



Social Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Fostering Social Solidarity through the Narrative of Abraham (Genesis 14:14): A Study at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja

Mawarni Iswani Manik

Pendidikan Profesi Guru, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

*correspondence: manikmawarni28@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examines the social competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in fostering social solidarity through the narrative of Abraham in Book of Genesis 14:14 at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja. The research employed a quantitative descriptive design involving 90 students from Grades IV-VI as respondents, drawn from a total of 121 Christian students. Data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire, classroom observations, and documentation analysis of lesson plans and instructional materials. The study operationalized teacher social competence into eight indicators, including empathetic communication, inclusive interaction, modeling cooperative behavior, conflict management, collaborative learning facilitation, integration of biblical solidarity values, responsiveness to students' social-emotional needs, and collegial collaboration. The findings reveal that the CRE teacher's social competence is categorized as very high, with an overall mean score indicating strong relational effectiveness. Students reported positive perceptions of the teacher's empathy, fairness, and encouragement of teamwork. Observational data further confirm that the narrative of Abraham's rescue of Lot was contextualized through cooperative activities, reflective discussions, and practical applications related to everyday school life. The integration of biblical narrative with relational modeling significantly contributed to the development of social solidarity among students. This study underscores the importance of teacher social competence in Christian Religious Education, demonstrating that effective relational engagement enhances the transformative potential of biblical instruction. The findings highlight the need for continuous professional development in interpersonal and social-emotional skills to strengthen character formation within elementary education.

Keywords: *Social Competence, Christian Religious Education, Social Solidarity*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher competence is a central determinant of educational quality, particularly in contexts where learning outcomes extend beyond cognitive mastery toward character and social formation. In Indonesia, teacher competence is legally framed in four interrelated domains: pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competence (*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen*). Among these, social competence refers to the teacher's ability to communicate and interact effectively with students, colleagues, parents, and the broader community in an inclusive, empathetic, and constructive manner. For teachers of Christian Religious Education (CRE), social competence carries additional theological and ethical dimensions, as they are expected not only to teach biblical content but also to model Christian virtues in social relationships. Research in educational theory underscores that teachers' relational capacity significantly influences students' social development and classroom climate. Positive teacher–student relationships are associated with increased engagement, prosocial behavior, and moral development (Wentzel, 1998). Furthermore, effective communication and empathetic interaction enhance students' sense of belonging and social responsibility (Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). In religious education contexts, social competence becomes even more critical because the teacher embodies and mediates the moral and spiritual values conveyed in Scripture. Thus, fostering social solidarity among students requires not only textual instruction but also relational modeling. The biblical narrative of Abraham in Book of Genesis 14:14 offers a compelling foundation for discussing social solidarity. In this passage, Abraham mobilizes trained men from his household to rescue his nephew Lot after he is captured during a regional conflict. The narrative portrays Abraham as a figure of responsibility, courage, loyalty, and communal concern. His action reflects a form of covenantal solidarity, standing in defense of kin and community despite personal risk. Old Testament scholars emphasize that this episode reveals Abraham's leadership and commitment to relational obligations within the broader framework of God's covenantal promises (Brueggemann, 1982; Wenham, 1994). For elementary students, this narrative provides a concrete illustration of helping others, defending the vulnerable, and acting in unity during crisis.

Religious education has a mandate not only to strengthen faith but also to nurture moral and social virtues that contribute to national cohesion (*Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 55 Tahun 2007 tentang Pendidikan Agama dan Pendidikan Keagamaan*). In contexts marked by diversity, social solidarity becomes a foundational value for harmonious coexistence. Christian Religious Education, therefore, plays a strategic role in shaping students' social attitudes, including cooperation, empathy, mutual assistance, and collective responsibility. At SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja, located in Simalungun, there are 121 Christian students and seven Christian teachers, including one CRE teacher. This demographic composition creates a meaningful environment for examining how CRE teachers foster social solidarity through biblical narratives. While the number of Christian students is substantial, the responsibility of modeling and cultivating social virtues extends beyond the classroom into the broader

school culture. The social competence of the CRE teacher thus becomes central in bridging biblical teaching with practical expressions of solidarity among students. Social competence in teaching involves communication skills, empathy, cultural sensitivity, collaboration, and conflict resolution abilities (Goleman, 1995; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). In the context of Abraham's narrative, these competencies translate into guiding students to understand solidarity not merely as an abstract concept but as lived action. When students learn about Abraham's rescue of Lot, they encounter a story of relational loyalty and communal responsibility. However, transforming this story into meaningful social attitudes requires pedagogical strategies that connect narrative comprehension with social practice. Scholars of Christian education argue that biblical storytelling becomes transformative when it invites students to identify with characters and apply values to their own contexts (Groome, 1999). For elementary learners, who typically operate within Piaget's concrete operational stage (Piaget, 1972), narratives such as Genesis 14:14 provide tangible examples of courage and cooperation that can be mirrored in everyday school interactions. Thus, the CRE teacher's social competence, expressed through empathetic communication, inclusive classroom practices, and collaborative learning activities, plays a decisive role in fostering social solidarity grounded in biblical teaching. Limited empirical research has specifically examined how CRE teachers cultivate social solidarity through Old Testament narratives in Indonesian public elementary schools. Most studies address general character education or moral instruction without focusing on the interplay between biblical narrative interpretation and teacher relational competence. This study aims to analyze the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in fostering social solidarity through the narrative of Abraham (Genesis 14:14) at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja. By exploring how relational competence intersects with biblical instruction, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of CRE teachers in shaping socially responsible and spiritually grounded students within the Indonesian educational context.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to examine the social competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in fostering social solidarity through the narrative of Abraham (Genesis 14:14) at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja. A quantitative descriptive approach is appropriate when the objective is to measure and systematically describe a phenomenon using numerical data without manipulating variables (Creswell, 2014). The design enabled the researcher to assess students' perceptions of the CRE teacher's social competence and its role in nurturing solidarity values in the classroom. The population of this study consisted of 121 Christian students enrolled at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja. Since the focus of the study was on how the CRE teacher's social competence influences students' experience of social solidarity, students served as primary respondents. Using total sampling for upper-grade students (Grades IV-VI), 90 students were selected as the research sample. These grade levels were chosen because students at this stage possess sufficient cognitive and social maturity to evaluate teacher interactions and classroom dynamics, consistent with the characteristics of the concrete operational stage (Piaget, 1972). Additionally, seven Christian teachers (including one CRE teacher) were involved in documentation validation and contextual

data confirmation, though they were not the primary respondents for the quantitative instrument. The primary variable in this study was Social Competence of the CRE Teacher in Fostering Social Solidarity. This variable was operationalized into measurable indicators adapted from the national teacher competence framework (*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen*) and social-emotional competence theory (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). The indicators included: effective and empathetic communication with students, inclusive interaction regardless of students' background or ability, ability to model cooperative and respectful behavior, skill in managing classroom conflict constructively, encouragement of collaborative learning activities, integration of solidarity values from Genesis 14:14 into classroom discussion, responsiveness to students' social and emotional needs, collaboration with colleagues to promote social harmony. Each indicator was translated into Likert-scale questionnaire items using five response options (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The instrument consisted of 24 items. Three instruments were utilized in this study: Student Questionnaire (A structured Likert-scale instrument measuring students' perceptions of the CRE teacher's social competence and its impact on social solidarity), Documentation Analysis (Review of lesson plans (RPP), teaching modules, and activity designs related to Genesis 14:14, focusing on how solidarity values were incorporated), and Observation Sheet (Structured classroom observations to assess teacher–student interactions and the implementation of cooperative learning activities). Instrument validity was tested using the Pearson product-moment correlation, while reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Validation of instruments by two experts in Christian Religious Education and educational research methodology. Distribution of questionnaires to selected students after completion of the instructional unit on Abraham's rescue of Lot (Genesis 14:14). Classroom observation during instructional sessions and collection of relevant teaching documents. All participants were informed of the study's purpose, and confidentiality was maintained according to ethical research standards (Creswell, 2014). Participation was voluntary, and students' responses were anonymized to ensure honesty and reliability. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores, percentage distribution, and standard deviation. The interpretation criteria were as follows: 4.21-5.00 = Very High, 3.41-4.20 = High, 2.61-3.40 = Moderate, 1.81-2.60 = Low, 1.00-1.80 = Very Low. Documentation and observation findings were analyzed descriptively to support and triangulate questionnaire results. Triangulation enhanced the credibility and internal validity of the findings (Creswell, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja plays a significant role in fostering social solidarity among students through the narrative of Abraham in Book of Genesis 14:14. Based on questionnaire responses from 90 students in Grades IV-VI, supported by documentation analysis and classroom observation, the overall mean score of the teacher's social competence was 4.28, which falls into the very high category. This indicates that students perceive the CRE teacher as demonstrating strong relational abilities, empathetic communication, inclusive interaction, and effective modeling of

solidarity values derived from the biblical narrative. The integration of Abraham's rescue of Lot into classroom life appears not merely as a textual explanation but as a lived social experience shaped by the teacher's relational engagement. Students rated empathetic and effective communication with a mean score of 4.35, suggesting that the teacher consistently communicates clearly, listens attentively, and responds respectfully to students' questions and concerns. Classroom observations showed that during discussions about Abraham's decision to rescue Lot, the teacher encouraged students to share personal experiences of helping friends or family members. The teacher acknowledged each contribution with affirmation, creating a safe environment for participation. According to Wentzel (1998), students are more likely to develop prosocial behaviors when they perceive their teachers as caring and supportive. In this context, the CRE teacher's empathetic communication appears to function as a foundation for cultivating solidarity, as students learn relational values not only from the biblical text but also from the teacher's interaction style. The inclusive interaction also received a high mean score of 4.30. Students reported that the teacher treated them fairly regardless of academic performance or social background. Observational data confirmed that the teacher deliberately formed heterogeneous discussion groups when analyzing Genesis 14:14, ensuring that students of varying abilities collaborated in interpreting Abraham's actions. This inclusive approach reflects the essence of social competence as defined in Indonesian teacher standards (*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen*), which emphasize non-discriminatory interaction. In practical terms, the teacher's inclusive practices reinforced the message of solidarity embedded in Abraham's narrative, standing together and supporting one another in times of difficulty. The classroom thus became a microcosm of the communal responsibility exemplified by Abraham. Modeling cooperative and respectful behavior yielded a mean score of 4.32. During lessons, the teacher consistently demonstrated respectful dialogue, even when students disagreed or provided incomplete answers. Rather than correcting harshly, the teacher guided students toward clearer understanding through probing questions. This modeling of respectful engagement aligns with social-emotional competence theory, which posits that teachers influence students' interpersonal skills through example (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). In connecting Abraham's mobilization of his trained men to rescue Lot, the teacher emphasized teamwork and mutual trust, relating these themes to classroom collaboration. Students were encouraged to view group work not as competition but as shared responsibility. This interpretive strategy reflects Groome's (1999) assertion that biblical narratives become transformative when integrated into relational practice. Ability to manage classroom conflict constructively received a mean score of 4.18 (high category). While slightly lower than other indicators, it still demonstrates strong competence. Observation revealed instances where minor disagreements arose during group discussions. The teacher intervened calmly, inviting each student to articulate their perspective and guiding them toward mutual understanding. Rather than suppressing conflict, the teacher framed it as an opportunity to practice solidarity and reconciliation. This approach resonates with Goleman's (1995) emphasis on emotional intelligence as a component of social competence. By managing conflict in a constructive manner, the teacher reinforced the biblical principle of relational responsibility illustrated in Genesis 14:14. Students thus experienced solidarity not as the absence of disagreement but as the commitment to unity despite differences.

Encouragement of collaborative learning activities produced a mean score of 4.40, the highest among all dimensions. The documentation analysis showed that lesson plans intentionally incorporated cooperative learning strategies such as group storytelling, role-play, and problem-solving tasks. For instance, students were asked to dramatize Abraham's preparation to rescue Lot, assigning roles to represent cooperation and shared mission. This experiential approach enabled students to internalize solidarity through active participation. According to Piaget (1972), children in the concrete operational stage learn effectively through hands-on activities and social interaction. The CRE teacher's implementation of collaborative methods therefore aligns with developmental theory and strengthens the pedagogical impact of the narrative. Through shared tasks, students practiced the very solidarity they studied, bridging biblical text and social behavior. The integration of solidarity values from Genesis 14:14 into classroom discussion obtained a mean score of 4.33. Students reported that the teacher consistently connected Abraham's rescue of Lot with contemporary examples of helping friends, supporting classmates, and standing up against bullying. Rather than limiting discussion to historical details, the teacher emphasized ethical application. Old Testament scholarship highlights Abraham's action as an expression of covenant loyalty and communal responsibility (Brueggemann, 1982; Wenham, 1994). The teacher translated these theological themes into accessible moral lessons, asking students how they might respond if a classmate faced difficulty. Such contextualization reflects a high level of social competence, as it requires sensitivity to students' social realities and the ability to guide reflection constructively. Responsiveness to students' social and emotional needs received a mean score of 4.25. Observation data indicated that the teacher paid attention to students who appeared withdrawn or hesitant, inviting them gently into discussion without coercion. This sensitivity fosters a sense of belonging and trust, which are essential for solidarity to flourish. Pianta, Hamre, and Allen (2012) argue that supportive teacher-student relationships enhance social adjustment and cooperative behavior. In this study, the CRE teacher's attentiveness to emotional cues strengthened the relational climate of the classroom, reinforcing the narrative's message of care and protection. Collaboration with colleagues to promote social harmony yielded a mean score of 4.10 (high category). Interviews and documentation suggested that the CRE teacher occasionally collaborated with other Christian teachers to organize joint character-building activities, such as group reflections or social service projects. Although collaboration was evident, time constraints limited its frequency. Nevertheless, the effort demonstrates recognition that fostering solidarity extends beyond a single classroom. The communal spirit exemplified by Abraham's mobilization of his household is mirrored in the teacher's willingness to cooperate with colleagues for broader school harmony. It becomes evident that the CRE teacher's social competence significantly shapes the cultivation of social solidarity among students. The narrative of Genesis 14:14 serves as a theological anchor, but the transformative impact depends largely on the teacher's relational practice. Students do not merely learn that Abraham rescued Lot; they experience solidarity through cooperative tasks, respectful dialogue, empathetic listening, and inclusive participation. This confirms Shulman's (1986) broader insight that effective teaching integrates knowledge with relational and pedagogical skill. In religious education, such integration is particularly crucial because values are transmitted through both word and example.

The diversity of students' social maturity levels occasionally created uneven participation in collaborative tasks. Some students required additional guidance to engage constructively in group work. Furthermore, the relatively large number of Christian students (121) compared to the limited number of Christian teachers (seven) places considerable relational demands on each educator. Sustaining high levels of social competence requires ongoing professional support and reflection. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) note that teachers' social-emotional competence must be nurtured to prevent burnout and maintain positive classroom climates. Thus, institutional support for professional development in communication skills, conflict resolution, and cooperative learning strategies remains essential. The implications of this study are both theoretical and practical. It affirms that biblical narrative instruction becomes socially transformative when mediated by relationally competent teachers. The story of Abraham in Genesis 14:14 illustrates solidarity in action, but its pedagogical effectiveness depends on how teachers embody and contextualize its values. The findings suggest that schools should prioritize the development of teachers' social competence through workshops, peer mentoring, and collaborative planning sessions. Emphasizing relational skills alongside content knowledge can enhance the impact of Christian Religious Education in fostering character and communal responsibility. The results demonstrate that the social competence of the CRE teacher at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja is at a very high level and effectively contributes to the development of social solidarity among students. Through empathetic communication, inclusive interaction, constructive conflict management, collaborative learning strategies, and contextual application of Genesis 14:14, the teacher successfully integrates biblical values with everyday social practice. The narrative of Abraham's rescue of Lot thus becomes not only a lesson in ancient history but a living model for solidarity within the school community.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja plays a decisive role in fostering social solidarity among students through the narrative of Abraham in Book of Genesis 14:14. The overall findings indicate that the teacher's social competence is categorized as very high, particularly in the areas of empathetic communication, inclusive interaction, modeling respectful behavior, and encouraging collaborative learning. These relational competencies enable biblical instruction to move beyond cognitive understanding toward practical social application. The study demonstrates that the narrative of Abraham's rescue of Lot becomes pedagogically transformative when mediated through strong relational engagement. Students not only understand the historical account of solidarity but also experience solidarity through cooperative activities, constructive conflict resolution, and inclusive classroom dialogue. The teacher's responsiveness to students' emotional and social needs further strengthens a learning climate characterized by trust, mutual respect, and shared responsibility. In this way, social competence functions as both a pedagogical tool and a moral exemplar. Although minor challenges were identified, such as varying levels of student participation and the relational demands associated with limited teacher resources, these do not diminish the overall effectiveness observed. Instead, they highlight the importance of continuous professional development and

institutional support to sustain and enhance teacher social competence. This research affirms that the social competence of CRE teachers significantly contributes to the cultivation of social solidarity in elementary education. By integrating biblical narrative, relational modeling, and collaborative practice, the teacher at SD Negeri 091540 Hutabayuraja successfully fosters a classroom environment that reflects the communal responsibility exemplified by Abraham. The findings underscore that effective Christian Religious Education requires not only theological knowledge but also strong interpersonal competence to nurture socially responsible and spiritually grounded students.

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