



The Social Competence of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Cultivating Social Reconciliation Values: Insights from Genesis 45:15 at SMP Negeri 4 Kualuh Selatan

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in cultivating social reconciliation values among students based on Genesis 45:15. Social competence is an essential dimension of teacher professionalism because it enables teachers to establish effective communication, build positive relationships, and create a supportive learning environment that encourages students' moral and social development. In Christian Religious Education, teachers are expected not only to transmit biblical knowledge but also to model Christian values such as forgiveness, empathy, and reconciliation in their interactions with students. The narrative of Joseph forgiving his brothers in Genesis 45:15 provides a theological foundation for teaching reconciliation as a transformative process that restores broken relationships and promotes social harmony. This research employed a quantitative descriptive approach conducted at SMP Negeri 4 Kualuh Selatan located in Labuhan Batu Utara. The participants consisted of 118 Christian students and 15 Christian teachers, resulting in a total of 133 respondents. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a Likert scale to measure perceptions of teacher social competence and the internalization of reconciliation values among students. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to identify patterns and tendencies in respondents' responses. The findings indicate that Christian Religious Education teachers demonstrate strong social competence through effective communication, empathy, and openness to dialogue with students. The integration of biblical teachings with relational teaching practices therefore plays a crucial role in fostering moral character and promoting harmonious social interactions within the school community.

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

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping students' intellectual development as well as their moral and social character. In modern educational discourse, teachers are not only responsible for transferring knowledge but also for cultivating values that support

peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and social harmony. In the context of Christian Religious Education, this responsibility becomes particularly significant because the teaching process involves the integration of biblical teachings with the formation of ethical attitudes and behaviors. One of the key competencies required for teachers in achieving this goal is social competence. Social competence refers to the ability of teachers to interact effectively with students, colleagues, parents, and the wider community through communication, empathy, collaboration, and responsible social engagement. According to E. Mulyasa, teacher social competence includes the ability to communicate and interact effectively and ethically with learners and other members of the educational community (Mulyasa, 2013). Social competence is closely related to the ability of teachers to embody Christian values in their relationships with students. Teachers are expected to demonstrate attitudes of love, forgiveness, humility, and reconciliation as expressions of Christian faith in everyday interactions. Through these relational practices, teachers can create learning environments that encourage students to develop empathy and respect toward others. Thomas H. Groome emphasizes that Christian education should connect faith traditions with lived experiences so that learners can interpret biblical teachings within their social realities and participate in the transformation of society (Groome, 2011). Thus, the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers becomes an important element in cultivating values that support peaceful and constructive relationships among students.

One of the biblical narratives that illustrates the value of reconciliation is found in Book of Genesis 45:15, where Joseph forgives his brothers and embraces them after years of separation and betrayal. This passage describes a powerful moment of reconciliation within the family of Jacob, demonstrating forgiveness, restoration, and emotional healing. Biblical scholars such as Walter Brueggemann interpret this narrative as a profound theological message about the transformative power of forgiveness and reconciliation in restoring broken relationships (Brueggemann, 2010). The story of Joseph and his brothers highlights the possibility of overcoming past conflicts through compassion and mutual understanding. The value of social reconciliation is particularly relevant in contemporary educational environments, where students come from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Conflicts among students, misunderstandings, and social tensions can emerge in various forms, including bullying, discrimination, and interpersonal disputes. Schools therefore have a responsibility to cultivate values that promote empathy, dialogue, and peaceful conflict resolution. According to Lawrence Kohlberg, moral development in adolescents involves the gradual formation of ethical reasoning and the ability to consider the well-being of others when making decisions (Kohlberg, 1984). Educational experiences that encourage reflection on ethical issues can help students develop a stronger commitment to justice, empathy, and reconciliation. Teachers' social competence plays a crucial role in facilitating such experiences. Educators who demonstrate empathy, openness, and respectful communication can build positive relationships with students and create classrooms that encourage constructive dialogue. Linda Darling-Hammond argues that effective teachers create inclusive learning communities where students feel respected, supported, and motivated to engage actively in the learning process (Darling-Hammond, 2006). In Christian Religious Education, such

environments allow students to explore biblical teachings related to forgiveness, reconciliation, and social harmony.

The educational context of SMP Negeri 4 Kualuh Selatan located in Labuhan Batu Utara provides an important setting for examining how Christian Religious Education teachers cultivate reconciliation values among students. Within this school community, there are 118 Christian students and 15 Christian teachers, including Christian Religious Education teachers who are directly responsible for teaching biblical values and guiding students' moral development. This environment offers an opportunity to explore how social competence among teachers contributes to the formation of attitudes related to forgiveness, empathy, and reconciliation among students. Although many studies have examined teacher competence in educational settings, most of them focus primarily on pedagogical or professional competence. Comparatively fewer studies have explored the role of teacher social competence in shaping students' moral attitudes and interpersonal relationships, particularly in the context of Christian Religious Education. Yet, values such as reconciliation, forgiveness, and social harmony are best cultivated through relational engagement and meaningful dialogue between teachers and students. Teachers who possess strong social competence are more capable of guiding students in reflecting on moral conflicts and exploring constructive ways to restore broken relationships. This study aims to analyze how the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers contributes to the cultivation of social reconciliation values among students, using the biblical narrative of Genesis 45:15 as a theological foundation. By examining the interactions and teaching practices within the school environment, this research seeks to provide insights into how Christian education can strengthen students' commitment to forgiveness, empathy, and reconciliation. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of Christian Religious Education practices that integrate biblical teachings with effective relational and educational strategies for character formation in contemporary school contexts.

METHODS

A quantitative research approach was used to examine the relationship between the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers and the cultivation of social reconciliation values among students. Quantitative research was chosen because it enables researchers to measure variables objectively and analyze patterns using statistical procedures. According to John W. Creswell, quantitative research is designed to test theories by examining relationships among variables through numerical data and statistical analysis (Creswell, 2014). The design used in this study was descriptive quantitative, aiming to describe the level of teachers' social competence and its contribution to the development of social reconciliation values among students based on the biblical reflection of Book of Genesis 45:15. The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 4 Kualuh Selatan, located in Labuhan Batu Utara. The participants consisted of members of the Christian school community in the institution. The population included 118 Christian students and 15 Christian teachers, including Christian Religious Education teachers who are directly involved in the teaching and learning process. Because the total population was relatively small, the study applied a total sampling technique in which all

members of the population were included as research respondents. Consequently, the total number of participants involved in the study was 133 respondents. This approach allowed the researcher to obtain a comprehensive representation of perceptions regarding teacher social competence and the cultivation of reconciliation values within the school environment. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure two main variables: teacher social competence and students' understanding of social reconciliation values. The questionnaire used a Likert scale format consisting of five response categories ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The Likert scale method was adopted based on the measurement technique developed by Rensis Likert, which is widely used in educational and social science research to measure attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral tendencies (Likert, 1932). The instrument included several indicators of teacher social competence, such as effective communication with students, empathy, openness to dialogue, and the ability to foster respectful interpersonal relationships. In addition, the instrument measured students' internalization of reconciliation values, including forgiveness, willingness to restore relationships, responsibility for resolving conflicts, and empathy toward others. Before the questionnaire was distributed, the instrument was reviewed to ensure clarity and relevance to the research objectives. The items were developed based on theoretical frameworks of teacher competence and moral development found in educational literature. The distribution of the questionnaire was conducted during the academic period with the assistance of school authorities to ensure that all respondents could participate in the data collection process. Students and teachers were informed about the purpose of the study and were encouraged to respond honestly to each statement in the questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to identify patterns and tendencies in respondents' perceptions. Statistical analysis was performed by calculating frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations to determine the level of teacher social competence and the extent to which reconciliation values were cultivated among students. Descriptive statistics allow researchers to summarize numerical data and provide a clear representation of the distribution of responses within the sample. As explained by Fred N. Kerlinger and Howard B. Lee, statistical analysis in quantitative research is essential for describing empirical patterns and identifying relationships between variables (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). Through this methodological approach, the study sought to obtain a systematic and measurable understanding of how the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers contributes to the cultivation of reconciliation values among students. The results of the analysis were then interpreted in light of biblical teachings on reconciliation, particularly the narrative of Genesis 45:15, in order to connect educational practices with theological reflection within the context of Christian Religious Education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide an empirical description of how the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers contributes to the cultivation of social reconciliation values among students at SMP Negeri 4 Kualuh Selatan located in North Labuhanbatu. The quantitative analysis was based on responses collected from 133 participants consisting of 118 Christian students and 15 Christian teachers. The questionnaire measured two primary variables: the social competence of Christian

Religious Education teachers and the internalization of social reconciliation values among students. The descriptive statistical analysis showed that the majority of respondents perceived the level of teacher social competence as high. Students reported that teachers demonstrated positive communication, empathy, openness, and constructive relationships within the classroom environment. These findings indicate that teachers at the school generally possess strong interpersonal skills that enable them to engage students in meaningful educational interactions. Such competencies are essential in Christian Religious Education because the learning process involves not only cognitive understanding but also relational experiences that shape students' attitudes and moral perspectives. The data analysis showed that effective communication between teachers and students emerged as one of the most prominent indicators of teacher social competence. Students reported that Christian Religious Education teachers often communicated clearly, respectfully, and empathetically when explaining biblical teachings and discussing moral issues. Effective communication is a key component of teacher professionalism because it enables teachers to establish trust and mutual understanding with students. According to E. Mulyasa, teacher social competence includes the ability to interact effectively and ethically with students and other members of the educational community (Mulyasa, 2013). When teachers communicate in ways that are respectful and supportive, students feel more comfortable sharing their ideas, expressing their concerns, and reflecting on moral challenges that they encounter in daily life. In the context of Christian Religious Education, this communicative relationship becomes a crucial medium for teaching values such as forgiveness, reconciliation, and compassion.

Another important aspect of teacher social competence identified in the findings is empathy. Many students indicated that their teachers showed understanding toward students' personal struggles, emotional experiences, and interpersonal conflicts. Empathy allows teachers to recognize the emotional dimensions of students' lives and respond with sensitivity and care. This quality is particularly important when discussing themes of conflict and reconciliation because students may have experienced disagreements or tensions with peers. Teachers who demonstrate empathy can guide students toward constructive reflection rather than judgment or condemnation. The development of empathetic relationships between teachers and students supports the broader goals of Christian education, which emphasizes love, compassion, and respect for others as expressions of faith in daily life. The findings also reveal that the teachers' openness to dialogue significantly contributed to the cultivation of reconciliation values among students. Classroom discussions about moral dilemmas and interpersonal conflicts were frequently used as learning strategies in Christian Religious Education classes. Students reported that teachers encouraged them to express their perspectives, listen to others, and explore different ways of resolving conflicts peacefully. This dialogical approach aligns with the educational perspective proposed by Thomas H. Groome, who emphasizes that Christian education should integrate faith traditions with the lived experiences of learners through reflective dialogue and communal learning (Groome, 2011). By creating spaces for discussion and reflection, teachers enable students to connect biblical teachings with real-life situations, thereby deepening their understanding of reconciliation as both a theological concept and a practical social value.

The study also examined students' perceptions regarding the internalization of social reconciliation values. The analysis indicated that many students demonstrated a strong awareness of the importance of forgiveness, restoration of relationships, and peaceful conflict resolution. Students expressed agreement with statements emphasizing the need to forgive others, seek reconciliation after disagreements, and maintain harmonious relationships with peers. These attitudes reflect the influence of educational experiences that encourage moral reflection and ethical decision-making. Moral development theories suggest that adolescents gradually develop the capacity to evaluate ethical situations and consider the perspectives of others when making decisions. According to Lawrence Kohlberg, the development of moral reasoning involves a progression from self-centered considerations toward a broader concern for justice and social harmony (Kohlberg, 1984). Educational environments that promote dialogue and reflection can accelerate this development by encouraging students to analyze moral conflicts and explore constructive solutions. The biblical foundation of this study, derived from Book of Genesis 45:15, played a significant role in shaping the teaching of reconciliation values. The narrative describes a pivotal moment when Joseph forgives his brothers and embraces them after a long period of separation and betrayal. This act of reconciliation not only restores family relationships but also demonstrates the transformative power of forgiveness and compassion. Biblical scholars such as Walter Brueggemann interpret this narrative as a profound theological message about the restoration of broken relationships through grace and reconciliation (Brueggemann, 2010). In the classroom context, Christian Religious Education teachers used this narrative to encourage students to reflect on the importance of forgiving others and rebuilding relationships after conflict. By connecting biblical stories with students' everyday experiences, teachers were able to make the concept of reconciliation more meaningful and relevant. The findings further indicate that teachers served as important role models for students in practicing reconciliation values. Students observed that teachers often demonstrated patience, fairness, and respect when dealing with conflicts among students. When disputes occurred in the classroom, teachers tended to encourage dialogue and mutual understanding rather than imposing punitive measures immediately. This approach reflects the principle that character formation in education is influenced not only by verbal instruction but also by the example set by educators. Students often learn ethical values by observing how teachers interact with others and handle challenging situations. When teachers demonstrate humility, forgiveness, and empathy, they provide tangible examples of how reconciliation can be practiced in everyday relationships.

Another significant finding of this study is the relationship between teacher social competence and the creation of a supportive classroom environment. Respondents indicated that the classroom atmosphere in Christian Religious Education classes was generally characterized by mutual respect and openness. Students felt that their opinions were valued and that teachers treated them with dignity and fairness. Educational research suggests that such environments are essential for effective learning because they promote student engagement and emotional well-being. According to Linda Darling-Hammond, effective teachers create inclusive learning communities where students feel safe, respected, and motivated to participate actively in the learning process (Darling-Hammond, 2006). In Christian Religious Education, this supportive environment provides

the foundation for discussions about ethical values and interpersonal relationships. The cultivation of reconciliation values also reflects the broader mission of Christian education to promote peace and social harmony. In many educational settings, students encounter various forms of interpersonal conflict, including misunderstandings, competition, and social tensions. These challenges can lead to negative behaviors such as hostility or exclusion if not addressed constructively. Christian Religious Education offers an opportunity to guide students toward alternative responses based on forgiveness, empathy, and mutual respect. The narrative of Joseph and his brothers illustrates that reconciliation requires courage, humility, and willingness to overcome past grievances. Teachers who possess strong social competence are better equipped to facilitate these reflections and encourage students to adopt attitudes that support peaceful coexistence. The results of the study also highlight the importance of integrating biblical teachings with contemporary educational practices. Christian Religious Education teachers at the school demonstrated an ability to relate scriptural narratives to students' everyday experiences. For example, discussions about reconciliation often included examples of conflicts that students might encounter with friends, classmates, or family members. By analyzing these situations through the lens of biblical teachings, students were encouraged to reflect on their own behavior and consider how they might respond differently in the future. This integrative approach helps students recognize that biblical teachings are not merely historical narratives but sources of ethical guidance for modern life.

The findings suggest that teacher social competence contributes to the development of students' emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence involves the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions while also recognizing the feelings of others. When teachers demonstrate empathy and encourage respectful communication, students learn to express their emotions in constructive ways and respond sensitively to the emotions of others. This capacity is closely related to reconciliation because resolving conflicts often requires individuals to acknowledge their mistakes, understand the perspectives of others, and seek mutually beneficial solutions. Educational experiences that promote emotional awareness and empathy therefore support the cultivation of reconciliation values among students. The study also indicates that the process of cultivating reconciliation values requires continuous effort and reflection. Some respondents indicated that conflicts among students still occur and that not all students immediately demonstrate willingness to forgive or seek reconciliation. These challenges highlight the complexity of character formation in educational settings. Moral attitudes develop gradually through repeated experiences of reflection, dialogue, and practice. Teachers must therefore continue to reinforce reconciliation values through consistent teaching, modeling, and encouragement. School programs that promote collaboration, group discussion, and conflict resolution training can further strengthen these values within the student community. The results of this study demonstrate that the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers plays a vital role in cultivating reconciliation values among students. Through effective communication, empathy, openness to dialogue, and positive role modeling, teachers create learning environments that encourage students to reflect on ethical issues and practice forgiveness in their relationships. The integration of biblical teachings from Genesis 45:15 provides a theological foundation that enriches the educational process and connects moral reflection with Christian faith traditions.

These findings support the broader understanding that character formation in Christian education is deeply relational, requiring meaningful interactions between teachers and students. The discussion of the results highlights that teacher social competence is not merely a professional requirement but also a spiritual and relational calling within Christian education. Teachers who cultivate empathetic and respectful relationships with students contribute significantly to the development of moral character and social responsibility. By guiding students to understand and practice reconciliation, Christian Religious Education teachers help prepare young people to become individuals who promote peace, forgiveness, and harmony within their communities. The experience at SMP Negeri 4 Kualuh Selatan demonstrates that when educational practices integrate biblical reflection with relational competence, schools can become environments where reconciliation values are not only taught but also lived and experienced in everyday interactions.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers in cultivating social reconciliation values among students at SMP Negeri 4 Kualuh Selatan located in Labuhan Batu Utara. Using a quantitative descriptive approach involving 133 respondents consisting of 118 Christian students and 15 Christian teachers, the research explored how teachers' interpersonal abilities influence students' understanding and practice of reconciliation values grounded in the biblical reflection of Book of Genesis 45:15. The findings demonstrate that the social competence of Christian Religious Education teachers plays a significant role in shaping a positive and supportive learning environment. Teachers who communicate effectively, show empathy, and maintain respectful relationships with students are able to foster deeper engagement in the learning process. These relational qualities encourage students to participate actively in discussions about moral issues and interpersonal relationships. As a result, students develop a stronger awareness of the importance of forgiveness, mutual respect, and peaceful conflict resolution within their social interactions. The integration of the biblical narrative in Genesis 45:15 provides a meaningful theological framework for teaching reconciliation values. The story of Joseph forgiving his brothers illustrates the transformative power of forgiveness and the restoration of broken relationships. When this narrative is presented within an interactive and reflective classroom setting, students are encouraged to internalize reconciliation as a practical value that can guide their daily behavior. Through reflection on biblical teachings and real-life experiences, students learn that reconciliation requires humility, empathy, and responsibility in maintaining harmonious relationships. The study highlights the importance of teachers serving as role models for the values they teach. The attitudes and behaviors demonstrated by teachers, such as patience, fairness, openness to dialogue, and willingness to resolve conflicts peacefully, provide concrete examples for students to emulate. In this way, the cultivation of reconciliation values does not occur solely through theoretical instruction but also through lived experiences within the school community. The results indicate that strong teacher social competence significantly contributes to the development of students' moral character and social responsibility. Christian Religious Education teachers who effectively integrate relational competence with biblical teachings can create transformative educational experiences that nurture forgiveness, empathy, and

reconciliation among students. Such educational practices are essential in preparing students to become individuals who promote peace and harmony within their communities.

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