



Professional Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Cultivating Children's Obedience: An Exegetical Insight from Genesis 22:7–8 at SDN 06 Durian-Batubara

Masni Sri Yudistira Capah

Pendidikan Profesi Guru, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

*correspondence: sricapah12@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the professional competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in cultivating children's obedience, using Genesis 22:7-8 as an exegetical and pedagogical framework. Conducted through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of 42 scholarly sources published between 2010 and 2024, the research synthesizes current knowledge on teacher professionalism, moral formation, relational pedagogy, and Scripture-informed instruction in Christian education. The exegetical reading of Genesis 22:7–8 highlights the relational encounter between Abraham and Isaac, illustrating how obedience emerges from trust, clarity, and spiritual assurance rather than coercion. Abraham's faithful response—"God Himself will provide the lamb"—demonstrates a model of calm guidance and theological grounding that reflects key aspects of professional competence relevant to CRE practice. The SLR findings reveal that children develop obedience most effectively when teachers embody consistency, emotional stability, and moral integrity while creating learning environments that encourage inquiry, trust, and reflective understanding. Professional competence in this context includes mastery of biblical content, pedagogical skill in translating Scripture into age-appropriate lessons, and relational competence that fosters secure attachment and respect. In settings such as SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, where social and cultural diversity influence students' moral experiences, these competencies are essential in supporting holistic spiritual and character development. The study concludes that integrating exegetical insight with pedagogical excellence enables CRE teachers to guide children toward meaningful and spiritually grounded obedience. Genesis 22:7-8 offers a timeless model for nurturing trust-filled relationships and faith-guided moral behavior, reaffirming the central role of professionally competent CRE teachers in shaping students' spiritual and ethical growth.

Keywords: Professional Competence, Christian Religious Education, Obedience

INTRODUCTION

The role of Christian Religious Education teachers in Indonesian public schools increasingly demands a holistic integration of pedagogical skill, spiritual maturity, and

ethical sensitivity. In contexts such as SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, where students come from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, teachers are expected not only to deliver cognitive religious knowledge but also to cultivate moral and spiritual dispositions, including obedience, responsibility, and sincerity of heart. One of the critical challenges in elementary education today is the declining tendency among children to practice obedience—both toward teachers as authority figures and toward parents at home. Research indicates that obedience is strongly influenced by the modeling, instructional clarity, and relational warmth demonstrated by educators. Thus, CRE teachers must uphold a high level of professional competence to shape children's behavior in ways that reflect Christian values. Professional competence, in the context of CRE, encompasses the teacher's mastery of biblical content, pedagogical skill, communication ability, and capacity to internalize spiritual truths in daily teaching practices. The teacher's role is not merely to transfer information but to embody the faith, values, and attitudes expected from students. This is particularly relevant when guiding children to develop obedience, an aspect that is deeply rooted in biblical narratives. Genesis 22:7-8 provides a foundational exegetical lens for understanding obedience within the relationship between a father (Abraham) and a child (Isaac). This passage highlights a moment where Isaac's curiosity meets Abraham's calm guidance, culminating in Isaac's willingness to trust and obey despite limited understanding. Genesis 22:7 reveals Isaac's rational engagement with the situation: *"Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"* His question demonstrates not rebellion but thoughtful inquiry, an important aspect in children's moral development. Abraham's response in verse 8, "God Himself will provide the lamb," reflects a pedagogical stance grounded in faith, reassurance, and spiritual leadership. Abraham does not impose obedience through fear or coercion but guides Isaac toward trust by modeling unwavering confidence in God. This mirrors the educational principle that obedience grows from relational trust and meaningful explanation rather than authoritarian discipline.

In contemporary elementary school settings, including SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, CRE teachers often encounter students who exhibit selective obedience, influenced by digital distractions, inconsistent home discipline, and peer dynamics. Therefore, teachers must adopt Abraham's model—providing clarity, maintaining emotional stability, and grounding instruction in faith-based principles. Professional competence in this sense is not only technical but spiritual: teachers must be capable interpreters of Scripture who can translate biblical truths into age-appropriate learning experiences. Through strong exegetical grounding, teachers can help students understand the value of obedience not as forced compliance but as a response born from trust, respect, and guided reasoning. The narrative of Genesis 22:7-8 underscores that children often obey when they feel secure under the guidance of a trustworthy adult. Isaac's obedience emerges from relational confidence, an important insight for CRE teachers whose task includes building safe emotional environments for learning. This relational dimension aligns with Christian pedagogical frameworks that emphasize shepherd-like guidance, compassion, and presence. Ultimately, developing children's obedience requires teachers who are competent both in interpreting Scripture and in cultivating relationships that reflect Christlike care. This study explores how professional competence among CRE teachers shapes the cultivation of children's obedience at SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, framed

through an exegetical study of Genesis 22:7-8. The focus is on understanding how biblical insight and pedagogical expertise intersect to produce effective moral and spiritual formation in elementary students.

METHODS

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design was implemented to examine how the professional competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers contributes to cultivating children's obedience, interpreted through the exegetical lens of Genesis 22:7-8. The SLR method was chosen because it provides a structured, transparent, and reproducible approach in synthesizing scholarly evidence related to teacher competence, biblical pedagogy, and child obedience in Christian educational contexts. Following the PRISMA framework, the review began with a comprehensive identification of sources through major academic databases using keyword combinations such as "Christian Religious Education teachers," "professional competence," "child obedience," "biblical pedagogy," "Genesis 22," and "Abraham and Isaac narrative." The search was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and conference papers published between 2010 and 2024 to ensure conceptual relevance and contemporary applicability. After the identification stage, duplicate studies were removed and abstracts were screened based on: studies discussing teacher competence in Christian education, research addressing moral or behavioral formation in children, literature integrating biblical or theological interpretation with educational practice, and studies referencing obedience, trust-building, or relational pedagogy. Exclusion criteria included non-academic sources, theological works without pedagogical relevance, and studies unrelated to primary school contexts. In the eligibility stage, full texts of the remaining articles were evaluated for methodological rigor, theoretical contribution, and thematic alignment with the focus of Genesis 22:7-8. A total of 42 studies met the final inclusion criteria and were synthesized narratively. The synthesis process involved coding emerging themes such as teacher modeling, spiritual leadership, relational influence, and Scripture-informed instruction, which were then compared to exegetical insights from the Abraham-Isaac narrative. This SLR approach ensured that the study's interpretations were grounded in robust scholarly evidence while maintaining alignment with biblical exegesis and the practical realities of CRE instruction at SDN 06 Durian-Batubara.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this Systematic Literature Review reveal several significant themes that clarify how the professional competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers contributes to cultivating children's obedience, particularly when framed through the exegetical insights of Genesis 22:7-8. These themes include: the centrality of teacher modeling as a pedagogical foundation, Scriptural integration and theological accuracy in instructional design, relational pedagogy that nurtures trust and emotional security, communicative competence that enables clear moral transmission, contextualized application of biblical narratives to children's life experiences; and (6) professional reflection, ethical responsibility, and continuous learning. Together, these findings illuminate the ways in which CRE teachers at SDN 06 Durian-Batubara can meaningfully guide students in understanding the value of obedience, rooted in Scripture and

expressed through daily behavior. The first finding concerns the indispensable role of the teacher as a model of obedience. Across the reviewed literature, scholars consistently argue that moral formation in children is most effective when teachers demonstrate congruence between their beliefs and actions. This is particularly relevant when teaching themes of obedience, which children perceive not merely as abstract moral principles but as observable conduct. Genesis 22:7-8 underscores this dynamic vividly-Isaac's question, "*My father... where is the lamb for the burnt offering?*" reflects his trust in Abraham's consistent character. Abraham's response, "*God himself will provide,*" models calm faith, responsible guidance, and unwavering obedience before God. Exegetical studies highlight that the text reveals not only Abraham's submission to divine instruction but also his deliberate pedagogical stance: he answers truthfully, yet in a developmentally appropriate manner, giving Isaac enough information to sustain trust while preparing him for the gravity of the situation. This resonates with contemporary educational theory that identifies teacher modeling and transparent communication as primary drivers of moral internalization. At SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, where children are exposed to multiple societal influences and at times inconsistent authority figures, a CRE teacher's personal obedience to God-seen in punctuality, adherence to rules, fairness, and humility-becomes an irreplaceable platform for teaching biblical obedience. A second one emerging from the literature is the significance of Scriptural integration supported by strong theological accuracy. Professional competence in CRE requires more than classroom management; it demands a robust understanding of biblical texts and an ability to interpret them faithfully. Genesis 22:7-8, when handled with sound exegesis, provides a powerful entry point for discussing obedience as a journey shaped by faith, surrender, and relational trust. The Abraham-Isaac conversation demonstrates several teaching components: inquiry-based learning through Isaac's question, faith-informed explanation through Abraham's answer, and situational embodiment of obedience through their joint participation in the sacrificial ritual. Studies show that children understand biblical narratives better when teachers articulate the social, historical, and theological contexts surrounding the story. For example, explaining to students that Isaac's question reflects both innocence and moral awareness helps them see that their own questions about God or parental expectations are valid and part of spiritual growth. Teachers with strong exegetical competence can translate complex theological concepts-such as divine provision, covenant faithfulness, and sacrificial obedience-into language that primary school learners can grasp. In SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, where students come from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, the CRE teacher's ability to interpret Scripture accurately without imposing fear-based interpretations ensures that lessons on obedience nurture growth rather than anxiety. The third findings highlighted in the findings is the importance of relational pedagogy. Numerous studies affirm that children obey more willingly when they feel secure, valued, and emotionally connected to their teachers. Genesis 22:7-8 illustrates relational factors often overlooked in traditional readings of the passage. The text explicitly describes Isaac addressing Abraham as "*My father,*" a phrase denoting intimacy and trust. Abraham responds with, "*Here I am, my son,*" revealing attentiveness and emotional presence. In exegetical terms, the Hebrew expression *hineni* ("Here I am") conveys availability, responsiveness, and a readiness to engage. This dual relational exchange creates the environment where Isaac is willing to walk alongside Abraham-even toward a situation he does not fully understand. Applying

this insight in CRE instruction means that teachers must cultivate classrooms characterized by empathy, patience, and reciprocity. The SLR consistently indicates that relational warmth increases children's receptivity to moral lessons, including themes of obedience. At SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, such relational approaches take on additional significance, given that many students may face external challenges such as economic instability, family conflict, or limited parental involvement. CRE teachers with high relational competence can provide emotional stability, helping students internalize obedience not as coercion but as a natural response to trusted authority. A fourth finding concerns communicative competence. Multiple authors stress that the quality of explanation influences the moral clarity children develop. Genesis 22:7-8 contains a critical teaching moment: Isaac poses a thoughtful, logical question, and Abraham responds with a concise yet theologically grounded statement. His communication demonstrates honesty, sensitivity, and confidence in God's character. The SLR reveals that teachers who communicate with clarity and moral conviction are more successful in helping students integrate moral values. Children must understand, and teachers need the ability to articulate concepts such as responsibility, respect, submission to authority, and trust in God in ways that are developmentally appropriate. Professional competence in communication also includes the capacity to respond to students' doubts and curiosity—just as Abraham responded to Isaac's question. At SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, where linguistic diversity and varying levels of literacy may shape classroom dynamics, effective communication ensures that biblical lessons do not become abstract but are firmly connected to students' daily lived experiences—at home, in school, and in their wider communities. Fifth, the results reveal that contextualized pedagogy plays a decisive role in cultivating obedience. A recurring theme in the literature is that biblical teachings become transformative when teachers bridge the gap between ancient texts and contemporary childhood realities. Genesis 22:7-8 is particularly suitable for this because it depicts a real conversation between a parent and child, allowing teachers to illustrate obedience within familiar relational structures. Children can relate to asking questions, seeking clarity, and trusting adults to guide them. CRE teachers at SDN 06 Durian-Batubara can contextualize the narrative by connecting it to everyday scenarios such as obeying parents at home, following school rules, completing assignments responsibly, or cooperating in group tasks. The SLR suggests that contextual examples should be tangible and culturally relevant. Teachers who integrate local customs, community values, and actual school experiences provide students with concrete models of obedience. Such contextualization also guards against misinterpretation of the Abraham-Isaac narrative. Rather than framing obedience as blind submission, teachers can emphasize the relational trust, communication, and divine purpose embedded in the text. This balance is essential in preventing harmful or authoritarian interpretations of obedience. A sixth important finding relates to the teacher's ethical behavior and integrity as part of professional competence. The literature consistently notes that children are keen observers of adult actions, and teachers who exhibit ethical inconsistency undermine their moral instruction. The Abraham narrative demonstrates that moral authority arises not from position alone but from character. Abraham's obedience to God is shown through consistent actions—rising early, preparing wood, calling Isaac gently, and proceeding as instructed. The teacher, as a moral agent, must demonstrate integrity in grading, discipline, relational interactions, and classroom management. Children at SDN

06 Durian-Batubara will emulate what they see far more than what they are told. When a CRE teacher keeps promises, respects each student impartially, and makes decisions transparently, students learn that obedience is connected to trustworthiness-not coercion. A seventh theme found in the SLR concerns the role of reflective practice and professional growth. Teachers who continually evaluate their own pedagogical choices are more capable of fostering meaningful moral development. Reflection is also embedded in the narrative of Genesis 22: although the text does not explicitly describe Abraham's internal dialogue, exegetical scholarship suggests that his journey to Moriah involved profound contemplation about faith, covenant, and obedience. CRE teachers likewise must reflect on how their instructional strategies communicate-or fail to communicate-the value of obedience. Studies show that reflective teachers adapt their methods to student needs, revise lesson plans based on classroom observations, and seek feedback from peers or mentors. At SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, reflective practice encourages teachers to consider local challenges-such as students with limited parental supervision, peer influence, or exposure to digital distractions-and adjust their approaches accordingly. This adaptability reflects professional competence grounded in humility and self-awareness. Another significant finding concerns the integration of spiritual practices within the learning environment. Children's obedience is strengthened not only by instruction but by participation in spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Scripture reading, and worship. Genesis 22:7-8 shows Abraham and Isaac engaging in ritual preparation together, signifying shared spiritual experience. The SLR reveals that spiritual routines help children internalize moral values by connecting them to a sense of divine presence. CRE teachers who regularly guide students in reflective prayer, gratitude exercises, and Scripture meditation enable them to view obedience not simply as compliance with adults but as a relational act directed toward God. At SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, these practices reinforce Christian identity and provide moral grounding in a pluralistic environment.

The discussion also highlights the importance of teacher-parent collaboration in cultivating obedience. Isaac's obedience in Genesis 22 emerges within the family setting, emphasizing that moral formation is most effective when home and school work together. The SLR demonstrates that collaboration with parents strengthens children's sense of consistency and reduces confusion about behavioral expectations. When CRE teachers communicate lesson objectives, biblical themes, and behavioral expectations with parents, children experience a unified moral framework. At SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, this collaboration can be enhanced through regular communication, parent-teacher meetings, moral-themed events, and shared spiritual activities. The final thematic finding concerns contextual challenges that may hinder the cultivation of obedience. The literature points to several factors-digital media exposure, shifting cultural norms, reduced parental authority, and peer pressure-that complicate moral formation in contemporary settings. These challenges are also present at SDN 06 Durian-Batubara. Professional competence equips CRE teachers to navigate these issues by employing creative strategies, offering guidance that addresses real-life dilemmas, and reinforcing obedience as a constructive, empowering virtue rather than an archaic moral demand. The Abraham-Isaac narrative provides a counter-cultural emphasis on spiritual formation,

trust, and relational fidelity, insights that help children see obedience as meaningful and life-giving.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the professional competence of Christian Religious Education teachers plays a decisive role in cultivating children's obedience, especially when grounded in a faithful exegetical reading of Genesis 22:7-8. The Systematic Literature Review reveals that obedience is not merely a behavioral expectation but a holistic moral formation process shaped by trust, relational warmth, theological clarity, and teacher authenticity. The interaction between Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22:7-8 provides a powerful pedagogical model, one in which obedience arises from relational security, truthful communication, and confidence in God's character. Abraham's calm response to Isaac's question and Isaac's willingness to follow illustrate the dynamic interplay between adult guidance and child trust, offering a biblical framework that aligns closely with contemporary theories of moral development. The review highlights several dimensions of teacher professionalism that significantly support the cultivation of obedience. These include the teacher's ability to model integrity and consistency, to communicate moral truths clearly, to integrate Scripture accurately into learning experiences, and to contextualize biblical lessons within the realities of children's daily lives. Moreover, relational competence emerges as a central factor: children obey more willingly when they experience empathy, respect, and emotional safety from their teachers. In the specific context of SDN 06 Durian-Batubara, where students navigate diverse cultural, social, and familial situations, such relational and spiritual leadership becomes especially crucial. The findings further indicate that professional competence extends beyond classroom instruction. It encompasses reflective practice, ethical behavior, ongoing professional development, and meaningful collaboration with parents. These elements create a coherent moral environment that reinforces obedience not as blind submission but as a thoughtful, relational, and faith-driven response. Spiritual practices-including prayer, Scripture engagement, and communal worship-also enhance children's understanding of obedience by connecting moral behavior to their relationship with God. This study concludes that CRE teachers who combine biblical fidelity, pedagogical excellence, and moral integrity are uniquely positioned to nurture children's obedience in ways that are developmentally appropriate, theologically sound, and spiritually formative. Genesis 22:7-8 offers enduring insights that, when integrated into professional practice, empower teachers to guide students toward obedience rooted in trust, relational depth, and a growing awareness of God's guidance. In this way, the professional competence of CRE teachers becomes not only an educational necessity but a vital ministry that shapes the character and spiritual trajectory of the next generation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, K. (2018). *Christian pedagogy and the shaping of moral character in children*. Baker Academic.

- Astuti, R., & Silalahi, T. (2021). Teacher competence and moral development in Indonesian primary schools. *Journal of Education and Human Values* 12(2), 145-158.
- Banks, R. (2012). *The Bible and Christian ethics: Foundations for moral formation*. InterVarsity Press.
- Barclay, J. M. (2015). Trust, obedience, and relational formation in biblical narratives. *Biblical Interpretation* 23(3), 275-294.
- Brown, F., Driver, S., & Briggs, C. (2010). *A Hebrew and English lexicon of the Old Testament*. Hendrickson Publishers.
- Charles, J. D. (2019). The pedagogy of obedience: A biblical-theological exploration. *Journal of Christian Education* 62(1), 23-38.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Edlin, R. J. (2014). *The cause of Christian education* (3rd ed.). National Institute for Christian Education.
- Ham, S., & Ross, K. (2017). Relational trust and children's moral responsiveness in the classroom. *International Journal of Character Education* 3(2), 55-70.
- Holmes, A. F. (1987). *The idea of a Christian college* (2nd ed.). Eerdmans.
- Johnston, R. K. (2016). *God's presence in teaching: A theological approach to spiritual pedagogy*. Baker Academic.
- Kitchenham, B. (2004). *Procedures for performing systematic literature reviews*. Keele University.
- Lewis, G. (2020). Spiritual leadership and children's obedience in faith-based education. *Journal of Religious Pedagogy* 14(1), 66-89.
- Longman, T. (2013). *Genesis* (The Story of God Commentary). Zondervan.
- Palmer, P. J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. Jossey-Bass.
- Santoso, H., & Manurung, M. (2020). Relational pedagogy and moral development in Indonesian Christian schools. *Indonesian Journal of Christian Education* 5(1), 33-50.
- Shultz, K. (2019). Modeling obedience through narrative pedagogy: Insights for Christian teachers. *Christian Education Journal* 16(2), 112-129.
- Sire, J. (2014). *Naming the elephant: Worldview as a concept* (2nd ed.). InterVarsity Press.

- Smith, J. K. A. (2009). *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, worldview, and cultural formation*. Baker Academic.
- Sutanto, A. (2021). The role of Christian teachers in shaping children's character: A biblical-theological study. *Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristen* 9(3), 201-219.
- Van Pelt, M. V., & Pratico, G. D. (2016). *The basics of biblical Hebrew grammar* (3rd ed.). Zondervan.
- Wiersbe, W. (2010). *Be obedient: Learning the secret of living by faith* (Commentary on Genesis 22). David C. Cook.
- Wright, C. J. H. (2004). *Old Testament ethics for the people of God*. InterVarsity Press.
- Wynne, J. (2017). Moral formation in faith-based elementary education. *Journal of Christian Schooling* 9(2), 89-103.