



The Social Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Instilling the Value of Generous Giving: A Biblical Reflection on Genesis 24:18-20 at SMK Swasta Yapim Taruna Tambusai

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ABSTRACT

The formation of Christian character is a central objective of Christian Religious Education (CRE), particularly in cultivating moral values that reflect biblical teachings. One important value emphasized in Christian ethics is the willingness to give generously to others. This study examines the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in instilling the value of generous giving through a biblical reflection on Genesis 24:18-20 at SMK Swasta Yapim Taruna Tambusai. The research employed a qualitative approach to explore how teachers interpret and implement biblical teachings on generosity within classroom learning. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with Christian Religious Education teachers, classroom observations, and document analysis of lesson plans and teaching materials. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes related to teacher social competence and the process of value internalization among students. The findings indicate that the social competence of teachers plays a significant role in creating a supportive and relational learning environment that encourages students to understand and practice the value of generous giving. Teachers demonstrated social competence through effective communication, empathy, relational engagement, and moral modeling during the learning process. The biblical narrative of Rebekah in Genesis 24:18-20 was used as a contextual teaching resource to illustrate the meaning of generosity, hospitality, and willingness to serve others. In addition, teachers applied various pedagogical strategies such as contextual discussions, collaborative learning activities, and practical service-oriented experiences to reinforce the internalization of generosity among students. The study concludes that the integration of biblical reflection, teacher social competence, and experiential learning contributes significantly to the development of generous character among students. Strengthening the relational and pedagogical competencies of Christian Religious Education teachers is therefore essential for fostering moral and spiritual formation in educational contexts.

Keywords: *Christian Religious Education, social competence, generous giving, Genesis 24:18-20*

INTRODUCTION

Education in the Christian perspective is not merely an intellectual endeavor but a holistic process aimed at shaping the moral, spiritual, and social character of students. Within the framework of Christian Religious Education (CRE), the teacher's role extends beyond delivering doctrinal knowledge; it involves guiding students toward internalizing biblical values that influence their attitudes and behavior in everyday life. Teachers of Christian Religious Education are therefore expected to embody and transmit Christian virtues through pedagogical practice, relational interaction, and moral modeling. Such a responsibility requires not only theological understanding but also strong professional competencies, particularly social competence, which enables teachers to build constructive relationships with students and foster meaningful moral formation in the classroom (Silalahi & Pasaribu, 2025). Social competence refers to a teacher's ability to communicate effectively, demonstrate empathy, establish positive interpersonal relationships, and create a supportive learning environment that encourages moral and spiritual growth. In educational contexts, teacher-student relationships significantly influence students' engagement, emotional well-being, and character development. When teachers demonstrate relational sensitivity, openness, and ethical consistency, students are more likely to internalize the values conveyed in the learning process. Research on teacher-student relationships indicates that participatory and relational teaching styles contribute positively to students' learning experiences and social development, highlighting the importance of relational interaction in educational effectiveness (Cardenal, Diaz-Santana, & Gonzalez-Betancor, 2024). Social competence becomes even more significant because the values being taught are deeply connected to moral transformation and spiritual formation. Teachers serve not only as instructors but also as spiritual mentors who model Christ-like attitudes in daily interactions. Studies on Christian pedagogy emphasize that relational competence, empathy, and ethical modeling by teachers are central elements in cultivating virtues such as compassion, empathy, gratitude, and care among students (Manurung, 2025). These virtues are not formed through theoretical explanation alone; they emerge through lived experiences, relational engagement, and the observation of moral examples in the learning environment. One important Christian virtue that requires intentional cultivation in education is the value of generous giving. Generous giving reflects a heart willing to serve others without expecting personal gain. In Christian theology, generosity is understood as a reflection of God's grace and love toward humanity, calling believers to practice selfless generosity in their relationships with others. Teaching this value in schools is essential, especially in contemporary contexts where individualism, materialism, and self-centered attitudes increasingly influence young people's behavior. In such circumstances, Christian Religious Education plays a crucial role in nurturing students to develop a spirit of generosity, compassion, and service toward others (Simangunsong & Samosir, 2024). The biblical narrative provides numerous examples that illustrate the value of generous giving. One significant passage is Genesis 24:18-20, which recounts the story of Rebekah's willingness to provide water not only for Abraham's servant but also for his camels. This narrative demonstrates remarkable generosity, initiative, and hospitality. Rebekah's actions were not prompted by obligation but by a sincere willingness to serve others. Her

generosity becomes a powerful biblical model of selfless giving, illustrating how kindness and hospitality can manifest in practical actions. In the context of Christian education, such biblical narratives serve as pedagogical resources that help students understand and internalize moral values through storytelling, reflection, and application in daily life. The integration of biblical narratives with educational practice has been widely recognized as an effective strategy in Christian pedagogy. By interpreting Scripture within the context of students' lived experiences, teachers can transform biblical teachings into meaningful moral lessons that influence students' attitudes and behavior. Studies on Christian Religious Education indicate that biblical reflection combined with relational pedagogy enables students to connect theological concepts with real-life moral practices (Zebua, 2025). Through such approaches, biblical teachings become not only objects of cognitive learning but also sources of character formation. In this process, the teacher's social competence plays a decisive role in translating biblical values into lived experiences for students. Socially competent teachers demonstrate empathy, effective communication, and relational authenticity that allow students to feel respected, understood, and encouraged in the learning process. Such relational dynamics create a supportive classroom environment where moral values can be explored openly and practiced through collaborative interaction. Research on Christian education highlights that empathy, emotional intelligence, and relational sensitivity enable teachers to guide students in internalizing spiritual values more effectively (Silalahi & Pasaribu, 2025). When teachers embody these relational qualities, they function not only as instructors but also as moral exemplars whose attitudes inspire students to practice similar virtues. The cultivation of generous giving among students requires learning environments that encourage cooperation, mutual respect, and acts of kindness. When students observe generosity modeled by teachers and peers, they begin to perceive giving as a natural and meaningful aspect of social life. Christian educators therefore need to design learning activities that promote reflection, empathy, and opportunities for practicing generosity in practical contexts. Such approaches align with the broader goal of Christian education, which seeks to nurture individuals who live according to biblical principles and contribute positively to their communities. Despite the importance of generosity as a Christian value, many educational settings still emphasize cognitive achievement more than character formation. As a result, moral virtues such as generosity, compassion, and willingness to serve others may receive limited attention in classroom practice. This challenge highlights the need for teachers who possess not only pedagogical knowledge but also social competence that enables them to integrate moral formation into everyday teaching activities. By establishing positive relationships and modeling Christ-like attitudes, teachers can create a learning environment that encourages students to internalize and practice biblical values. Based on these considerations, this study seeks to explore the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in instilling the value of generous giving through the biblical narrative of Genesis 24:18-20. The research focuses on the educational context of SMK Swasta Yapim Taruna Tambusai, examining how teachers interpret and apply this biblical text in classroom practice and how their relational competence influences students' understanding of generosity. Through this investigation, the study aims to contribute to the development of Christian pedagogical approaches that integrate biblical reflection, teacher competence, and character formation in the context of secondary education. Understanding the role of teacher social

competence in cultivating generous character is essential for strengthening the mission of Christian education. By connecting biblical teachings with relational pedagogy, teachers can guide students to experience faith not only as doctrinal knowledge but as a transformative way of life expressed through acts of generosity, compassion, and service toward others.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore how the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers contributes to instilling the value of generous giving based on the biblical narrative of Genesis 24:18-20. Qualitative research was chosen because it enables researchers to examine social phenomena in depth and to understand meanings, experiences, and interactions that occur in natural educational settings. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative research focuses on exploring and understanding the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem, making it particularly suitable for studies examining values, relationships, and educational practices. In the context of Christian Religious Education, qualitative methods allow the researcher to capture the lived experiences of teachers and students in the process of integrating biblical teachings into classroom learning. The research was conducted at SMK Swasta Yapim Taruna Tambusai, an educational institution where Christian Religious Education is taught as part of the formal curriculum. The study focused on teachers who teach Christian Religious Education and students who participate in the learning process. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, a sampling technique commonly used in qualitative studies to select individuals who possess relevant knowledge or experience related to the research topic. According to Patton (2015), purposive sampling enables researchers to identify information-rich participants who can provide deep insights into the phenomenon being studied. In this research, the selected participants included Christian Religious Education teachers and several students who actively engaged in classroom learning activities related to biblical teachings on generosity. Data were collected through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with Christian Religious Education teachers to explore their understanding of social competence, their pedagogical strategies in teaching biblical values, and their efforts to instill the value of generous giving among students. Semi-structured interview guides were used to ensure that the discussions remained focused on the research objectives while still allowing participants to share their experiences and perspectives openly. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), semi-structured interviews are effective in qualitative research because they provide flexibility while maintaining the depth of inquiry needed to explore participants' perceptions and experiences. Classroom observations were carried out to examine how teachers demonstrate social competence during the teaching and learning process. Through observation, the researcher examined teacher-student interactions, communication patterns, and classroom dynamics that reflect relational engagement and moral guidance. Observations also allowed the researcher to identify how the biblical narrative of Genesis 24:18-20 was presented and discussed in the classroom context. In addition, document analysis was conducted to review lesson plans, teaching materials, and other instructional documents used by teachers in delivering Christian Religious Education lessons related to generosity and

service. Document analysis helps researchers understand how educational values are formally planned and integrated into instructional design (Bowen, 2009). The data collected from interviews, observations, and documents were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involves organizing data, coding significant statements, identifying recurring themes, and interpreting patterns that emerge from participants' experiences. According to Braun and Clarke (2021), thematic analysis allows researchers to systematically interpret qualitative data by identifying meaningful themes that represent the core aspects of the phenomenon being studied. Through this analytical process, the study aimed to reveal how teachers' social competence influences the teaching of biblical generosity and how students respond to these relational and pedagogical practices within the learning environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the social competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers plays a central role in shaping the moral atmosphere of the classroom and in facilitating the internalization of biblical values among students. Social competence refers to a teacher's ability to communicate effectively, build meaningful relationships, demonstrate empathy, and maintain a respectful and supportive learning environment. In the context of Christian education, such competence becomes even more essential because the teaching process involves not only knowledge transmission but also the formation of spiritual and moral character. Teachers are expected to embody Christian virtues in their daily interactions so that students can observe and imitate these values in practical ways. Based on interviews conducted with CRE teachers at SMK Swasta Yapim Taruna Tambusai, it was found that relational interaction between teachers and students significantly influences students' openness to learning biblical values. Teachers emphasized that students tend to respond more positively when they feel respected, understood, and valued in the classroom. This relational closeness encourages students to participate actively in discussions, share personal experiences, and reflect on the moral lessons conveyed in Scripture. These findings align with the view that effective teacher-student relationships contribute to students' social and emotional development, thereby supporting the process of character formation (Cardenal, Diaz-Santana, & Gonzalez-Betancor, 2024). Classroom observations also demonstrated that teachers who possess strong social competence create a learning environment characterized by openness, trust, and mutual respect. During lessons on biblical narratives, teachers encouraged students to express their interpretations, ask questions, and relate the teachings of Scripture to real-life situations. Rather than presenting biblical texts in a purely doctrinal manner, teachers used dialogue-based learning approaches that allowed students to engage emotionally and intellectually with the message of the Bible. Such pedagogical interaction reflects the idea that Christian education should emphasize relational engagement and transformative learning rather than mere cognitive instruction. Teachers demonstrated social competence through empathy and attentiveness to students' personal circumstances. For instance, teachers often shared pastoral guidance with students who experienced difficulties in family or social relationships. Through these interactions, teachers modeled compassion and care, which are essential components of Christian character. Students reported that such supportive attitudes helped them feel safe and motivated to participate in learning activities. These relational practices illustrate

how social competence functions as a bridge between biblical teaching and students' lived experiences. The findings also show that social competence contributes to moral credibility. When teachers consistently demonstrate humility, kindness, and patience, students perceive them as authentic role models. This authenticity strengthens the influence of teachers' moral messages, including teachings about generosity and service. In contrast, when teachers merely deliver moral instructions without embodying those values, students may perceive the teaching as abstract or irrelevant. Therefore, the integration of relational integrity and pedagogical practice is crucial for effective Christian Religious Education. These observations correspond with educational studies emphasizing that teacher behavior significantly influences students' moral learning. Teachers who demonstrate ethical consistency and relational sensitivity are more likely to inspire positive character development among students (Manurung, 2025). Within Christian education, this influence becomes even more profound because the teacher's life itself becomes a living testimony of the gospel values being taught. Consequently, social competence functions not only as a professional skill but also as a spiritual responsibility that supports the mission of Christian education.

Biblical Reflection on Generous Giving in Genesis 24:18-20

The value of generous giving explored in this study is rooted in the biblical narrative of Genesis 24:18-20, which recounts the story of Rebekah providing water for Abraham's servant and his camels. This passage illustrates an extraordinary example of generosity, hospitality, and willingness to serve others without expecting any reward. Rebekah's actions reflect a compassionate and responsive attitude toward the needs of others, demonstrating a heart that is attentive and ready to help. In classroom discussions, teachers used this biblical narrative to guide students in understanding the meaning of generosity within the Christian faith. Teachers explained that Rebekah's willingness to serve was not merely an act of politeness but an expression of a generous character shaped by compassion and hospitality. The narrative highlights the importance of voluntary service, emphasizing that genuine generosity arises from a sincere willingness to give rather than from external pressure or obligation. Students participating in the learning process were encouraged to reflect on the practical implications of this story in their daily lives. Through guided discussions, teachers asked students to identify situations where they could demonstrate generosity toward others, such as helping classmates, sharing resources, or supporting individuals in need. These reflections helped students connect biblical teachings with their social environment, making the message of Scripture more relevant to their personal experiences. Observational data showed that students responded positively to storytelling and narrative-based learning. When teachers presented the story of Rebekah in a vivid and engaging manner, students demonstrated greater interest and emotional involvement. They were able to imagine the context of the story and appreciate the significance of Rebekah's generous actions. Narrative-based learning therefore served as an effective pedagogical strategy for communicating moral values in Christian Religious Education.

From a theological perspective, the story of Rebekah also reflects broader biblical themes of hospitality and selfless service. Throughout Scripture, generosity is portrayed as an essential aspect of faithful living. Believers are encouraged to care for others, support the needy, and demonstrate kindness as an expression of God's love. Teaching such values in

educational settings contributes to the formation of compassionate individuals who are willing to contribute positively to society. Students' reflections during interviews further indicated that the story inspired them to reconsider their attitudes toward helping others. Some students acknowledged that they previously associated giving with financial contributions alone. However, through the study of Genesis 24:18–20, they began to understand that generosity can also be expressed through time, attention, effort, and acts of service. This expanded understanding allowed students to recognize that they can practice generosity in various ways within their daily interactions. The integration of biblical narratives with reflective dialogue therefore provides meaningful opportunities for moral formation. When students engage actively with the message of Scripture, they begin to see how biblical values can guide their behavior in real-life contexts. Such learning experiences illustrate the transformative potential of Christian Religious Education when biblical teachings are presented in ways that resonate with students' social realities.

Strategies Used by Teachers to Instill the Value of Generous Giving

The study identified several pedagogical strategies employed by CRE teachers to instill the value of generous giving among students. These strategies reflect the teachers' efforts to integrate biblical teachings with interactive learning methods that encourage reflection, empathy, and practical application. One of the primary strategies observed was contextual discussion. Teachers facilitated open conversations about generosity by relating biblical teachings to students' everyday experiences. For example, teachers asked students to discuss how acts of kindness could be practiced in school environments, such as helping classmates who struggle academically or supporting peers facing personal difficulties. Through these discussions, students were encouraged to view generosity as a practical lifestyle rather than an abstract concept. Another strategy involved role modeling. Teachers consciously demonstrated acts of generosity and kindness within the classroom environment. Simple gestures such as listening attentively to students' concerns, offering encouragement, and showing patience in guiding struggling learners became powerful examples of generous attitudes. Students often cited these behaviors as meaningful demonstrations of Christian values in action. The influence of such modeling supports the idea that character education is most effective when teachers embody the virtues they seek to cultivate in students. These experiences helped them develop attitudes of empathy and cooperation that align with the principle of generous giving. Teachers occasionally organized service-oriented activities, such as encouraging students to participate in community service projects or charitable initiatives. These activities provided opportunities for students to practice generosity in tangible ways. By engaging in acts of service, students gained firsthand experience of helping others and reflecting on the social impact of their actions. Such experiential learning reinforces the moral lessons derived from biblical narratives. The effectiveness of these strategies can be observed in students' behavioral responses. Many students expressed a growing awareness of the importance of kindness and generosity in their relationships with others. Some reported that they became more willing to assist classmates or participate in social initiatives after learning about the biblical principles of generosity. Although such changes may appear small, they represent meaningful steps toward the development of compassionate character. The findings indicate that integrating relational interaction,

narrative teaching, and experiential learning creates a comprehensive approach to character education in Christian Religious Education. By combining these strategies, teachers can guide students to understand, appreciate, and practice the value of generous giving within their daily lives.

Implications for Character Formation in Christian Education

The results of this study highlight several important implications for character formation within Christian educational contexts. First, the findings demonstrate that teacher social competence significantly influences the effectiveness of moral and spiritual education. Teachers who cultivate positive relationships with students create a supportive environment where moral values can be explored openly and internalized meaningfully. Second, the study confirms that biblical narratives serve as powerful tools for character education. Stories such as the account of Rebekah in Genesis 24:18-20 provide concrete examples of virtues that students can understand and emulate. Narrative-based learning allows students to engage emotionally with moral lessons, thereby strengthening the process of value internalization. Third, the integration of reflective dialogue and experiential learning enhances students' ability to translate biblical teachings into real-life actions. When students are given opportunities to discuss, reflect, and practice moral values, they develop a deeper understanding of the ethical principles underlying Christian teachings. Such approaches align with the broader goal of Christian education, which seeks to nurture individuals who live out their faith through compassionate and responsible behavior. The findings emphasize that character formation requires intentional collaboration between teachers, students, and the broader school community. Educational institutions should support programs and activities that encourage acts of kindness, generosity, and service. By creating a culture of generosity within the school environment, Christian education can contribute to the development of socially responsible and spiritually grounded individuals. The research findings demonstrate that the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers plays a crucial role in instilling the value of generous giving among students. Through relational interaction, biblical reflection, and practical learning experiences, teachers can guide students to develop a deeper understanding of generosity as a fundamental expression of Christian faith. The integration of these elements strengthens the transformative mission of Christian education, enabling students to grow not only in knowledge but also in character and spiritual maturity.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of the social competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in instilling the value of generous giving through a biblical reflection on Genesis 24:18-20 at SMK Swasta Yapim Taruna Tambusai. The findings demonstrate that teacher social competence is a crucial factor in the process of character formation within Christian education. Social competence enables teachers to build meaningful relationships with students, create a supportive and respectful classroom atmosphere, and guide learners toward understanding and practicing biblical values in their daily lives. Through effective communication, empathy, and relational engagement, teachers are able to translate biblical teachings into practical moral lessons that resonate with

students' experiences. The study also highlights that biblical narratives play a significant role in shaping students' moral awareness. The story of Rebekah in Genesis 24:18-20 provides a powerful example of generous giving expressed through hospitality, willingness to serve, and sincere concern for others. By presenting this narrative in an engaging and reflective manner, teachers help students understand that generosity is not limited to material giving but also includes acts of kindness, service, and empathy. As students reflect on the story and relate it to their own social interactions, they begin to recognize the importance of generosity as a fundamental aspect of Christian character. Furthermore, the findings reveal that the effectiveness of value formation is closely connected to the teaching strategies employed by CRE teachers. Contextual discussions, role modeling, collaborative learning activities, and service-oriented experiences were identified as key strategies that support the internalization of the value of generous giving. When teachers model generous attitudes and provide opportunities for students to practice acts of kindness, students are more likely to adopt similar behaviors. This indicates that character education within Christian Religious Education should combine biblical instruction with relational interaction and practical experiences that encourage students to live out the values they learn. Another important implication of this study is the recognition that character formation requires a holistic educational approach. Teachers, schools, and the broader learning community share responsibility in fostering an environment where values such as generosity, compassion, and service can flourish. When schools intentionally cultivate a culture of empathy and cooperation, students are more likely to develop attitudes that reflect Christian moral principles. Such environments reinforce the message that faith is not merely a matter of belief but also a way of life expressed through actions that benefit others. The social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers significantly contributes to the successful integration of biblical teachings and character development in the classroom. By embodying Christian virtues and fostering relational learning environments, teachers can guide students toward developing a generous and compassionate character. The story of Rebekah in Genesis 24:18–20 serves as an effective biblical foundation for teaching generosity, reminding students that acts of kindness and willingness to serve others are essential expressions of living faith. Strengthening teacher competence in relational and moral leadership will therefore enhance the transformative mission of Christian education in shaping students who are not only knowledgeable in Scripture but also committed to practicing generosity in their everyday lives.

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