

Pedagogical Competence of Civic Education Teachers in Senior High School: A Qualitative Analysis Based on the 2023 Teacher Competence Model

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the pedagogical competence of Civic Education teachers at MAN 2 Samarinda based on the Regulation of the Director General of Teachers and Education Personnel Number 2626/B/Hk.04.01/2023 concerning the Teacher Competency Model, focusing on creating safe learning environments, student-centered learning, and assessment practices. The research used a descriptive qualitative method through intensive classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with two teachers and six students selected purposively. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, including reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that teachers' pedagogical competence is mainly concentrated at the levels of conceptual understanding and classroom-level implementation across the three aspects, but declines at higher levels such as reflection, collaboration, and professional assistance. Assessment practices represent the lowest level of achievement, as they remain largely procedural and have not functioned optimally as formative tools.



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A. INTRODUCTION

In the formal education system, education serves not only as a medium for transmitting knowledge but also as a systematic process for developing students' skills, character, and integrity through interactions between teachers, students, learning resources, and the educational environment (Lathifah & Ndonga, 2024; Utami et al., 2025). Globally, the primary focus in improving the education system centers on strengthening teacher competency as agents of transformation who must adapt to accelerated digitalization and social change (Gümüş, 2022). The dynamic interaction between curriculum design, teacher practice, and student participation shapes the quality of learning in schools. Among these elements, teachers occupy a strategic position due to their direct responsibility for designing activities, implementing strategies, conducting assessments, and guiding student development (Maullidina et al., 2023). Consequently, classroom effectiveness is inextricably linked to the level of competency authentically demonstrated by teachers.

A review of recent research trends indicates that teacher competency continues to undergo significant evolution. Recent bibliometric analyses reveal a global shift towards digital competencies, 21st-century skills, and educational sustainability (Daga et al., 2023; Zayimoglu Ozturk et al., 2025). Competing perspectives debate the effectiveness of competency assessment: whether it is more accurate through student perceptions or direct observation of classroom behavior. In Indonesia, the government responded through the Regulation of the Director General of Teachers and Education Personnel of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 2626/B/Hk.04.01/2023 Concerning Teacher Competency Models, which identifies four core competencies: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional. Among these, pedagogical competency holds a central position as it directly regulates teachers' capacity to design, manage, and evaluate the learning process (Aimah et al., 2017; Wijaya et al., 2023). This regulation introduces a pedagogical competency model across five progressive levels, serving as an analytical framework for mapping teacher development based on objectively observable behavioral indicators in authentic settings.

However, empirical conditions at MAN 2 Samarinda reveal a significant gap between regulation and implementation. Although Civic Education teachers strive to build supportive classroom environments, active student engagement remains inconsistent, and learning strategies are often limited to conventional variations. This situation reinforces a crucial research gap. These findings are consistent with the view that competency implementation often falls short of professional expectations (Elitasari, 2022). Most previous research suffers from methodological limitations, including a heavy reliance on self-reporting, which often does not reflect actual instructional practice (Amaliah et al., 2024; Wiggs et al., 2023). Furthermore, despite extensive literature on teacher competency, specific evidence regarding the implementation of the level-based model within Civic Education remains limited. Student learning difficulties often stem from teachers' limitations in planning and utilizing contextual learning resources (Maasawet et al., 2025), making the strengthening of instructional capacity a top priority.

This research aims to address this gap by implementing a novel, progressively structured behavioral indicator-based evaluation instrument (Levels 1-5). Unlike conventional descriptive approaches or perception-based research, this study operationalizes the dimensions of pedagogical competence more precisely through classroom observations and in-depth interviews. This approach broadens our understanding by objectively identifying the suitability of pedagogical practices based on the latest standards, thus providing a precise picture of attained milestones and necessary improvements.

Based on these considerations, this study analyzes the pedagogical competence of Civic Education teachers at MAN 2 Samarinda based on the latest Teacher Competency Model framework. The primary objective is to evaluate their ability to design safe and comfortable learning environments, implement student-centered learning, and execute effective assessment and reporting practices. By analyzing classroom practices through observable behavioral indicators, this research is expected to facilitate teacher competency mapping and provide solutions to improve instructional quality.

B. METHODS

This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach to investigate the pedagogical competence of Civic Education teachers based on the Teacher Competence Model outlined in the Regulation of the Director General of Teachers and Education Personnel of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 2626/B/Hk.04.01/2023. The use of this approach enabled an in-depth exploration of pedagogical practices as they occur in authentic classroom contexts, allowing the researcher to examine instructional processes, identify contextual challenges, and interpret meanings derived from empirical data (Rifa'i, 2023). This study was conducted at MAN 2 Samarinda, a state Islamic high school, with participants selected through purposive sampling to ensure a wealth of relevant information.

The informants in this study consisted of two Civics teachers as key informants and six students as supporting informants. Teacher A has 23 years of teaching experience and teaches students in grades 11 and 12, while Teacher B has 4 years of teaching experience and teaches students in grades 10 and 12. To corroborate the data, six students, three boys and three girls, aged 15-18, were selected to provide perspectives from the learning recipients. This limited number of informants was determined based on the principle of data saturation and the need for depth of information. Focusing on two key informants allowed researchers to conduct a microscopic analysis of complex instructional behaviors, while six students provided representative cross-confirmation of the data.

Data were collected through intensive classroom observations and in-depth individual interviews over a one-month research period, conducted in August 2025. Observations were conducted twice per week for each teacher, resulting in a cumulative total of eight classroom observation sessions. The duration of each observation session followed the school's effective teaching hours, namely 2 x 45 minutes (90 minutes). The aim was to ensure consistency in instructional management, teaching strategies, teacher-student interaction patterns, and efforts to build a safe and supportive learning environment. In addition to observations, interviews were conducted using a semi-structured guideline developed based on pedagogical competency indicators in the 2023 Teacher Competency Model. The research instruments used included an observation sheet and an interview guide.

The collected data were then analyzed using an interactive analytical process that included data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing according to the Miles and Huberman (2014) framework. This analytical process was carried out continuously and repeatedly throughout the research phase to ensure the quality of the results (Saleh, 2017). The research findings were organized into three core aspects of pedagogical competence, namely: (1) a safe and comfortable learning environment for students, (2) effective learner-centered learning, and (3) student-centered assessment, feedback, and reporting. To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher applied methodological and source triangulation by comparing information from classroom observations with teacher and student interview data. The credibility of the findings was further strengthened through repeated examination of field notes and conducting further confirmation (member checks) with informants to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. A Safe and Comfortable Learning Environment for Students

The learning environment includes the physical, social, and psychological contexts experienced by learners, including interactions with teachers, peers, and the classroom environment. (Kempen et al., 2024). A safe and comfortable environment has been shown to enhance motivation, promote comfort, and contribute to improved student learning outcomes (Putri & Hibana, 2024). In line with this perspective, the 2023 Teacher Competency Regulation defines five progressive levels of pedagogical competence in establishing a safe and comfortable learning environment for students. Table 1 presents these competency indicators across levels.

Table 1. Indicators of a Safe and Comfortable Learning Environment

Competency Indicators	Competency Level	Description
A safe and comfortable learning environment for students	Level 1	Understanding the importance and benefits of a safe and comfortable learning environment for students
	Level 2	Implementing strategies for a safe and comfortable learning environment for students
	Level 3	Evaluating strategies for implementing a safe and comfortable learning environment for students and designing improvements
	Level 4	Collaborating with colleagues on strategies for implementing a safe and comfortable learning environment for students
	Level 5	Guiding colleagues in implementing strategies for a safe and comfortable learning environment for students

Based on table 1, the findings indicate that civic education teachers have demonstrated strong achievement at Level 1 and Level 2. Teachers have successfully established a stable and supportive learning environment in which students feel comfortable expressing their opinions without fear of pressure or stigma. This finding is consistent with Chen (2023), who argues that a positive classroom climate is an integral component in encouraging students to remain focused and actively participate in discussions. In addition, teachers have demonstrated reflective practices aligned with the indicators of Level 3, as evidenced by their ability to observe student engagement and adjust instructional methods or modify strategies when learning activities are perceived as ineffective.

However, student perspectives reveal that reflective practices at this level remain situational rather than systematic. Adjustments to instructional strategies are often based on individual teacher intuition rather than structured reflective mechanisms. As a result, the fulfillment of Level 3 indicators is present but not consistently experienced by all students. At a more advanced level, coordination among colleagues regarding classroom management is evident, indicating partial achievement of collaborative indicators at Level 4.

Despite this, such collaboration remains largely routine and has not yet developed into collective pedagogical practices that are systematically designed and evaluated. Furthermore,

there is no evidence that teachers assume mentoring roles for their peers, as required at Level 5. Consequently, the consistency of a safe learning environment is more apparent at the individual classroom level and has not yet evolved into a school-wide pedagogical culture (Hyypiä et al., 2019).

It is important to note that a sense of safety should not diminish students' intellectual challenge. A safe learning environment must be balanced with cognitive demands to promote critical thinking (Amaliah et al., 2024; Hannington et al., 2025). In addition, learning comfort is influenced by physical factors such as air circulation and classroom facilities (Widiastuti et al., 2020). Adequate physical conditions significantly contribute to students' concentration and well-being during learning (Domínguez-Amarillo et al., 2020). The findings indicate that although basic facilities such as projectors are available, limited air circulation in classrooms sometimes hinders students' physical comfort. Therefore, creating an ideal learning environment requires a combination of teachers' pedagogical competence and school policies that are responsive to the physical conditions of the classroom.

2. Effective Learner-Centered Learning

Student-centered learning emphasizes learners as active participants, with instructional practices deliberately designed to address their individual needs, interests, and learning characteristics. Within this approach, teachers play a crucial role as facilitators who promote active engagement, autonomy, and reflective thinking while maintaining clear instructional goals and structure (Bremner, 2022; Jaiswal, 2019). Rather than implying unrestricted freedom, this approach is represented as a structured process that emphasizes student responsibility. In line with this perspective, the 2023 Teacher Competency Regulation defines five progressive levels of pedagogical competence in establishing effective learner-centered learning. Table 2 presents these competency indicators across levels.

Table 2. Indicators of Effective Learner-Centered Learning

Competency Indicators	Competency Level	Description
Effective learner-centered learning	Level 1	Understanding the importance and benefits of effective learner-centered learning
	Level 2	Implementing effective learner-centered learning
	Level 3	Evaluating effective learner-centered learning and designing improvements
	Level 4	Collaborating with colleagues on the selection of strategies for implementing effective learner-centered learning
	Level 5	Guiding colleagues in implementing strategies for effective learner-centered learning

Based on table 2, the findings indicate that civic education teachers demonstrate a strong understanding of student-centered learning principles; however, this understanding is not yet consistently reflected in classroom practice. Teachers recognize the importance of learner independence and their role as facilitators. This finding is consistent with (Ecker, 2023), who

argues that student-centered learning provides space for the gradual development of learner independence according to individual needs. Therefore, the indicators at Level 1 can be considered well achieved.

At the implementation stage, teachers have begun to adopt more participatory approaches through strategies such as group discussions and case studies. This indicates that the indicators at Level 2 have been met. However, student engagement in the classroom remains uneven; some students actively participate, while others remain passive. This suggests that student-centered learning has not yet fully succeeded in promoting consistent participation. One contributing factor is students' academic workload, which limits their engagement, leading some students to rely on grade-based incentives as their primary motivation to participate.

This gap between understanding and practice indicates that teachers' conceptual knowledge has not yet been fully translated into instructional practice. This finding aligns with Dorjee (2025), who emphasizes that awareness does not always lead to behavioral change, highlighting the need for more targeted implementation efforts. In this context, the effectiveness of learning depends not only on teachers' understanding but also on how instructional strategies are designed and adapted to students' learning conditions.

In terms of reflective practice, teachers demonstrate awareness of the need to adjust instructional methods when learning outcomes are not optimal. However, from the students' perspective, these practices are not yet implemented consistently and systematically. This contrasts with Hardoko (2018), who argues that meaningful changes in learning behavior require a structured process, ranging from pre-learning activities to reflection. Therefore, the achievement of Level 3 remains partial and largely dependent on individual teacher initiative.

Regarding professional collaboration, the school's efforts to provide training indicate an initial move toward teacher collaboration in line with Level 4 indicators. However, this collaboration remains limited to program coordination and has not yet developed into jointly designed and systematically evaluated teaching practices. Furthermore, no evidence of sustained mentoring practices was found, as required at Level 5. This suggests that competency development remains centered at the individual level, while institutional support has not yet effectively promoted collaborative professional development.

3. Student-Centered Assessment, Feedback, and Reporting

Assessment, feedback, and reporting are essential components of student-centered learning, as they not only measure learning outcomes but also support students' active involvement in the learning process. Assessment is viewed as a systematic process for gathering information to improve learning, rather than merely evaluating results (Gaffney, 2022; Tractenberg, 2021). In this context, formative assessment functions as a responsive approach that enables instructional adjustments and helps students identify areas for improvement, thereby fostering a more adaptive and effective learning process (Babinčáková et al., 2020). In line with this perspective, the 2023 Teacher Competency Regulation defines five progressive levels of pedagogical competence in establishing student-centered assessment, feedback, and reporting, Table 3 presents these competency indicators across levels.

Table 3. Student-Centered Assessment, Feedback, and Reporting

Competency Indicators	Competency Level	Description
Student-centered assessment, feedback, and reporting	Level 1	Understanding the importance and benefits of student-centered assessment, feedback, and reporting
	Level 2	Conducting student-centered assessment, feedback, and reporting
	Level 3	Evaluating learner-centered assessment, feedback, and reporting, and designing improvements
	Level 4	Collaborating with colleagues on the implementation of learner-centered assessment, feedback, and reporting
	Level 5	Guiding colleagues in conducting learner-centered assessment, feedback, and reporting

Based on table 3, the findings of this study indicate that Civics teachers demonstrate relatively strong achievement in conceptual understanding regarding the function of assessment and feedback within the learning process. Assessment is no longer perceived merely as an administrative requirement but is understood as a tool to monitor students' learning progress, evaluate cognitive, affective, and participatory aspects, and inform appropriate instructional follow-up. This understanding reflects the fulfillment of Level 1 indicators, namely the ability to recognize the significance and benefits of assessment and feedback in supporting student-centered learning. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by Mohiuddin et al (2019), which suggests that teachers generally possess a solid conceptual foundation regarding the role of assessment in learning. In addition, Johannes König and colleagues emphasize that teachers' pedagogical knowledge contributes significantly to the quality of instruction, particularly in the domains of evaluation and classroom management.

However, at the implementation level, the study reveals a considerable gap between conceptual understanding and actual classroom practices. This finding aligns with de Kleijn (2023), who found that feedback practices are often not optimally utilized by students due to limitations in both design and application. In this study, feedback tends to be reduced to numerical scores without sufficient explanatory comments, particularly when using digital platforms such as Google Forms. This practice does not align with the principles of effective feedback proposed by Cohen & Singh (2020), who argue that feedback should be specific, constructive, and oriented toward improvement. This discrepancy may be influenced by contextual factors such as teachers' administrative workload, time constraints, and limited competence in designing formative feedback.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that Level 2 indicators have been procedurally achieved; however, assessment has not fully functioned as a student-centered learning tool. This condition is supported by studies in pedagogical evaluation, which show that many teachers still face challenges in effectively integrating assessment into daily teaching practices (Fialho et al., 2023). Therefore, although assessment activities have been carried out, their implementation has not yet reached an optimal formative function.

In addition, student involvement in the feedback process remains limited. This finding contrasts with the research of Wood and James, which demonstrates that students can develop deeper understanding through comparison with peers' work, peer feedback, and teacher guidance. The combination of multiple feedback sources in their study helps students calibrate evaluative judgment and improve the quality of their work. In contrast, although similar strategies have been applied in this study, the lack of systematic guidance limits their effectiveness, preventing optimal learning outcomes. This suggests that the success of feedback strategies depends heavily on the quality of teacher facilitation and scaffolding.

Moreover, the findings reveal that assessment practices still tend to emphasize *assessment of learning* rather than *assessment for learning*. This tendency is not fully aligned with recent developments in educational innovation, which highlight the importance of continuous assessment and individualized feedback to promote active student engagement and self-regulated learning (Costado, 2025). In this study, feedback is not consistently provided and has not been integrated into a continuous learning cycle. This inconsistency may be due to the absence of a well-structured formative assessment system at the classroom level.

In terms of evaluation and instructional improvement design, teachers demonstrate reflective awareness of the importance of using assessment results to enhance learning, indicating the emergence of Level 3 indicators. However, its implementation remains partial and is not consistently experienced by students. This suggests that the development of teachers' pedagogical competence is gradual, as supported by studies on teaching quality development, which indicate that complex aspects of teaching practice require time and professional support to develop effectively (Röhl et al., 2025).

At the level of professional collaboration, the findings show that teachers have engaged in coordination primarily related to the administrative aspects of assessment. However, this has not yet evolved into reflective collaboration focused on improving assessment quality. This finding reinforces previous research indicating that teacher collaboration often remains limited to technical matters and has not yet addressed deeper pedagogical practice development. Therefore, Level 4 and Level 5 indicators remain at an early stage and have not yet become part of teachers' professional culture.

4. Data Display

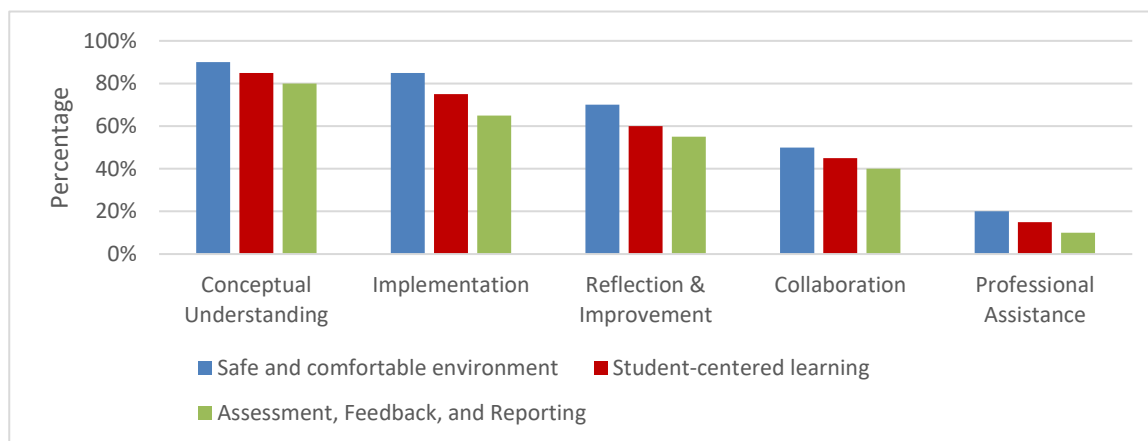


Figure 1. achievement of pedagogical competency levels

Based on Figure 1, the pedagogical competence of Citizenship Education teachers at MAN 2 Samarinda showed the highest achievement at the level of conceptual understanding and implementation in the three aspects studied, namely the learning environment, student-centered learning, and assessment and feedback. The consistent decreasing pattern from the conceptual level to professional assistance across all aspects indicates that the higher the complexity of pedagogical competence, the lower the level of achievement. This indicates that teachers tend to be able to achieve basic conceptual and implementation competencies, but face challenges in developing higher-level competencies, such as systematic reflection, pedagogical collaboration, and professional mentoring. Furthermore, the assessment aspect consistently had the lowest achievement compared to other aspects, indicating that the learning evaluation function is not optimal. Overall, these findings confirm that teachers' pedagogical competence is still focused on individual practice at the classroom level and has not yet developed comprehensively towards reflective, collaborative, and sustainable professional practice.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The results of this study indicate that the pedagogical competence of Civic Education teachers at MAN 2 Samarinda is predominantly concentrated at the levels of conceptual understanding and classroom-level implementation across the three examined aspects. However, a consistent decline is observed as the competency progresses toward higher levels, particularly in reflection, collaboration, and professional assistance, indicating that the development of advanced pedagogical competencies remains limited. Teachers are able to create safe and supportive learning environments and implement learner-centered strategies; nevertheless, these practices tend to be operational, uneven across students, and not yet systematically utilized for reflective improvement. Among the three aspects, assessment, feedback, and reporting demonstrate the lowest level of achievement, as practices are largely procedural and have not functioned optimally as formative tools to support student learning. Overall, the development of pedagogical competence remains individually driven and has not yet evolved into a collaborative and mentoring-based pedagogical culture at the school level. These findings highlight the need for future research to explore both the barriers and enabling factors that can support the transformation from individual practice toward sustained, reflective, and collaborative professional development within school contexts.

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