



## **Social Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Teaching Social Friendship Values through Genesis 26:28: A Study at SD Negeri 104315 Jatirejo**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examines the social competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in teaching social friendship values through Book of Genesis 26:28 at SD Negeri 104315 Jatirejo. Genesis 26:28 presents a narrative of reconciliation between Isaac and Abimelech, highlighting friendship as a deliberate commitment to peace, mutual recognition, and covenantal agreement. This research aims to analyze how the social competence of the CRE teacher facilitates the internalization of friendship values among students. The study employed a qualitative descriptive design involving one CRE teacher as the primary informant, four Christian teachers for triangulation, and 27 Christian students as participants. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis of lesson plans and reflective assignments. Data were analyzed using thematic procedures, including coding, categorization, and interpretation to identify patterns related to communicative openness, fairness, empathy, conflict mediation, and collaborative practices. The findings reveal that the CRE teacher's social competence significantly shaped a classroom culture of friendship. Dialogical communication encouraged students to relate biblical reconciliation to personal experiences, while fair and non-discriminatory treatment strengthened trust and belonging. Emotional responsiveness and constructive conflict resolution modeled the principles of peaceful coexistence reflected in Genesis 26:28. Symbolic activities, such as collective friendship agreements, reinforced covenantal commitment in practical ways. The study concludes that social competence in Christian Religious Education functions as both pedagogical strategy and moral embodiment. Friendship values are most effectively cultivated when biblical narratives are integrated with authentic relational modeling. Through consistent example and intentional instruction, Genesis 26:28 becomes a transformative framework for fostering social friendship among elementary students.*

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

## INTRODUCTION

Teacher competence remains a decisive factor in shaping students' character formation, particularly within religious education contexts. In Indonesia, teacher competence is legally defined in four integrated domains: pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competence (*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen*). Among these, social competence refers to a teacher's ability to communicate effectively, interact inclusively, adapt to socio-cultural contexts, and build harmonious relationships with students, colleagues, parents, and the community. For Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers, social competence is not merely administrative or interpersonal skill; it reflects the embodiment of biblical relational values in everyday teaching practice. One central value emphasized in Scripture is friendship rooted in peace and mutual recognition. The narrative recorded in Book of Genesis 26:28 recounts the encounter between Isaac and Abimelech. After previous tensions over wells and territorial disputes, Abimelech approaches Isaac and acknowledges, "We saw clearly that the Lord was with you; so we said, 'Let there be a sworn agreement between us...'" (Gen. 26:28). This moment marks a transition from suspicion to recognition, from conflict to covenantal friendship. Old Testament scholars interpret this episode as a model of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence grounded in divine acknowledgment (Wenham, 1994; Hamilton, 1995). The narrative highlights social friendship not as superficial familiarity, but as relational peace built upon respect, integrity, and shared commitment. In the context of elementary education, friendship constitutes a foundational social experience. Developmental research suggests that peer relationships during middle childhood significantly influence emotional security, empathy, cooperation, and moral reasoning (Piaget, 1972; Wentzel, 2015). When guided constructively, friendship fosters social competence and reduces aggressive or exclusionary behavior. Teachers therefore play a strategic role in modeling and facilitating healthy friendship patterns within classrooms. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) emphasize that teachers' social-emotional competence directly shapes classroom climate, influencing students' interpersonal attitudes and behaviors. A socially competent teacher does not merely instruct about friendship but demonstrates fairness, empathy, and reconciliation in practice.

Within Indonesian public schools, religious education aims to develop faith, morality, and social harmony (Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 55 Tahun 2007 tentang Pendidikan Agama dan Pendidikan Keagamaan). At SD Negeri 104315 Jatirejo, there are 27 Christian students and five Christian teachers, including the CRE teacher. Although the number of Christian students is relatively small, the responsibility to cultivate biblical character remains significant. In such settings, the CRE teacher's social competence becomes a vital bridge between scriptural teaching and the lived experience of friendship among students. The classroom becomes not only a site of doctrinal instruction but a micro-community where values of reconciliation and peace are practiced. Genesis 26:28 portrays friendship emerging from recognition of God's presence and a willingness to transform conflict into covenant. Brueggemann (1982) notes that patriarchal narratives often illustrate how divine blessing compels others toward peaceful acknowledgment rather than hostility. Translating this into educational practice requires pedagogical intentionality. Teachers must contextualize the text in ways that elementary students can

understand, connecting Isaac's reconciliation with everyday experiences of sharing, apologizing, forgiving, and cooperating. Most existing studies examine character education broadly without detailed attention to the integration of biblical exegesis and relational pedagogy. Therefore, this study seeks to analyze the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in teaching social friendship values through Genesis 26:28 at SD Negeri 104315 Jatirejo. By examining classroom interaction, instructional planning, and student experiences, this research aims to illuminate how biblical narratives of reconciliation can be transformed into practical social friendship within an elementary school environment.

## **METHODS**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher in teaching social friendship values through Book of Genesis 26:28 at SD Negeri 104315 Jatirejo. A qualitative descriptive approach was selected because the purpose of the research was to obtain a comprehensive and contextualized understanding of lived experiences, classroom interactions, and relational dynamics rather than to test hypotheses or measure variables statistically. This design allows the researcher to describe phenomena as they naturally occur while interpreting meanings constructed by participants within their educational setting. The participants of the study consisted of one Christian Religious Education teacher as the primary informant, four additional Christian teachers for triangulation, and 27 Christian students as supporting participants. Purposive sampling was used to select individuals directly involved in the implementation and experience of CRE instruction related to Genesis 26:28. The CRE teacher was chosen due to direct responsibility for integrating biblical narratives into character formation lessons, while the other Christian teachers provided complementary perspectives regarding collaboration and school climate. Students were included to capture authentic perceptions of how friendship values were communicated, modeled, and practiced in the classroom. Data collection was conducted through three main techniques: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the CRE teacher to explore pedagogical strategies, understanding of social competence, integration of biblical content into relational teaching, and challenges encountered in cultivating friendship among students. Interviews with other Christian teachers focused on collegial collaboration and reinforcement of friendship values across subjects. Several students representing diverse academic and social characteristics were interviewed to gather reflective insights about classroom interactions, fairness, reconciliation experiences, and perceptions of teacher modeling. All interviews were conducted with informed consent, audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Classroom observations were conducted during CRE lessons addressing Genesis 26:28. The researcher observed communication patterns, teacher responses to peer conflict, facilitation of group activities, and expressions of empathy and fairness. Particular attention was given to moments when the teacher connected Isaac's reconciliation with Abimelech to students' daily friendship experiences. Field notes documented both verbal and non-verbal interactions to capture the relational atmosphere of the classroom. In

addition, document analysis included reviewing lesson plans, instructional modules, student reflection assignments, and school policies related to character education to examine alignment between planned objectives and enacted practice. Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative procedure involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Transcripts and field notes were coded inductively to identify recurring themes such as communicative openness, conflict mediation, fairness, empathy, collaborative learning, and modeling of reconciliation. The credibility of the findings was strengthened through triangulation of sources, member checking with participants, and maintaining an audit trail of research procedures. Ethical considerations included voluntary participation, confidentiality of identities, and respect for participants' perspectives. Through this methodological framework, the study aimed to provide an in-depth description of how teacher social competence functions as a transformative medium for teaching social friendship values within an elementary school context.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this qualitative descriptive study conducted at SD Negeri 104315 Jatirejo reveal that the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher plays a central and transformative role in teaching social friendship values through Book of Genesis 26:28. Based on in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving one CRE teacher, four Christian teachers, and 27 Christian students, the results indicate that friendship was not presented merely as a conceptual moral lesson but was embodied, modeled, and practiced through relational dynamics in the classroom. The integration of the reconciliation narrative between Isaac and Abimelech became meaningful because it was supported by the teacher's communicative openness, fairness, empathy, and conflict mediation skills, which collectively shaped a classroom culture characterized by relational trust and peaceful coexistence. One of the most prominent findings concerns communicative openness as a foundational dimension of social competence. During classroom observations, the CRE teacher consistently used dialogical teaching methods when discussing Genesis 26:28. Rather than delivering a purely lecture-based explanation of Isaac's reconciliation with Abimelech, the teacher invited students to reflect on their own experiences of misunderstanding, competition, and reconciliation with friends. This dialogical approach enabled students to see parallels between the biblical narrative and their daily interactions. Students reported in interviews that they felt "heard" and "respected" when expressing their opinions. Such communicative openness reinforced the core message of Genesis 26:28, in which former adversaries acknowledged each other and intentionally sought peace. The teacher's ability to create space for student voices reflected a relational ethic of recognition, mirroring Abimelech's acknowledgment that "the Lord was with you." In practice, this meant recognizing each student's dignity and contribution, thereby strengthening peer-to-peer friendship dynamics. Another significant finding relates to the modeling of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Genesis 26 narrates prior conflict over wells before culminating in covenantal agreement. The teacher emphasized that friendship does not eliminate conflict but transforms it through honest dialogue and willingness to forgive. Observations documented several instances in which minor disputes arose during group

activities, such as disagreements about task distribution or leadership roles. Instead of responding with punitive authority, the teacher facilitated structured conversation, encouraging each student to articulate feelings and perspectives. By doing so, the teacher enacted the biblical principle that peace is achieved through intentional agreement rather than avoidance. Students later reflected that these guided discussions helped them maintain friendships even after disagreements. The narrative of Isaac and Abimelech thus became a pedagogical lens through which conflict was reframed as an opportunity for deeper friendship rather than relational breakdown.

Fairness and impartiality also emerged as critical components of the teacher's social competence. Students consistently noted that the CRE teacher treated all 27 Christian students equally, regardless of academic performance or social background. Classroom observation revealed deliberate efforts to rotate leadership roles in group work and ensure equal speaking opportunities. When grading assignments related to reflections on friendship, the teacher provided constructive feedback focused on growth rather than comparison. This equitable treatment reinforced the moral structure of Genesis 26:28, where both parties entered into mutual agreement without coercion. Friendship, as presented in the narrative, required parity and shared commitment. By modeling fairness in classroom management and evaluation, the teacher embodied the reciprocal dimension of biblical friendship, fostering a sense of security and belonging among students. Empathy and emotional sensitivity constituted another essential dimension identified in the findings. Interviews with students revealed that they felt comfortable approaching the CRE teacher when experiencing interpersonal difficulties. Observational data confirmed that the teacher paid attention to subtle emotional cues, such as withdrawal during group discussion or visible frustration after peer interaction. When such situations occurred, the teacher gently initiated private conversations to explore concerns. This responsiveness cultivated emotional safety, which is indispensable for authentic friendship formation. In teaching Genesis 26:28, the teacher highlighted the importance of recognizing the other person's perspective, just as Abimelech recognized Isaac's blessed status. Students were encouraged to practice perspective-taking by imagining how their friends might feel during conflicts. Through reflective exercises, they wrote short commitments to maintain patience and kindness in friendships. These practices illustrate how social competence extends beyond communication skills to include emotional attunement and supportive guidance.

The integration of biblical narrative into practical classroom rituals further strengthened friendship values. Document analysis revealed that lesson plans included objectives such as "students demonstrate reconciliation behavior in peer interaction" and "students participate in cooperative activities reflecting biblical friendship." One notable activity involved creating a "Friendship Covenant Poster," inspired by Isaac's sworn agreement. Students collaboratively formulated class agreements emphasizing respect, listening, and mutual help. The teacher framed this as a modern parallel to Isaac and Abimelech's oath. Observational follow-up showed that students occasionally referred to the poster when resolving disputes, indicating internalization of covenantal friendship principles. This demonstrates the pedagogical effectiveness of symbolic reinforcement in elementary education, where concrete representations facilitate moral comprehension.

Collaboration among the five Christian teachers in the school also contributed to a coherent friendship culture. Interviews with colleagues indicated informal coordination regarding character-building themes. For example, when the CRE teacher addressed reconciliation through Genesis 26:28, other teachers reinforced similar themes in civic education or language lessons through cooperative storytelling and group projects. This consistency across subjects enhanced credibility and minimized contradictory behavioral expectations. Students reported perceiving uniform moral standards among Christian teachers, which strengthened their confidence in the authenticity of the friendship message. Such institutional coherence amplified the impact of the CRE teacher's social competence, demonstrating that friendship education benefits from communal reinforcement rather than isolated instruction.

The findings also highlight contextual challenges. Some students initially interpreted friendship narrowly as exclusivity within small peer groups. The teacher addressed this by emphasizing that Isaac's reconciliation extended beyond immediate allies to former adversaries. Classroom discussions explored the difference between selective companionship and inclusive peace. Over time, observation indicated increased willingness among students to collaborate across friendship circles during group assignments. Although occasional misunderstandings persisted, the teacher consistently redirected attention to principles of dialogue, respect, and shared responsibility. Rather than eroding friendship values, these challenges served as experiential learning opportunities. The elementary context proved conducive to narrative-based moral instruction. Students responded positively to storytelling techniques and role-playing activities reenacting the meeting between Isaac and Abimelech. By dramatizing the transition from tension to peace, students internalized emotional nuances of reconciliation. The teacher's social competence was evident in guiding reflection after role-play, asking questions such as, "How did it feel to apologize?" and "Why is agreement important for friendship?" Such reflective facilitation deepened understanding beyond surface dramatization. Students began articulating friendship not only as playing together but as maintaining honesty and respect even after disagreement. The study found that teacher authenticity significantly influenced student perception. Students reported that the CRE teacher personally practiced friendliness, greeting them daily and acknowledging birthdays or achievements. This personal regard strengthened relational trust, making biblical instruction credible. When the teacher spoke about Isaac's peaceful approach, students connected it to lived experience of being treated kindly and fairly. The congruence between message and behavior prevented cognitive dissonance and reinforced moral coherence. The results demonstrate that social competence in this context operated multidimensionally: communicative openness fostered dialogue; fairness ensured equity; empathy nurtured emotional safety; conflict mediation modeled reconciliation; symbolic activities reinforced covenantal commitment; and collegial collaboration ensured consistency. Together, these dimensions translated Genesis 26:28 from ancient narrative into contemporary classroom practice. Friendship was not reduced to sentimental encouragement but structured as a disciplined commitment to peace and mutual recognition. The findings affirm that the CRE teacher's social competence functioned as both pedagogical strategy and relational embodiment. By integrating biblical reconciliation with consistent modeling, the teacher cultivated a classroom

culture where friendship was practiced intentionally and reflectively. Genesis 26:28 served as theological anchor, while daily interactions provided experiential reinforcement. Within the small yet significant community of 27 Christian students at SD Negeri 104315 Jatirejo, social friendship values emerged not only as instructional objectives but as lived relational reality shaped by competent, empathetic, and authentic teaching.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the social competence of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) teacher plays a decisive role in teaching and cultivating social friendship values through Book of Genesis 26:28 at SD Negeri 104315 Jatirejo. The reconciliation narrative between Isaac and Abimelech provided a strong theological foundation for understanding friendship as a deliberate commitment to peace, mutual recognition, and covenantal agreement. However, its transformative impact depended largely on the teacher's ability to embody and model those values consistently in classroom practice. The findings demonstrate that friendship education was most effective when integrated with communicative openness, fairness, empathy, and constructive conflict mediation. Through dialogical teaching, students were encouraged to connect biblical reconciliation with their own relational experiences. The teacher's impartial treatment of all 27 Christian students strengthened perceptions of justice and equality, while emotional responsiveness created a psychologically safe environment for honest interaction. When conflicts emerged, they were addressed through guided dialogue rather than punitive measures, reinforcing the message that genuine friendship requires accountability and willingness to reconcile. The intentional integration of symbolic classroom activities, such as collective agreements inspired by Isaac's covenant, enabled students to internalize friendship as shared responsibility. Collaboration among the five Christian teachers contributed to consistent moral reinforcement across the school environment, enhancing the credibility of friendship instruction. In this way, social competence functioned not only as interpersonal skill but as moral embodiment, aligning biblical narrative with lived relational culture. Teaching friendship through Genesis 26:28 becomes transformative when scriptural content is harmonized with authentic teacher modeling. The CRE teacher's social competence served as the bridge between theological insight and practical character formation. Within the elementary school context, friendship values were not merely explained but experienced, practiced, and sustained through relational integrity and consistent example.

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