



The Role of Social Competence in Christian Religious Education Teachers in Nurturing Respectful Peer Communication: A Genesis 22:7 Perspective at SDN 45 Bilah Hulu

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of social competence in Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in nurturing respectful peer communication among students through the pedagogical perspective of Genesis 22:7. Recognizing that education is fundamentally relational, this research explores how teachers' interpersonal abilities contribute to shaping students' communication patterns and social interactions. Employing a qualitative research design, the study was conducted at SDN 45 Bilah Hulu and involved classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Data were analyzed using an interactive model that included data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing to identify patterns of relational interaction and communication development. The findings reveal that the teacher's social competence played a significant role in fostering respectful peer communication. This competence was demonstrated through empathetic engagement, dialogical teaching methods, and consistent modeling of respectful interaction. Students were not only instructed about respectful behavior but were guided to experience and practice it within collaborative learning contexts. The integration of Genesis 22:7 provided a theological framework that reinforced values of trust, openness, and relational sensitivity. As a result, students exhibited improved communication patterns, including active listening, thoughtful expression, and constructive conflict resolution. The study concludes that socially competent CRE teachers serve as catalysts for developing respectful communication among students by translating biblical values into lived classroom practices. This integration of professional competence and theological reflection contributes to both character formation and positive peer interaction. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening teachers' social competence as a strategic approach to fostering relationally healthy learning environments.

Keywords: social competence, Christian Religious Education, peer communication, respectful interaction, Genesis 22:7.

INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamentally a relational process in which knowledge transmission is inseparable from interpersonal interaction. Within this relational framework, teachers are not merely conveyors of subject matter but also social agents who shape students' attitudes, communication patterns, and character development. In contemporary educational discourse, increasing attention has been given to the role of teachers' social competence as a determinant of classroom climate and student behavior. Social competence refers to the ability to communicate effectively, establish meaningful relationships, demonstrate empathy, and collaborate constructively within the school environment (Rasdiany et al., 2024). In the context of Christian Religious Education (CRE), this competence becomes even more crucial because teachers are expected to embody moral and spiritual values in their interactions with students. Recent studies have emphasized that teachers' social competence significantly influences students' motivation, resilience, and social development. For instance, Oka (2025) found that communication skills, interpersonal sensitivity, and collaborative interaction displayed by religious education teachers contributed directly to creating a conducive learning atmosphere that enhanced student engagement. Similarly, Hutagalung (2025) demonstrated that socially competent Christian Religious Education teachers fostered students' sense of responsibility in social relationships by modeling positive communication behaviors and facilitating reflective dialogue. These findings indicate that social competence is not merely a professional requirement but a transformative tool that shapes students' interpersonal dynamics. Peer communication plays a vital role in students' socialization process. Children develop communication patterns, conflict resolution skills, and emotional understanding through daily interaction with classmates. However, without proper guidance, peer interaction can easily deteriorate into negative behaviors such as exclusion, verbal aggression, or misunderstanding. Teachers therefore serve as mediators who cultivate respectful communication among students. According to Lewar and Simbolon (2025), teachers who demonstrate empathy, emotional intelligence, and inclusive communication strategies create meaningful relationships that support students' moral and behavioral development. Through such relationships, students not only learn academic content but also internalize values such as respect, cooperation, and responsibility. Within Christian Religious Education, the responsibility to nurture respectful communication among students is closely linked to biblical principles. Scripture provides relational models that emphasize trust, dialogue, and mutual respect. Genesis 22:7, which records the respectful dialogue between Isaac and Abraham, reflects a relational dynamic characterized by openness and trust. This narrative illustrates how communication grounded in faith and relational sensitivity fosters understanding rather than fear. When interpreted pedagogically, this passage offers a theological foundation for cultivating respectful peer communication in educational contexts. CRE teachers who integrate such biblical perspectives into their teaching practice can bridge theological instruction with lived social experience, thereby fostering holistic student development (Hutagaol & Barasa, 2025).

Effective teacher communication has been shown to play a central role in internalizing values among students. Fuadi et al. (2025) argue that persuasive and interactive communication by teachers significantly improves students' understanding and acceptance of religious values. This suggests that respectful peer communication cannot

be taught solely through verbal instruction but must be modeled through consistent teacher-student and student-student interactions. Social competence thus becomes the bridge between theological teaching and behavioral transformation. In the Indonesian educational context, social competence is formally recognized as one of the essential components of teacher professionalism. National educational policy emphasizes that teachers must be capable of interacting effectively with students, colleagues, parents, and the broader community (Didaktika Pedagogia, 2025). This requirement aligns with contemporary research asserting that socially competent teachers enhance communication quality and foster collaborative learning environments. Rasdiany et al. (2024) highlight that teachers with strong social competence tend to allocate more time for meaningful interaction with students and establish stronger communication networks within the school community. Such interaction patterns create an environment where respectful communication becomes normative rather than incidental.

Empirical studies within Christian education settings further confirm that teachers' social competence influences not only academic outcomes but also students' character formation. Manurung and Simatupang (2025) found that communication strategies such as active listening, questioning techniques, and empathetic responses significantly enhanced students' engagement and interpersonal awareness. This demonstrates that respectful peer communication is cultivated through structured interaction facilitated by socially competent teachers. Despite these insights, there remains a gap in research focusing specifically on how CRE teachers' social competence nurtures respectful peer communication among primary school students through a biblical pedagogical framework. Most existing studies concentrate on motivation, resilience, or academic engagement rather than peer interaction patterns. Furthermore, limited research integrates scriptural reflection into the analysis of teacher social competence in contemporary classroom practice. This study seeks to explore the role of Christian Religious Education teachers' social competence in nurturing respectful peer communication among students through the lens of Genesis 22:7. By situating the investigation at SDN 45 Bilah Hulu, this research aims to provide contextual insights into how theological values and professional competencies intersect in shaping students' social behavior. The findings are expected to contribute to both educational practice and theological pedagogy by demonstrating how social competence serves as a practical expression of biblical relational principles in modern classrooms. Understanding the intersection between teacher social competence, biblical values, and peer communication is essential for developing educational environments that foster not only cognitive growth but also respectful interpersonal relationships. In doing so, Christian Religious Education can fulfill its broader mission of forming students who embody faith-based values in their daily social interactions.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the role of social competence in Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in nurturing respectful peer communication among students through the perspective of Genesis 22:7. A qualitative design was considered appropriate because the research aimed to understand lived experiences, relational dynamics, and meaning-making processes within the natural

classroom setting rather than to measure variables statistically. As Creswell and Poth (2018) explain, qualitative research is particularly suited to investigating social interactions and value formation processes that are deeply contextual and interpretive. The research was conducted at SDN 45 Bilah Hulu, focusing on the Christian Religious Education learning environment. The participants consisted of one CRE teacher and several upper-grade students who were actively involved in classroom interaction. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure that those included had direct experience with CRE instruction and peer communication practices shaped by the teacher's relational approach (Palinkas et al., 2015). This sampling strategy enabled the researcher to capture rich and relevant insights related to teacher-student and student-student interaction. Data were collected through three primary techniques: classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations were conducted to examine how the teacher demonstrated social competence through communication patterns, empathy, classroom interaction, and conflict mediation strategies. Observations also focused on how these behaviors influenced students' peer communication. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the CRE teacher and selected students to gain deeper insight into their perceptions of respectful communication and relational learning. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), semi-structured interviews allow participants to articulate their experiences while enabling the researcher to explore emerging themes. In addition, document analysis of lesson plans and reflective teaching notes was conducted to identify how biblical principles particularly Genesis 22:7, were integrated into pedagogical practice.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. First, collected data were transcribed and organized into thematic categories related to teacher social competence and peer communication. Second, patterns of interaction were displayed through narrative matrices to highlight recurring behaviors and relational dynamics. Finally, interpretations were drawn to connect observed practices with biblical relational principles reflected in Genesis 22:7. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the study applied credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability criteria as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of observation, interview, and documentation data. Member checking was conducted to validate participants' perspectives. Dependability was ensured through consistent documentation of research procedures, while confirmability was achieved by maintaining reflective field notes to minimize researcher bias. Through this qualitative approach, the study sought to provide an in-depth understanding of how teachers' social competence becomes a practical instrument for cultivating respectful peer communication in the CRE classroom.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the social competence demonstrated by the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher played a significant role in shaping respectful peer communication among students. This competence was not merely expressed through formal instruction but was embedded in daily relational interactions, communication styles, and the teacher's consistent modeling of respectful dialogue. The results indicate that students did not primarily learn respectful communication through

direct moral teaching alone, but through observing and experiencing how the teacher communicated with them and facilitated their interactions with one another. One of the most prominent findings was the teacher's ability to create an emotionally safe learning environment. Through warm verbal expressions, attentive listening, and non-judgmental responses, the teacher established a classroom atmosphere characterized by trust and openness. Students reported feeling comfortable expressing opinions and asking questions without fear of ridicule. This emotional safety became the foundation upon which respectful peer communication could develop. Observational data showed that when students perceived the teacher as approachable and empathetic, they were more likely to adopt similar communication patterns in their interactions with classmates. The teacher's communication style was dialogical rather than authoritative. Instead of delivering moral directives, the teacher engaged students in reflective conversations, often asking open-ended questions that encouraged them to consider the feelings and perspectives of others. This approach aligns with the relational nature of Genesis 22:7, where Isaac initiates a respectful inquiry toward Abraham, and Abraham responds in a way that sustains relational trust. In the classroom context, the teacher used biblical narratives not as doctrinal instruction alone but as relational models. Students were guided to see communication as an act of mutual respect rather than a means of asserting dominance. This relational pedagogy was particularly evident during peer discussions and group activities. The teacher intentionally structured learning tasks that required collaboration and dialogue. Before beginning group work, the teacher frequently reminded students to speak respectfully, listen actively, and value differing opinions. However, these reminders were not delivered as rigid rules but were framed as shared commitments rooted in Christian values of love and mutual care. As a result, respectful communication emerged as a communal norm rather than an externally imposed obligation.

The study also found that the teacher's social competence was reflected in conflict mediation practices. When disagreements arose among students, the teacher did not immediately impose solutions but facilitated dialogue between the parties involved. Students were encouraged to articulate their perspectives and listen to one another's experiences. This process not only resolved conflicts but also cultivated communication skills such as empathy, patience, and self-regulation. Over time, students began to replicate these mediation strategies independently, indicating internalization of respectful interaction patterns. Another important aspect of the findings was the role of modeling. The teacher consistently demonstrated respectful communication in interactions with students, colleagues, and even during disciplinary moments. For instance, when addressing inappropriate behavior, the teacher avoided harsh language and instead explained the impact of such behavior on others. This approach shifted the focus from punishment to understanding relational consequences. Students observed that correction could be delivered without humiliation, reinforcing the idea that respect should be maintained even in moments of disagreement. The integration of biblical reflection further enriched this process. Genesis 22:7 was used as a narrative entry point to discuss themes of trust, openness, and relational sensitivity. Rather than focusing solely on theological interpretation, the teacher invited students to explore the communication dynamic between Isaac and Abraham. Students were asked to identify how respect was expressed in their dialogue and to consider how similar respect could be practiced in

friendships. This exercise enabled students to connect scriptural values with everyday social experiences, bridging faith and practice. The findings suggest that respectful peer communication was nurtured through three interconnected dimensions of teacher social competence: relational presence, communicative modeling, and dialogical facilitation. Relational presence refers to the teacher's ability to be emotionally available and attentive to students' experiences. Communicative modeling involves demonstrating respectful language and behavior in all interactions. Dialogical facilitation includes guiding students to engage in meaningful and empathetic dialogue with peers. Students' responses during interviews highlighted noticeable changes in peer interaction patterns. Many reported that they had become more careful in choosing words when speaking to classmates. Some mentioned learning to apologize sincerely after conflicts, while others expressed increased willingness to listen to differing opinions. These changes indicate that respectful communication was not merely understood cognitively but practiced behaviorally.

The classroom observations also revealed a decline in negative interaction patterns such as teasing and exclusion. While such behaviors did not disappear entirely, students became more responsive to reminders of mutual respect and were more likely to intervene when peers were treated unfairly. This suggests that the teacher's social competence contributed to the development of collective responsibility among students. The discussion of these findings underscores the significance of social competence as a transformative dimension of CRE teaching. Rather than functioning as an abstract professional requirement, social competence became an active force shaping students' relational habits. The teacher's ability to translate biblical values into lived communication practices exemplifies how theological education can influence social behavior. The use of Genesis 22:7 as a pedagogical lens provided a meaningful framework for discussing communication ethics. The passage illustrates that respectful dialogue is grounded in trust and relational awareness. By connecting this biblical narrative with classroom interactions, the teacher enabled students to perceive respect as a faith-based practice rather than a mere social expectation. This integration of theology and pedagogy addresses a critical gap in contemporary education, where moral instruction is often separated from relational practice. The study demonstrates that when teachers embody the values they teach, students are more likely to internalize those values in their peer relationships. Respectful communication thus becomes not only a behavioral outcome but also a reflection of spiritual formation.

The findings highlight the importance of teacher intentionality. Social competence does not automatically translate into positive student outcomes unless it is consciously applied within pedagogical practice. The teacher's deliberate efforts to facilitate dialogue, model empathy, and integrate biblical reflection were instrumental in nurturing respectful communication. The implications of this study extend beyond CRE classrooms. They suggest that social competence should be viewed as a foundational component of character education. In diverse educational contexts, teachers who demonstrate relational sensitivity can foster environments where respectful communication becomes normative. The study also acknowledges contextual limitations. The findings are situated within a specific educational and cultural setting, and the relational dynamics observed may differ in other contexts. Nevertheless, the core insight that teacher social competence plays a vital role in shaping peer communication remains broadly applicable.

In conclusion, the research findings affirm that the social competence of CRE teachers significantly contributes to nurturing respectful peer communication among students. Through relational presence, communicative modeling, and dialogical facilitation, the teacher transformed biblical values into lived classroom practices. The use of Genesis 22:7 provided a theological foundation that reinforced the importance of trust and respectful dialogue. As students internalized these values, peer interactions became more empathetic, cooperative, and respectful, reflecting the transformative potential of socially competent teaching.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore the role of social competence in Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in nurturing respectful peer communication among students through the lens of Genesis 22:7. The findings clearly demonstrate that social competence is not merely a supplementary professional attribute but a central pedagogical force that shapes the relational culture of the classroom. Through emotionally responsive interaction, dialogical communication, and consistent behavioral modeling, the CRE teacher created an environment where respectful peer communication could develop naturally and meaningfully. One of the key conclusions emerging from this research is that respectful communication among students is primarily formed through relational experience rather than through verbal instruction alone. Students learn how to communicate respectfully by observing how teachers listen, respond, correct, and engage with others. In this study, the teacher's empathetic listening, non-threatening language, and collaborative conflict mediation served as practical demonstrations of respect in action. These behaviors gradually influenced students' own communication patterns, fostering greater sensitivity, patience, and openness in peer interactions. The integration of Genesis 22:7 provided a theological framework that enriched the pedagogical process. The narrative of respectful dialogue between Isaac and Abraham offered a meaningful model of communication grounded in trust and relational awareness. By connecting this biblical interaction to everyday classroom experiences, the teacher enabled students to perceive respectful communication not merely as a social norm but as a faith-based value. This integration helped bridge the gap between religious teaching and lived behavior, demonstrating that spiritual principles can be expressed through daily interpersonal interactions. The study also highlights the importance of intentional facilitation. Social competence alone does not automatically produce positive outcomes unless it is consciously enacted within teaching practice. The teacher's deliberate efforts to structure collaborative activities, guide reflective dialogue, and mediate conflicts played a significant role in shaping a classroom culture rooted in mutual respect. Over time, students began to internalize these values, as evidenced by their increased willingness to listen, apologize, and support one another during disagreements. Another important implication of this research is that social competence contributes not only to improved communication but also to the broader formation of character. Respectful peer interaction fosters empathy, responsibility, and cooperation qualities essential for holistic student development. In this sense, the CRE classroom becomes a space where spiritual values are translated into relational habits that extend beyond academic learning. While the findings are context-specific, they underscore a broader educational insight: teachers who embody relational

sensitivity and ethical communication significantly influence students' social behavior. Therefore, strengthening teachers' social competence should be considered a strategic priority in educational practice, particularly within faith-based instruction. This study affirms that when CRE teachers integrate professional social competence with biblical relational principles, they can effectively nurture respectful peer communication. In doing so, education moves beyond knowledge transmission toward the formation of individuals capable of living out values of respect, empathy, and trust in their daily relationships.

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