and pastoral sensitivity. Teaching the value of hope, therefore, requires not only technical expertise but also a deep spiritual and theological orientation that allows biblical truth to speak meaningfully into students' existential struggles. This study is theologically grounded in Book of Genesis 50:24, where Joseph, near the end of his life, declares to his brothers, *"I am about to die, but God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."* This verse stands as a powerful confession of hope in the midst of unresolved suffering. Theologically, Joseph speaks not as a triumphant ruler but as a dying servant who entrusts the future of his people entirely to God's faithfulness. The Hebrew expression *paqōd yipqōd 'ēlōhîm 'etkem* ("God will surely visit you") emphasizes divine certainty and redemptive intervention, even when empirical circumstances suggest delay or stagnation (Wenham, 2008). Genesis 50:24 is situated at the intersection of suffering, promise, and eschatological hope. Joseph's life narrative is marked by betrayal, injustice, imprisonment, and prolonged waiting. Yet his final testimony points beyond personal success to the certainty of God's covenantal faithfulness. This theological framework affirms that hope is not rooted in immediate circumstances but in the reliability of God's promises across generations (Osborne, 2010). Consequently, hope in the biblical sense is not optimism based on human calculation, but trust based on divine faithfulness. In the educational context, this theological understanding of hope has deep relevance for students, especially those who live in geographically isolated and socio-economically limited contexts. At SMA Negeri 1 Satu Atap Pulau Simuk, where 58 Christian students are guided by one CRE teacher, students face not only academic challenges but also structural limitations related to access, infrastructure, and future opportunities. Such conditions can easily give rise to discouragement and uncertainty about life beyond school. Therefore, teaching the value of hope is not an abstract theological task, but an existential necessity for students' spiritual and psychological resilience. Previous studies consistently confirm that hope is a decisive factor in students' motivation, emotional well-being, and moral perseverance (Palmer, 2007; Kolb, 2015). In Christian pedagogy, hope is formed most effectively when biblical teaching is integrated with personal narrative, contextual reflection, and consistent teacher modeling (Bruner, 1996; Richards & Bredfeldt, 1998). However, empirical research that specifically examines how the professional competence of CRE teachers cultivates the value of hope based on Old Testament theology—particularly Genesis 50:24—remains limited, especially within remote and underrepresented educational contexts such as island-based public schools. Existing literature tends to emphasize pedagogical competence in general terms, while fewer

studies explore how professional competence operates as a spiritual and formative instrument within faith-based instruction. The integration between theological exegesis, professional teaching standards, and students' lived experience of suffering and hope remains an underdeveloped field of inquiry. This gap is especially evident in senior high school contexts, where students are in a critical phase of identity formation and future orientation. This study seeks to examine how the professional competence of a CRE teacher at SMA Negeri 1 Satu Atap Pulau Simuk functions in teaching and cultivating the value of hope amid adversity, grounded in the theological framework of Genesis 50:24. By employing a qualitative case study approach complemented by a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), this research aims to provide both empirical insight and theoretical contribution to the development of contextual Christian pedagogy. The central assumption of this study is that professional competence, when integrated with sound biblical theology and relational pedagogy, becomes a powerful means of forming resilient hope in students who live amid real-life limitations and uncertainties.

## **METHODS**

This study employed a qualitative case study design integrated with a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to explore how the professional competence of a Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher cultivates the value of hope amid adversity based on Genesis 50:24. The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Satu Atap Pulau Simuk, involving 58 Christian students and one CRE teacher as the primary participants. A qualitative approach was selected to allow for an in-depth examination of classroom practices, spiritual-pedagogical processes, and students' lived experiences of hope in a geographically remote educational context. Data were collected over one academic semester using methodological triangulation to enhance credibility. First, non-participant classroom observations were conducted to document how Genesis 50:24 and related theological themes of hope were integrated into lesson planning, instructional strategies, teacher–student interaction, and assessment practices. Observation indicators included mastery of biblical content, clarity of theological explanation, contextualization of hope in students' real-life challenges, classroom climate, and student engagement. Second, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the CRE teacher to examine professional competence across theological mastery, pedagogical strategy, ethical responsibility, and reflective practice, as well as perceived challenges in teaching hope amid adversity. Supporting interviews were also conducted with a purposive sample of Christian students representing different academic levels and spiritual backgrounds to capture their perceptions of hope, their personal struggles, and the impact of CRE instruction on their resilience. Third, document analysis was employed to examine syllabi, lesson plans, students' reflective work, and school spiritual activity programs to assess the coherence between curriculum planning and classroom implementation. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically using an interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, with inductive coding to identify patterns related to professional competence, theological integration, narrative and contextual pedagogy, teacher modeling, and student hope formation. To strengthen the theoretical foundation of the empirical findings, a Systematic Literature Review was conducted through structured stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and synthesis. Scholarly sources published

primarily between 2003 and 2024 were retrieved from peer-reviewed journals, academic books, and reputable theological and educational publishers. The SLR focused on four thematic clusters: professional competence of teachers, biblical theology of hope, Christian pedagogy in adolescent education, and faith formation in contexts of adversity. The integration of case study data with SLR findings enabled dialogical analysis between empirical realities and established theory. Trustworthiness was ensured through credibility (data and method triangulation), dependability (systematic documentation of procedures), confirmability (audit trail and researcher reflexivity), and transferability (thick contextual description). Ethical considerations included informed consent, confidentiality of participants' identities, and formal research permission from school authorities. Through this methodological design, the study sought to generate a robust, biblically grounded, and empirically validated understanding of how professional competence functions as a formative instrument in teaching the value of hope amid adversity in Christian Religious Education.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the integrated findings of the qualitative case study and the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) concerning how the professional competence of a Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher cultivates the value of hope amid adversity at SMA Negeri 1 Satu Atap Pulau Simuk. The analysis is organized into five major thematic dimensions: theological understanding of hope based on Genesis 50:24, professional competence in instructional design and delivery, narrative and contextual pedagogy as a medium of hope formation, teacher modeling and relational professionalism, and student outcomes in cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of hope. The main finding concerns the CRE teacher's theological mastery of hope as framed in Book of Genesis 50:24. Classroom observations and interviews revealed that the teacher interpreted Joseph's final testimony not merely as a historical statement but as a prophetic declaration of God's covenantal faithfulness. The phrase "God will surely come to your aid" was consistently emphasized as the theological core of hope, shifting students' focus from present hardship to eschatological certainty. The teacher explained that hope in the biblical sense is not rooted in visible change but in the reliability of God's promise across generations. The teacher highlighted the emphatic Hebrew construction expressing certainty of divine visitation, reinforcing that hope is grounded in God's initiative, not human ability. This theological framing aligns with classical Old Testament scholarship that understands Genesis 50:24 as the bridge between the patriarchal promises and the Exodus redemption. The SLR confirms that when biblical hope is taught as covenantal assurance rather than emotional optimism, students develop a more resilient and theologically mature understanding of suffering and waiting. Student interview data indicate that many initially equated hope with "expecting something good to happen soon." After sustained instruction, however, students began to articulate hope as "trusting God even when nothing changes yet" and "believing that God has a future beyond our present problems." This conceptual shift demonstrates that theological clarity, as part of professional competence, plays a crucial role in reshaping students' spiritual worldview.

### ***Professional Competence in Instructional Design and Teaching Strategy***

The other finding relates to the teacher's professional competence in designing and delivering instruction on hope amid adversity. Document analysis of lesson plans shows that Genesis 50:24 was not treated as an isolated verse but embedded within thematic learning units such as "Faith under Pressure," "God's Faithfulness in History," and "Living with Hope in Limitation." The teacher employed clear learning objectives, structured learning stages, and varied pedagogical strategies that reflected strong professional planning. In instructional practice, the teacher demonstrated subject-matter mastery, coherent explanation, and adaptive teaching methods. Lessons regularly included biblical exposition, guided discussion, reflective questioning, and short contemplative prayer sessions. The professional use of questioning strategies encouraged higher-order thinking, leading students to analyze Joseph's life narrative in relation to their own lived struggles. Students were not only asked what the text says but also what it means for their future, aspirations, and fears. From the SLR perspective, professional competence is consistently linked to teachers' ability to integrate content mastery with pedagogical adaptability and ethical responsibility. The present findings confirm that such integration enabled the teacher to address students' emotional and existential dimensions without sacrificing theological depth. Despite limited resources and geographical isolation, the teacher maintained consistent instructional quality, demonstrating that professional competence is not primarily dependent on infrastructure but on vocational commitment and reflective practice. Challenges were also observed. With only one CRE teacher serving 58 students across multiple grade levels, instructional time was constrained. The teacher reported difficulty in providing individualized mentoring for all students. Through careful classroom management and structured group activities, the teacher maximized limited contact hours to sustain continuity of hope formation.

Narrative-based and contextual pedagogy emerged as a dominant instructional approach in shaping students' hope. The teacher regularly used Joseph's life story—betrayal by his brothers, injustice in Potiphar's house, imprisonment, and eventual elevation—to illustrate that suffering does not nullify God's promises. This narrative approach enabled students to perceive hardship as part of a larger redemptive story rather than as meaningless pain. Contextualization was particularly strong due to the island setting of Pulau Simuk, where students face limited access to higher education, economic vulnerability, and geographical isolation. The teacher intentionally connected Joseph's prolonged waiting in a foreign land with students' experience of studying in a remote region with uncertain career prospects. This contextual bridge helped students reinterpret their limitations as a space where God's promise can still unfold. According to the SLR, narrative and contextual learning are highly effective in faith formation because they enable students to integrate biblical meaning with personal experience. In this study, students repeatedly stated that the story of Joseph made them feel that "God also sees people in difficult places" and that "our struggle is not useless." Such statements indicate that narrative pedagogy successfully transformed abstract doctrine into existentially meaningful hope. Yet, the study also notes a pedagogical tension: while narrative engagement was strong, students' biblical literacy varied. Some students required repeated reinforcement to grasp the broader redemptive-historical context of Genesis. This indicates the need for sustained curriculum scaffolding to support deep biblical understanding alongside contextual application.

### ***Teacher Modeling and Relational Professionalism***

One of the most powerful findings of this study is the central role of teacher modeling in shaping students' hope. Students consistently described the CRE teacher as "patient," "faithful," and "never giving up on us." Observations revealed that the teacher demonstrated calmness in handling learning difficulties, persistence in conducting lessons despite logistical obstacles, and emotional availability when students faced personal crises. This relational professionalism functioned as a living embodiment of Genesis 50:24. The teacher's consistent presence and faithfulness in a remote and challenging context became a concrete sign of hope for students. Several students testified that observing the teacher's perseverance in teaching on the island strengthened their belief that "God also does not abandon us." The SLR strongly supports this finding, emphasizing that spiritual and moral values are most effectively transmitted through lived example rather than verbal instruction alone. In this case study, teacher modeling served as a practical hermeneutic through which students interpreted the biblical concept of hope. The teacher's ethical integrity, responsibility, and spiritual consistency constituted a form of relational curriculum that continuously shaped students' perceptions. The emotional burden of relational professionalism was evident. The teacher acknowledged experiencing fatigue and isolation due to limited professional community and institutional support. This highlights a structural vulnerability in island-based education contexts, where teachers must carry not only instructional but also pastoral and social responsibilities.

The impact of professional competence on students' hope formation was evident across three domains: cognitive understanding, affective orientation, and behavioral expression. Cognitively which is students demonstrated an improved theological understanding of hope. Many could accurately articulate that hope is rooted in God's promise rather than in immediate success. They were able to explain Joseph's statement in Genesis 50:24 as a declaration of trust in God's future work, not merely as personal optimism. Affectively which is students expressed stronger emotional resilience when facing personal and academic challenges. Interviews revealed that several students struggled with family economic hardship, separation from parents, and uncertainty about post-graduation opportunities. After sustained CRE instruction, many described their emotional outlook as "more peaceful," "less afraid of the future," and "able to pray instead of despair." These affective changes indicate that hope had begun to function as an inner spiritual resource. Behaviorally which is teachers observed increased consistency in students' participation in worship activities, greater seriousness in learning, and improved moral self-control in peer interactions. Although not all students exhibited the same level of transformation, the overall trend suggested a positive association between professional teaching competence and the behavioral expression of hope. At the same time, variations were evident. Some students remained passive and struggled to internalize hope deeply due to strong external pressures from family and social environment. This confirms the SLR finding that faith formation is influenced by multiple contextual systems and cannot be attributed solely to classroom instruction.

The integration of case study findings and SLR data reveals a strong convergence between theory and practice. The literature consistently asserts that professional competence in

Christian education includes four interrelated dimensions: theological mastery, pedagogical skill, ethical integrity, and reflective praxis. All four dimensions were identifiable in the observed teaching practices at SMA Negeri 1 Satu Atap Pulau Simuk. The SLR further emphasizes that hope as a spiritual virtue is most effectively formed through pedagogies that are narrative-based, relational, and contextually sensitive. The empirical data strongly confirm this framework. Genesis 50:24 functioned not only as a doctrinal text but as a spiritual lens through which students interpreted their life conditions. Professional competence enabled the teacher to translate this text into meaningful learning experience. The study therefore affirms that professional competence is not merely a technical teaching standard but a formative spiritual instrument in Christian education. It acts as the bridge between biblical theology and students' existential realities, particularly in contexts marked by adversity and limitation. The findings carry important implications for Christian education in geographically isolated and socio-economically vulnerable contexts. CRE teachers in such settings require not only pedagogical training but also strong theological and emotional resilience. Professional development programs must include narrative pedagogy, pastoral counseling skills, and contextual theology to equip teachers for holistic ministry in schools. Institutional support is essential. Without adequate mentoring systems, peer communities, and psychological support, the heavy relational burden placed on a single CRE teacher may undermine long-term effectiveness. Curriculum designs should intentionally integrate biblical texts of hope with students' lived experiences of limitation and struggle to ensure existential relevance.

## CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that the professional competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers plays a pivotal role in cultivating the value of hope amid adversity among students, particularly when grounded in the theological framework of Genesis 50:24. Conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Satu Atap Pulau Simuk with 58 Christian students and one CRE teacher, the research reveals that professional competence encompasses not only mastery of biblical content and pedagogical skill but also ethical integrity, relational professionalism, and reflective practice. The teacher's ability to interpret Joseph's final testimony as a declaration of trust in God's covenantal faithfulness provided a theological foundation that made hope tangible and relevant to students' lived experiences of hardship. The findings indicate that professional competence translates into effective instructional design, narrative and contextual pedagogy, and consistent teacher modeling, all of which collectively foster cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of hope. Students demonstrated an increased understanding of hope as trust in God's promises, greater emotional resilience in the face of personal and academic challenges, and more consistent expressions of moral and spiritual engagement. The relational aspect of teaching, where the teacher's own faithfulness, patience, and care serve as a model, emerged as one of the most influential factors in internalizing hope, confirming that Christian pedagogy is both formative and transformative. Integration with the Systematic Literature Review further supports the conclusion that hope formation is most effective when biblical theology, narrative instruction, and relational pedagogy are interwoven. The study also highlights structural challenges, such as large class sizes and

limited institutional support, which can constrain individualized mentoring. The teacher's professional competence mitigated potential limitations, illustrating that sustained commitment, theological insight, and adaptive pedagogy are crucial in cultivating hope. This study contributes to Christian educational discourse by bridging Old Testament exegesis with contemporary pedagogical practice, demonstrating how professional competence functions as a spiritual and formative instrument. It offers actionable insights for CRE teachers in remote or resource-limited contexts, emphasizing the integration of biblical interpretation, narrative pedagogy, relational modeling, and contextual adaptation. Future research should explore longitudinal effects of professional competence on students' hope, comparative studies across different educational levels, and the role of institutional support in sustaining hope formation. In conclusion, professional competence in Christian education is not merely technical proficiency but a holistic integration of theological understanding, pedagogical skill, relational integrity, and reflective practice. When effectively applied, it transforms classrooms into spaces where hope is actively cultivated, internalized, and expressed, equipping students to navigate adversity with faith, resilience, and trust in God's promises.

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