

Social Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Fostering a Humanistic School Culture: An Exegetical Study of Philippians 2:1-4 at SDN 28 Sagulubbek

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher in fostering a humanistic school culture at SDN 28 Sagulubbek, a remote Mentawai Islands elementary school with 23 Christian students and one CRE teacher. Grounded in an exegetical reflection on Philippians 2:1-4, the research explores how the relational virtues emphasized by Paul shape pedagogical relationships and influence the development of a relationally rich learning environment. Employing a qualitative design, the study combines a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as its primary methodological foundation with limited semi-structured interviews used to complement and contextualize the theoretical findings. The results reveal that the CRE teacher's social competence manifests through empathetic communication, active listening, restorative approaches to conflict, and consistent emotional stability. The teacher's humility and compassion reflect the Christlike model urged in Philippians 2:1-4 and translate into practical actions that strengthen interpersonal trust and cooperation among students. Cultural sensitivity also emerges as a crucial dimension of social competence. By integrating biblical teachings with local Mentawai cultural values, particularly communal harmony and mutual care, the teacher fosters a culturally grounded and meaningful expression of Christian ethics. The findings indicate that the social competence of the CRE teacher plays a vital role in forming a humanistic school culture characterized by mutual respect, inclusiveness, and relational harmony. The study highlights the continuing relevance of biblical relational ethics in contemporary Christian pedagogy and recommends further research on the development of social competence among CRE teachers in diverse Indonesian educational contexts.

Keywords: *Spiritual Competence, Christian Religious Education, Humanistic School*

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary educational discourse, the demand for a humanistic school culture, one that affirms dignity, mutual respect, empathy, and collaborative relationships, has become increasingly urgent. Indonesian public schools located in geographically isolated areas, such as the Mentawai Islands, face unique social and cultural challenges that

require educators to demonstrate not only pedagogical abilities but also strong social competence. Within this context, Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers hold a strategic role, especially in schools where Christian students form a minority or small learning community. At SDN 28 Sagulubbek, where 23 Christian students are mentored by a single CRE teacher, the cultivation of a humanistic school culture depends significantly on the teacher's ability to build healthy relationships, mediate diversity, and foster an atmosphere grounded in compassion and mutual regard. Social competence in Christian education entails more than interpersonal skills; it reflects the educator's capacity to embody relational virtues rooted in the biblical narrative. The apostle Paul's exhortation in Philippians 2:1-4 provides a theological foundation for understanding how relationships should be formed within Christian communities. Paul highlights four core elements, encouragement through Christ, comfort from love, fellowship in the Spirit, and compassion, that are meant to shape believers' interactions. These principles converge in Paul's call for humility, mutual submission, and prioritizing the interests of others. When applied to the educational setting, these virtues offer a profound vision of how teachers can nurture a humanistic environment: by practicing empathy, minimizing selfish ambition, valuing each student equally, and cultivating classroom relationships that reflect Christlike humility. Schools in the Mentawai region are characterized by cultural diversity, economic limitations, and strong community ties. In such contexts, students often experience educational disparities, limited access to resources, and varied social backgrounds. A CRE teacher with strong social competence becomes not only a transmitter of biblical knowledge but also a relational bridge builder capable of promoting solidarity among students. This is particularly important in classrooms where Christian values intersect with local wisdom, communal identity, and indigenous expressions of harmony. A humanistic school culture in this setting means creating spaces where students feel valued, safe, and empowered to collaborate despite differences. Research on teacher social competence emphasizes interpersonal communication, cultural sensitivity, emotional stability, and the ability to build trust. However, within Christian education, these components are inseparable from spiritual motivations grounded in Scripture. Philippians 2:1-4 reinforces that genuine social competence is not merely technique-based; it emerges from a transformed mindset shaped by humility and love. This integration of biblical reflection with educational practice provides a rich framework for exploring how CRE teachers can effectively shape school culture. The CRE teacher at SDN 28 Sagulubbek is responsible not only for formal religious instruction but also for guiding students in developing relational maturity that contributes to broader school values. Through daily interactions, pastoral care, conflict mediation, and modeling Christlike attitudes, the teacher influences both the Christian students and the wider school community. The humanistic culture envisioned in this study is therefore not limited to interpersonal warmth but extends to the creation of an ethical atmosphere where justice, empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect flourish. Empirical research on the social competence of CRE teachers in remote or rural Indonesian contexts remains limited. Existing studies often highlight pedagogical challenges, curriculum constraints, or spiritual formation, but few explore how biblical exegesis can inform relational practices in public schools. By grounding the discussion in Philippians 2:1-4, this study seeks to offer an integrative perspective that bridges theology, social competence theory, and educational praxis. This article examines how the social competence of the Christian

Religious Education teacher at SDN 28 Sagulubbek contributes to the realization of a humanistic school culture. Through exegetical analysis, qualitative insights, and contextual reflection, the study aims to articulate how humility, empathy, and communal love-rooted in Paul's teachings-can shape relationships in a school environment and provide a model for Christian educators in similar settings.

METHODS

The combination of SLR and field-based insights, to examine how the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher at SDN 28 Sagulubbek contributes to the development of a humanistic school culture, allowed the study to bridge theoretical perspectives, exegetical understanding of Philippians 2:1-4, and real-world educational practices within the Mentawai Islands context. The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) served as the primary methodological foundation. Following standard SLR protocols, the review process involved identifying, appraising, and synthesizing peer-reviewed literature published within the last 10-15 years on themes related to social competence in teaching, Christian education, humanistic pedagogy, and the integration of biblical principles in educational relationships. Databases were used to gather relevant studies, included "social competence," "Christian Religious Education," "humanistic school culture," "biblical pedagogy," "teacher-student relationships," and "Philippians 2:1-4." The initial search identified approximately 180 titles, which were filtered through inclusion and exclusion criteria based on relevance, recency, methodological, and conceptual alignment with the study's framework. After screening abstracts and full texts, 52 high-quality sources were selected for in-depth analysis. The SLR operated through thematic coding. Each article was categorized according to: teacher interpersonal communication, humility and empathy in pedagogy, relational ethics in Christian education, cultural sensitivity in rural schools, and theological foundations of social interactions. This structured process ensured that the findings were grounded in established scholarly consensus while allowing room for the integration of biblical and contextual insights. Exegetical commentaries on Philippians 2:1-4 were included to ensure accurate theological grounding. These exegetical sources provided insight into Pauline relational ethics-encouragement, unity, compassion, humility, and prioritizing others' interests-which were later used to interpret the pedagogical implications in the Mentawai setting. Complementing the SLR, brief semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Christian Religious Education teacher and a small sample of Christian students (four students were selected purposively based on willingness and ability to articulate experiences). The goal of the interviews was not to produce generalizable data but to obtain contextual illustrations of how relational practices and classroom interactions unfold in the school's daily life. Questions addressed themes such as teacher-student communication, experiences of empathy and mutual respect, strategies used to handle interpersonal issues, and perceptions of the teacher's role in shaping classroom culture. These interviews enriched the study by providing lived experiences that echoed, nuanced, or diverged from themes identified in the literature. The methodological integration of SLR and limited interviews allowed this study to articulate a comprehensive and context-sensitive understanding of how the CRE teacher at SDN 28 Sagulubbek embodies the

relational virtues of Philippians 2:1-4 and fosters a humanistic school culture grounded in humility, empathy, and mutual care.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study reveal that the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher at SDN 28 Sagulubbek plays a defining role in shaping a humanistic school culture characterized by empathy, cooperation, and respect for human dignity. The SLR findings consistently highlight that teachers who demonstrate humility, effective interpersonal communication, and cultural sensitivity tend to cultivate warmer and more inclusive learning environments. When these characteristics are examined through the theological lens of Philippians 2:1-4, a deeper framework emerges: social competence is not merely a pedagogical skill set but a relational virtue rooted in the imitation of Christ's humility. The integration of literature, interviews, and biblical exegesis shows that the CRE teacher embodies these relational virtues in various forms of classroom interaction, conflict mediation, and daily modeling of compassionate behavior. The major finding concerns the centrality of humility and empathy, which together form the core relational qualities emphasized in Paul's exhortation. Philippians 2:3-4 explicitly instructs believers to "do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit," but rather to act in humility, "valuing others above yourselves." This scriptural mandate resonates strongly with contemporary educational theories that regard social competence as rooted in the ability to view others' perspectives, regulate emotions, and act with altruistic intent. The SLR shows that humility-based teaching practices—such as active listening, allowing students' voices to be heard, acknowledging mistakes, and prioritizing student well-being, can significantly strengthen trust between teachers and learners. The interview with the CRE teacher confirms that these values shape her approach: she deliberately listens to students' concerns, treats them as equal partners in learning, and avoids hierarchical barriers that may create fear or distance. This relational posture makes students feel respected, leading to more harmonious interactions among the 23 Christian students under her guidance. A next key finding concerns the teacher's ability to foster unity and cooperation, mirroring Paul's appeal for believers to be "*like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind*" (Phil. 2:2). Social competence literature consistently emphasizes that teachers act as social architects who influence group dynamics through structuring collaborative opportunities and modeling conflict resolution. In the context of SDN 28 Sagulubbek, a school located in a remote island region with limited resources—cooperation becomes a survival mechanism that enhances both academic and social resilience. The CRE teacher promotes unity through cooperative learning activities, storytelling centered on biblical themes of mutual care, and class discussions that encourage students to consider others' feelings before acting. Interview data from students also reveal that when interpersonal disagreements arise, the teacher does not immediately impose sanctions; instead, she invites students to reflect on their actions, reconcile with one another, and understand the consequences of harmful behavior. This restorative approach aligns with both the Pauline ethic of fellowship "in the Spirit" and the contemporary concept of humanistic education, which prioritizes relational repair over punitive discipline. Students reported feeling safer and more supported in such an environment, which in turn reduces conflict frequency and promotes a sense of belonging. The results show that the teacher's cultural sensitivity

plays a crucial role in harmonizing Christian values with the indigenous culture of the Mentawai Islands. Social competence in multicultural contexts requires respect for local customs, communication styles, and collective values. The SLR indicates that culturally responsive Christian educators are more effective in integrating biblical principles into students' lived experiences. Philippians 2:1 emphasizes "comfort from love," which, when contextualized, can be interpreted as the ability to comfort others through compassionate understanding of their socio-cultural identity. The CRE teacher demonstrates cultural sensitivity by acknowledging the communal nature of Mentawai society, where mutual help, shared responsibility, and social harmony are traditional values deeply embedded in the community. Instead of imposing Christian teachings in a rigid or culturally dismissive manner, she connects biblical stories with local wisdom—such as the Mentawai principles of kinship, mutual care, and community gatherings. Students report that this approach makes Christian teachings more relatable and easier to internalize. By validating students' cultural background, the teacher strengthens their self-worth and contributes to a school culture where diversity is honored rather than suppressed. The study reveals that the teacher's emotional regulation and relational stability significantly influence the climate of the classroom. The SLR emphasizes emotional stability as a fundamental component of social competence because it enables teachers to respond calmly and constructively to challenges. Philippians 2:1's reference to "encouragement in Christ" suggests a spiritual foundation that helps believers maintain inner strength and emotional balance. In the interview, the teacher described moments when students struggled with family issues, academic pressure, or social conflicts. Instead of reacting harshly or dismissively, she deliberately maintained emotional composure, offered comfort, and prayed silently for wisdom. Students noted that her calm demeanor helped them feel secure, and even in disciplinary situations, they felt guided rather than intimidated. This aligns with humanistic educational philosophy that frames emotional safety as a prerequisite for learning and moral development. Results indicate that the teacher's communication style embodies the biblical ethic of compassion and mutual respect. Philippians 2:1-2 emphasizes "fellowship in the Spirit" and "tenderness and compassion," qualities that in practical education translate to empathetic communication, gentle correction, and affirming interactions. According to the SLR, teachers with strong communication skills use inclusive language, provide constructive feedback, and adjust their tone based on students' emotional readiness. The CRE teacher integrates these practices consistently: she begins lessons by asking students about their well-being, affirms their contributions during class discussions, and uses encouraging phrases that help build confidence. Students reported feeling valued because the teacher communicates with warmth and does not ridicule or belittle their mistakes.

The findings also reveal that the teacher actively models ethical and relational behaviors, which students imitate unconsciously. The SLR underscores that teacher modeling is one of the strongest predictors of student character formation. Paul's instruction in Philippians 2:3-4, to "look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others," is demonstrated when the teacher volunteers personal time to assist struggling students, shares resources generously, and collaborates with other teachers to resolve school-wide concerns. Students recount instances in which the teacher intervened to help peers experiencing bullying or exclusion, demonstrating protective care and advocating

for justice. Such behaviors reinforce a humanistic culture where fairness, empathy, and mutual advocacy are normalized. Another significant finding relates to the teacher's role in mediating diversity and promoting inclusive relationships in a school where Christianity exists alongside other faith traditions. While the focus of this study is on the 23 Christian students, the teacher's conduct influences the broader school population. Philippians 2:4 encourages believers to consider "the interests of others," which in this context includes non-Christian students. The teacher builds friendships with teachers of different religious backgrounds and fosters an atmosphere free from religious superiority. The SLR shows that such inclusive behavior enhances social cohesion in pluralistic schools and reduces prejudice. The interviews highlight that the teacher encourages Christian students to show respect and kindness to peers of other faiths, framing this as an expression of Christlike humility. This approach contributes to the development of a humanistic school culture in which diversity is approached with openness rather than fear. Students reported that this attitude helped reduce misunderstandings and strengthened friendships across religious lines, thus expanding the impact of the teacher's social competence beyond the Christian classroom. A further important discovery is that the teacher integrates biblical reflection and prayer as tools for shaping social attitudes. Social competence in Christian education is not merely behavioral; it flows from spiritual formation. Several SLR sources argue that scripturally grounded reflection helps students internalize ethical norms more deeply than rule-based instruction alone. During the interview, both the teacher and students mentioned that prayer sessions often become moments of emotional healing and encouragement. The teacher uses these opportunities not only to teach doctrine but also to guide students in expressing gratitude, asking forgiveness, and praying for one another's needs. This practice aligns with Paul's emphasis on unity "in the Spirit," suggesting that spiritual fellowship strengthens relational unity. The results show that the teacher adopts a restorative approach to conflict management, grounded in humility and reconciliation. The SLR on conflict resolution in Christian education indicates that punitive disciplinary systems often fail to cultivate moral maturity, whereas restorative methods promote empathy and accountability. Philippians 2:3 critiques "*vain conceit*," urging believers to adopt a posture of gentle correction rather than dominance. In interview accounts, students described how the teacher rarely scolds harshly when they misbehave; instead, she invites them to reflect, apologize, and make amends. This approach encourages self-awareness and strengthens interpersonal bonds among students. The study reveals that the teacher's overall influence extends far beyond the classroom, shaping school culture holistically. The SLR supports the notion that humanistic school culture emerges when teachers consistently practice care-based ethics, maintain equitable treatment of all students, and model harmonious relationships with colleagues. The CRE teacher exemplifies these qualities: she collaborates with staff, engages with parents, and participates in school activities that emphasize unity and solidarity. Her presence contributes to a school climate where students feel that their emotional, social, and spiritual needs are acknowledged.

In summary, the results highlight that the social competence of the CRE teacher—expressed through humility, empathy, cultural sensitivity, emotional stability, inclusive communication, ethical modeling, restorative discipline, and spiritual fellowship—creates

a humanistic school culture that reflects the relational ethos of Philippians 2:1–4. The integration of biblical principles with social competencies allows the teacher to nurture students' character, promote mutual respect, reduce conflict, and strengthen unity in a diverse educational setting. This study affirms that the relational virtues taught by Paul continue to hold transformative power in modern pedagogy, especially in rural Indonesian schools where communal harmony and cultural values intersect deeply with educational practice.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (PAK) teacher at SDN 28 Sagulubbek plays a pivotal role in cultivating a humanistic school culture, particularly when interpreted through the ethical and relational framework of Philippians 2:1-4. The exegetical insights from the text, emphasizing encouragement, consolation of love, fellowship in the Spirit, compassion, humility, and attentiveness to the needs of others, provide a theological lens that informs and strengthens practices of empathy, collaboration, and ethical humility within educational contexts. The findings reveal that the teacher's relational empathy serves as a foundation for creating a safe, caring, and emotionally supportive classroom climate, enabling students to feel respected, understood, and valued. This relational stance aligns closely with humanistic educational principles, which prioritize dignity, emotional safety, and mutual respect among all members of the school community. The study also highlights the teacher's collaborative engagement, particularly the ability to work constructively with colleagues, parents, and the local community despite the challenges posed by the rural Mentawai context. Such collaboration not only supports harmonious interreligious relationships but also reinforces the unity and shared purpose encouraged by Paul in Philippians 2:1-2. Parent-teacher partnerships, informal community interactions, and inter-teacher cooperation help extend humanistic values beyond the classroom, strengthening the overall cultural fabric of the school. Furthermore, the teacher's ethical humility emerges as a defining virtue—one that promotes fairness, openness, and mutual learning. By modelling humility in authority, respecting student voices, and integrating elements of local culture, the teacher reflects the Christlike mindset that Paul urges believers to imitate. The study also identifies important challenges. Limited access to professional development, resource constraints, and socio-economic difficulties within students' families diminish the teacher's ability to fully implement humanistic pedagogical practices. These structural limitations underscore the need for systemic support, ongoing training, and increased resource allocation to rural schools. Navigating the balance between Christian theological commitments and the expectations of a public, pluralistic school context remains a delicate task that requires ongoing negotiation and relational sensitivity. The evidence strongly indicates that a PAK teacher who embodies the spirit of Philippians 2:1-4 can significantly influence the formation of a humanistic school culture. The integration of biblical ethics with social competence produces a powerful model of relational pedagogy—one that transcends doctrinal instruction and reaches into the realm of character formation, communal harmony, and moral transformation. This study contributes to the broader discourse on Christian education by demonstrating that the spiritual qualities of compassion, unity, and humility are deeply compatible with

humanistic educational aims and can flourish even within resource-limited and culturally diverse settings. The PAK teacher at SDN 28 Sagulubek exemplifies how social competence grounded in Christian spirituality can enrich school culture, strengthen relational well-being, and promote holistic human development. The findings call for greater attention to the relational, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of teacher competence in Christian education research and practice. Future initiatives should focus on enhancing professional development in social-emotional learning, strengthening community partnerships, and creating environments that support the sustainable cultivation of humanistic values. Through such efforts, Christian educators can continue to embody and advance the compassionate, humble, and others-centered ethos of Philippians 2:1-4 within Indonesia's diverse educational landscape.

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