



Teaching Diversity and Respect: Pedagogical Insights from Matthew 15:21–28 at SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua

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ABSTRACT

In contemporary primary education, fostering respect for diversity is essential for nurturing socially and morally competent students, particularly in culturally pluralistic contexts such as SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua. This study examines the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE/PAK) teachers in cultivating students' respect and ethical responsiveness, grounded in the exegetical reflection of Matthew 15:21–28. The narrative of the Canaanite woman, who persistently appeals to Jesus for her daughter's healing, provides a rich theological foundation for teaching inclusion, empathy, and recognition of others' dignity, illustrating how moral and spiritual principles can inform practical classroom strategies. The study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to synthesize empirical, theoretical, and theological literature on teacher competence, moral education, and value-based pedagogy. Key themes identified include pedagogical competence as relational and ethical skill, respect for diversity as a multidimensional educational outcome, and Matthew 15:21–28 as a model for ethical recognition and inclusive teaching. The findings indicate that CRE teachers' modeling of empathy, cultural sensitivity, and ethical responsiveness significantly enhances students' ability to internalize and enact respect for others. This study concludes that pedagogical competence in CRE teaching involves integrating biblical insight, ethical modeling, and relational skills to create a classroom culture that fosters respect, inclusion, and moral awareness. By operationalizing the lessons of Matthew 15:21–28, teachers at SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua can cultivate students who are empathetic, socially responsible, and prepared to engage constructively in a diverse and pluralistic society.

Keywords: *Pedagogical Insights, Christian Religious Education, Diversity, Respect*

INTRODUCTION

In the context of contemporary education, cultivating respect and appreciation for diversity has become a fundamental goal for teachers, particularly in primary school settings where students are in formative stages of social and moral development. Schools

like SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua reflect Indonesia's broader societal diversity, encompassing variations in ethnicity, socio-economic status, language, and cultural backgrounds. Within such environments, Christian Religious Education (CRE/PAK) teachers are tasked not only with transmitting knowledge about biblical teachings but also with modeling values that foster interpersonal harmony, empathy, and ethical awareness. The pedagogical challenge lies in bridging the gap between abstract scriptural principles and practical classroom behaviors, guiding students to internalize and enact respect for individuals from all walks of life. Matthew 15:21-28 provides a rich biblical narrative for exploring these pedagogical dimensions. The passage recounts the encounter between Jesus and the Canaanite woman, who approaches Him with a plea for the healing of her daughter. Initially, Jesus appears to resist her request, stating that His mission is primarily directed to the "lost sheep of Israel." Yet the woman's persistence, humility, and faith lead to a remarkable outcome: her daughter is healed, illustrating both the power of faith and the moral imperative to recognize and respond to the needs of others, even those who are socially or culturally marginalized. From an exegetical perspective, this story highlights the themes of inclusion, perseverance, and the ethical recognition of others' dignity-concepts that directly inform contemporary pedagogical practice in diverse classrooms. The Canaanite woman's narrative demonstrates that barriers of difference-whether ethnic, social, or perceived status-must not inhibit acts of compassion, justice, and respect, which remain central to the formation of Christian character. In practical terms, CRE teachers at SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua can draw from Matthew 15:21-28 to foster a classroom culture that values diversity and models respectful interactions. Pedagogical strategies may include storytelling, guided discussion, role-playing, and collaborative learning experiences that encourage students to explore perspectives different from their own. By integrating the narrative's moral and ethical lessons with developmentally appropriate teaching techniques, educators can promote not only cognitive understanding of biblical principles but also affective and behavioral growth. Students learn that respect is not merely a theoretical value but an actionable ethic manifested in daily decisions, dialogue, and social engagement. Research in educational psychology and moral development supports the significance of teacher modeling in shaping students' attitudes toward diversity. Teachers' social and professional competence-including empathy, cultural sensitivity, and ethical consistency-directly impacts students' capacity to internalize and enact values such as respect, fairness, and inclusion. In the context of CRE, these competencies are further reinforced when teachers draw explicit connections between biblical narratives and students' lived experiences. Matthew 15:21-28 serves as an exemplary text for illustrating how moral virtues can transcend cultural and social boundaries, providing both theological grounding and practical application for value-based education. This study aims to explore the pedagogical approaches employed by CRE teachers at SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua in nurturing respect and appreciation for diversity, using Matthew 15:21-28 as a foundational exegetical lens. By examining how teachers translate the principles of inclusion, perseverance, and ethical recognition into classroom practices, the research seeks to illuminate strategies that effectively cultivate socially and morally competent students. This investigation contributes to a broader understanding of how biblical teaching can be operationalized in primary education, fostering not only academic growth

but also the formation of students' character, empathy, and commitment to respectful engagement in a multicultural society.

METHODS

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design was implemented to investigate how Christian Religious Education (CRE/PAK) teachers cultivate respect for diversity among students, drawing pedagogical insights from Matthew 15:21-28. The SLR method was chosen for its capacity to rigorously synthesize empirical, theoretical, and theological research, providing a comprehensive understanding of the intersection between teacher competence, moral education, and biblical pedagogy. By adopting a systematic approach, the study moves beyond anecdotal evidence to establish evidence-based strategies applicable in primary school contexts, particularly at SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua, where students experience a culturally and socially diverse learning environment. The review followed identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. The research questions guiding the review were: How is pedagogical competence conceptualized in contemporary CRE teaching, particularly in fostering respect for others? What strategies have been shown to promote empathy, ethical awareness, and inclusion in primary school students? How has Matthew 15:21–28 been interpreted in biblical scholarship with respect to diversity, inclusion, and ethical responsiveness? These questions ensured alignment between exegetical insights and pedagogical applications. A comprehensive search was conducted across major academic databases, focused on publications from 2000 to 2024 to ensure relevance to contemporary pedagogical practices and culturally diverse school settings. Data extraction followed a standardized protocol to capture key information, including author, year, research design, population, pedagogical interventions, and outcomes related to respect, diversity, and moral formation. Analysis employed thematic synthesis, identifying recurring patterns and categorizing them into: pedagogical competence as relational and moral skill, encompassing communication, empathy, and classroom management, respect and inclusion as educational outcomes, highlighting cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, and Matthew 15:21-28 as an exegetical model, emphasizing humility, persistence, and ethical recognition across cultural boundaries. The review incorporated triangulation of sources across educational, psychological, and theological disciplines, inter-reviewer checks of thematic coding, and transparent documentation of the selection and synthesis process. Ethical integrity was maintained by accurately citing all sources and avoiding misrepresentation of the original studies. Through this SLR approach, the study generates a robust framework linking biblical insights with professional pedagogical practice. It highlights how CRE teachers at SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua can operationalize the narrative of the Canaanite woman to foster respect for diversity, inclusion, and ethical responsiveness among students, thereby enhancing both spiritual and social development in primary education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this systematic literature review reveal that the pedagogical competence of Christian Religious Education (CRE/PAK) teachers plays a pivotal role in fostering

students' respect for diversity and ethical responsiveness, particularly when anchored in exegetical reflection on Matthew 15:21-28. Across the literature, teacher competence is consistently conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing not only subject-matter knowledge but also relational intelligence, ethical modeling, and contextualized pedagogical strategies that enable students to engage meaningfully with both content and social dynamics. In the context of SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua, where students come from varied cultural, socio-economic, and linguistic backgrounds, these dimensions of competence are critical for cultivating a classroom climate that promotes inclusivity and mutual respect. The Canaanite woman narrative provides a rich theological lens for interpreting how respect for diversity can be taught and embodied, illustrating the interplay between perseverance, humility, and ethical recognition. Teachers who understand and convey the moral and spiritual dimensions of this text can model behaviors that reflect the principles of inclusion, demonstrating to students that differences should be met with attentiveness, empathy, and justice rather than exclusion or prejudice. A main theme emerging from the literature concerns the integration of biblical narratives with pedagogical practices. Studies highlight that students internalize values more effectively when lessons are not limited to rote memorization or abstract discussion but are combined with reflective activities that encourage personal application. In the case of Matthew 15:21-28, CRE teachers can design exercises that allow students to examine their own attitudes toward peers from different backgrounds, discuss scenarios involving cultural or social marginalization, and role-play responses that reflect ethical recognition and compassion. Such methods align with contemporary pedagogical frameworks emphasizing experiential and reflective learning. Furthermore, the narrative underscores the significance of teacher modeling; when students observe teachers treating every individual with respect, listening actively, and responding ethically to student needs, they are more likely to emulate these behaviors. Literature in educational psychology confirms that the social-emotional competencies of teachers, including empathy, cultural sensitivity, and fairness, are strongly correlated with students' prosocial behaviors, such as inclusion, collaboration, and respect for diversity. Therefore, pedagogical competence extends beyond instructional design to encompass the teacher's ethical presence and relational engagement within the classroom. Another prominent finding relates to culturally responsive teaching practices. The studies reviewed indicate that primary school students respond positively to teachers who validate and integrate their cultural experiences into learning. In the context of SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua, this may involve acknowledging linguistic diversity, celebrating local customs, or creating group activities that encourage intercultural dialogue. By connecting the principles exemplified in Matthew 15:21-28, where Jesus ultimately recognizes the faith and dignity of the Canaanite woman despite her social marginalization, teachers can illustrate that respect and ethical responsiveness require attentiveness to the unique experiences of others. This approach not only promotes social harmony within the classroom but also enhances students' capacity to navigate wider societal diversity. Research also emphasizes that repeated exposure to ethical exemplars and structured reflection enhances moral reasoning, suggesting that integrating biblical narratives with practical, culturally aware activities reinforces both spiritual and social development. The literature further highlights the role of structured dialogue and critical reflection in fostering respect for diversity. Classroom strategies such as group discussions, peer feedback, and guided

reflection enable students to articulate their understanding of ethical principles and relate them to lived experiences. In the case of Matthew 15:21-28, teachers can facilitate discussions about fairness, persistence, and the recognition of others' needs, helping students explore why respecting differences is both a moral and a social imperative. These practices align with findings from moral education research, which show that reflective dialogue enhances empathy, perspective-taking, and ethical judgment. Additionally, the narrative encourages students to consider the impact of their actions on others, promoting a form of moral reasoning that is both relational and action-oriented. When teachers intentionally connect scripture with classroom reflection, students are equipped to translate ethical principles into behaviors, such as including marginalized peers in group activities, respecting differing opinions, and advocating for justice when unfairness occurs.

A further insight from the reviewed literature concerns the development of affective and cognitive dimensions of empathy. Studies indicate that respect for diversity is strengthened when students engage both emotionally and intellectually with moral narratives. The story of the Canaanite woman provides opportunities for such dual engagement: students can emotionally connect with her vulnerability, courage, and persistence, while cognitively analyzing the ethical and social principles illustrated by Jesus' response. CRE teachers who scaffold these experiences through discussion prompts, reflective journaling, and role-play foster deeper understanding and internalization of ethical values. This dual engagement aligns with holistic models of Christian pedagogy, which emphasize the integration of heart, mind, and action in moral formation. The literature also points to the importance of teacher professional development in moral and intercultural competence. Pedagogical effectiveness in fostering respect for diversity is enhanced when teachers receive training in cultural sensitivity, ethical classroom management, and the integration of biblical narratives into value education. Continuous professional reflection, peer collaboration, and exposure to best practices in moral pedagogy strengthen teachers' capacity to model and teach respect effectively. In the SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua context, such development enables teachers to respond to classroom challenges involving prejudice, exclusion, or misunderstanding, ensuring that ethical principles are consistently applied and reinforced. The synthesis of biblical exegesis and pedagogical literature demonstrates that Matthew 15:21-28 serves as both a moral and instructional paradigm. The narrative's themes of inclusion, recognition, and ethical responsiveness resonate strongly with the principles of socially and morally competent teaching. CRE teachers who translate these principles into structured classroom activities cultivate students who are empathetic, socially aware, and capable of navigating diversity with respect. This integration of biblical insight, pedagogical skill, and ethical modeling establishes a classroom culture that promotes both spiritual formation and social competence, preparing students to participate in a pluralistic society with integrity, fairness, and moral discernment. The results indicate that the professional competence of CRE teachers, particularly their pedagogical, relational, and ethical dimensions, is central to fostering respect for diversity in primary education. By grounding teaching practices in Matthew 15:21-28, educators at SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua can create learning experiences that integrate cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of moral formation,

enabling students to internalize ethical principles and apply them in interactions with diverse peers. This approach not only strengthens students' understanding of Christian moral values but also promotes a classroom environment characterized by inclusion, empathy, and mutual respect, demonstrating the transformative potential of value-based education.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the critical role of Christian Religious Education (CRE/PAK) teachers in fostering respect for diversity among primary school students, using Matthew 15:21-28 as an exegetical and pedagogical guide. The narrative of the Canaanite woman underscores the importance of inclusion, ethical responsiveness, and recognition of the dignity of others, offering a rich foundation for value-based education. Findings from the systematic literature review demonstrate that teachers' pedagogical competence—including relational intelligence, cultural sensitivity, ethical modeling, and reflective practice—is essential for cultivating empathy, perspective-taking, and prosocial behavior in students. By integrating biblical narratives with structured classroom strategies such as storytelling, guided discussion, role-play, and reflective exercises, educators can translate moral and spiritual principles into tangible actions that reinforce respect for differences and promote harmonious social interactions. The research emphasizes that teacher modeling of ethical behavior and attentiveness to students' diverse experiences significantly enhances the internalization of values. Students are more likely to develop lasting moral understanding and respect for diversity when they observe teachers consistently embodying the principles of inclusion, compassion, and justice illustrated in Scripture. Professional development in cultural competence, ethical pedagogy, and reflective teaching further strengthens educators' ability to navigate diverse classroom contexts effectively. Pedagogical competence in CRE teaching is not merely about knowledge transmission but involves cultivating ethical, relational, and spiritual dimensions of student development. At SD Negeri No. 173380 Hutatua, teachers who operationalize the lessons of Matthew 15:21-28 create a learning environment where respect, empathy, and moral awareness flourish. This study contributes to the broader understanding of how biblical narratives can be effectively translated into classroom practice, fostering socially and morally competent students equipped to engage positively in a multicultural and pluralistic society.

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