



From Interaction to Transformation: Interpersonal Communication as a Model for Hindu Religious Character Formation in Early Childhood Education

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Jun 06, 2026

Revised Jul 23, 2026

Accepted Aug 09, 2026

Keywords:

Interpersonal Communication;
Religious Character;
Childhood education.

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the interpersonal relationship between teachers and children in reinforcement of Hindu religious values at the Early Childhood Education Center in Denpasar. The study aims at exploring the interpersonal communication and its influence on children's understanding and practice of Hindu religious beliefs, and to construct a theoretical framework from the findings. Qualitative descriptive approach was employed with a single case framework. The data were collected by classroom observation, in-depth interviews, recording and literature review of school principle, educators, students and institutional administrators. The results demonstrate that the communication between teachers and children is a coherent system, including of verbal, non-verbal and persuasive components, aided by collaboration between teachers and parents. The role of interpersonal communication is reflected in the improvement of the understanding of Hindu religious concepts, the application of Hindu religious principles in everyday life, the improvement of social emotional development, and the creation of a religious and humanistic education climate. The study implies that comprehensive understanding on interpersonal communication based on spiritual, and religious values may develop the noble character of the students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is the foundation on which children build an understanding of themselves, how to relate to others, the world around them and the values they will use to guide their future conduct. At this stage of growth, education is derived not simply from formally provided instructional content. It is heavily influenced by direct experience, relationships, familiarity and interaction with people who have strong emotional ties to children. In this context, teachers are not only knowledge transmitters but also developmental partners, moral guides and role models of conduct[1].

Interpersonal communication is extremely important since early childhood education is based on continuous interpersonal ties between educators and young students [2]. Children learn educational lessons better in a safe setting, when focused, when accepted and when they have the opportunity to participate. This paper conceptualizes interpersonal communication not simply as a message exchange but as a process of relating thru which knowledge, emotional intimacy, experience learning, attitudes and actions are created. This setting is very important in early childhood education in Denpasar because of the various characteristics of the student demographic including children with typical development, children with autism, children with specific educational needs, and children with speech impairments.

Such diversity demands communication modes that are flexible, dynamic and empathetic by the instructors. There are Hindu principles such as Tat Twam Asi, Tri Kaya Parisudha, and Tri Hita Karana are used as the foundation of character development and fosters an inclusive educational environment where children with diverse developmental characteristics can learn and interact together [3]. As far as the Hindu way of teaching is concerned, spiritual concepts are not bound to knowledge of doctrine teachings or ceremonies practice. These include the development of moral,



spiritual, social and ethical consciousness which is reflected in daily behavior. Character building include integrity, civility, self-discipline, accountability, compassion, consideration, care for others, and the ability to live in peace [4].

Previous studies cited in this dissertation have shown that interpersonal communication is very closely related to learning, language acquisition, social-emotional growth, and moral development [5], [6], [7]. However, there is a conceptual need to integrate communication proficiency, children's developmental characteristics and the mechanism of value internalization into a holistic framework notably in teacher-child interaction in Hindu-oriented early childhood education.

It is this difference that provides the basis for the present work. The study looks at how educators engage with pupils and how these interactions support Hindu religious beliefs. The study addressed three main issues. These are types of interpersonal communication between teachers and students, barriers in improving religious values thru interpersonal communication, and the impact of interpersonal communication on children's understanding and practice of Hindu religious values [8].

The research is founded on the theories of interpersonal communication, humanism, symbolic interactionism, social development, and value internalization in theory. Interpersonal communication theory considers the quality of relationships and dynamics of interaction, the humanistic perspective focuses on empathy, acceptance, and psychological safety, symbolic interactionism describes the process of meaning creation thru language, symbols, and actions, social learning theory describes the adaptation of communication to the developmental characteristics of children [9]. Moreover, the value-internalization perspective helps to understand the transition from understanding to religious attitudes, practices, and behaviors.

The objective of this study is to study the teacher-children interpersonal communication in reinforcing Hindu religious values, to investigate the constraints faced, to clarify the function of such communication in developing the understanding and practice of Hindu religious values among children, and to formulate a conceptual framework for enriching the communication discourse in Hindu-oriented early childhood education.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the researchers employed a descriptive qualitative research design using a sigle case approach. The methodology was used because the study seeks to understand the meaning, experiences, interactional patterns, and relationship dynamics between educators and students in a naturalistic educational context [10]. The case study allows for a full analysis of communication phenomena in the natural institutional setting in which they occur.

This research was conducted in a preschool in Denpasar, an early childhood education institution with Hindu orientation and heterogeneous students. The context of research includes the integration of early childhood education, Hindu religious education, Balinese cultural values, and inclusive pedagogical. The information was qualitative data based on actual experience and involvement. The participants were school principal, teachers, pupils and institutional administrators. The choice of informants was purposeful, based on their importance and involvement with the issues under research.

Data were collected by participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and literature review. The interviews were conducted in a comprehensive way using an unstructured interview framework, where the interviewer might frame questions based on participant's responses and experiences [11]. Documentation was added to observational and interview data, institutional profiles, educational programs, activity plans, archives, and photos relevant to teacher-child interactions and educational efforts.

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive framework of data reduction, visualization of data, and formulation and validation of results [12]. Data from observations, interviews, and recordings were clustered into themes on the ways of communication, barriers, effects, and procedures for value addition. For the sake of increasing the reliability of the data, source triangulation, technique triangulation and member validation were applied

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The results show that the communication between educators and children in the preschool in Denpasar is broad, conversational, human-centered, and continual. Educators don't see children as passive recipients of information but as active partners with different abilities, experiences, emotions and needs. In educational ventures teachers promote close involvement with students. Eye contact, seeing emotions, feedback, and more organic bilateral involvement is easier because they are at the height of the child. Children are provided with opportunities to answer questions, express their views and interact directly with teachers.

The results show that teacher-child interpersonal communication is not merely instructional talk. Safety and confidence are built on the foundation of interpersonal relationships. Successful interpersonal communication needs transparency, compassion, support, affirmative consideration and parity as key criteria. The humanistic perspective



highly values empathy, compassion and genuineness to create a supportive environment that is conducive to personal development [13]. Both views are very relevant to the improvement of Hindu religious principles in the early growth of Hindu religion. Thus, the heart of interpersonal communication as outlined in this study can be viewed as relational-spiritual discourse. It is relational because the teacher-child relationship is the foundation for receiving and understanding knowledge.

Verbal communication is the primary method educators employ to teach knowledge, deliver instructions, encourage dialog, and help young people understand religious concepts. However, the data suggest that verbal communication is not realized as a one-way process. Teachers use simple language, clear intonation, questions, stories, visual aids and talks to actively involve youngsters in the learning process. Visual media are used not only as teaching aids but also as motivators for youngsters to observe, react, ask questions and share experiences. Educators then ask further questions, clarifications or reinforcement based on the students' answers (Mantra et al., 2023).

Oral discourse also connects spiritual truths to everyday life. Teachers speak of mutual respect, politeness, cleanliness, love of God's creation and regard for all creatures. Christian ideas, therefore, are not given as abstractions separated from the world of children but as truths that may be recognized in simple daily activities. The results show that verbal communication has a minimum of five functions in the educational process of value enhancement: instructive, emotional, spiritual, conversational and narrative. The learning process helps students how to communicate more effectively to convey their ideas and experiences in learning (Mantra et al., 2024).

Young toddlers frequently learn values better thru concrete acts than thru abstract words, therefore nonverbal communication is important. The research identified the utilization of facial cues, eye contact, body movement, spatial arrangement, proximity, voice modulation and a variety of affirmative gestures used in conjunction with speech. Spiritual practices also involve non-verbal communication. Smiles, nods, motions in the prayer guiding, introduction of educational media, etc. are important symbols for children who recognize those symbols thru continuous exposure.

Religious ideas are expressed, seen and lived in social engagement. The teachers' demonstration is highly important. The behavior of teachers is a communicative signal. Students observe the correspondence between the words and acts of teachers. This finding is in accordance with the philosophy of Tri Kaya Parisudha which emphasizes the significance of coherence between cognition, communication and behavior (Suputra & Sanjaya, 2025). Therefore, nonverbal communication is not just an addition to verbal communication.

The research distinguishes persuasive communication from compliance-driven communication based on compulsion. Educators use mainly incentives, communication, modeling, positive reinforcement, and habituation. The educator clearly explains when a student makes a mistake, encourages the learner to comprehend the behavior, and then offers an opportunity to correct. The goal here is to modify behavior so that people do not follow laws out of fear of penalty, but rather to help internalize values.

The effective methodology perceives children as active participants in the learning process. Children are provided with opportunities to learn the reasons for expected conduct. In Hindu education, this approach is an embodiment of Tat Twam Asi in terms of relations imbued with reverence, kindness, mindfulness, and awareness of individual circumstances. Therefore, persuasive communication works as a channel from normative signals to children's consciousness. Educators do not merely state conduct to be correct or bad; they aid youngsters in comprehending the rationale for the necessity of specific behaviors.

The results show that the development of religious principles can not only be done in the classroom. Experiences from the home environment are brought to school by children and school experiences are brought to the family environment. Hence, the constant communication between the educators and the parents becomes an essential element in strengthening the values. Cooperation ensures that behaviors learned in the school context are reinforced in the home setting. The interaction with parents allows educators to understand the situation of the children, such as behavior, needs, development, and obstacles outside the classroom. The proposed framework also has an element that supports the development of values and family cooperation. Children are able to develop values learned from teachers more easily if they are given regular experiences in the household.

The first challenge of verbal communication carried out by the students is how express their thoughts and feeling appropriately. Some young people are able to express their thoughts and feelings with relative ease, while others require guidance to articulate their messages clearly and coherently. Such restrictions may be discovered when youngsters are unable to convey feelings, needs, or precise meanings with words but instead communicate thru sobbing, silence, anger, or physical gestures. Teachers break down this barrier by speaking clearly, repeating instructions, demonstrating, using body language, giving one-on-one help, and getting parents to cooperate more. It may take longer to understand ideals, but it does not mean there is no development. Habituation, exemplification and flexible communication can help young people gradually learn and internalize Hindu religious values.



The second challenge is the emotional and behavioral volatility of some children with special needs. This could include mood swings, irritability, crying spells, difficulties concentrating or avoiding certain activities. These conditions could hinder the flow of communication. Younger people could find it difficult to express their emotions and needs orally or socially. Teachers must be patient, flexible, individualized and change their communication strategies. A humanistic approach is important because children need acceptance even if they learn and interact differently [16].

Cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social, familial and spiritual experiences vary, which means that teachers are unable to have a one-size fits-all approach to communication with every child. Communication, therefore, must be adaptable. The results show that effective communication is based on the ability of educators to detect children's readiness. Teachers have to be able to know when to explain, when to repeat, when to give a specific example, when to give extra time and when to give individual support.

Insufficient consistency of communication between educational institutions and guardians. Another barrier is the consistency of the communication between the school and the family. Consistency of experience is how you add value. If the habits are not reinforced at home, the process of internalization may be slower. Therefore, the relationship between teachers and parents is not just an administrative improvement but a necessary part of value education. First, the children come to understand better the basic concepts of the Hindu religion. It is not so much the power of expressing abstract religious notions that tests the children's understanding as it is their capability to recognize and respond to values in concrete situations. Educators construct educational experiences using stories, dramatization, imagery, songs, talks, and play that are appropriate for the developmental stages of children. A greater understanding is then turned into action.

Children start learning to share, to help other children, to say sorry, to show love, to respect other people, to keep things clean and to participate in religion. This legislation is not to be seen as an immediate educational outcome. Values are formed via repetition, experience, observation and continued involvement. Therefore, face-to-face interaction remains an important channel to link information and behavior. A conversation of love and encouragement gives youngsters a sense of value. Children have the opportunity to express their ideas, share their feelings, ask for help and interact with their peers. A setting that integrates ordinarily functioning kids with special needs kids creates more social tolerance and compassion. Children realize that people are capable of growth and behaving differently, but they still need the same respect. This philosophy expresses the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, considering mankind as one family [17].

Additionally, the effective learning environment can be developed through creating humanist atmosphere in the classroom. Religious beliefs are not merely ritualistic; they are embedded in the way teachers talk, teach, support, mediate disagreements, and relate to students. Warm interpersonal contact creates an affectionate, accepting school culture. Religious concepts are not just taught to children, they are learned throughout their daily social interactions [18].

The results suggest a strong relationship between teacher-child interpersonal interactions and Hindu philosophies. Tat Twam Asi opens the way for compassion and tolerance. Teachers regard each kid as a person who is entitled to respect, attention, understanding and support suited to his or her special qualities. Tri Kaya Parisudha is the foundation of Thought, Word and Deed. The benefit is evident when educators' speech matches the actions they demonstrate. Tri Hita Karana is a philosophy that guides how one should maintain harmonies amongst human beings, between humans and God and with environment. These principles are reflected in religious activities, mutual respect in interpersonal relationships, and responsibility for the environment. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam extends the view of communication thru the recognition that each person is part of a larger human family. In inclusive education this principle is realized in the admission of pupils with different traits. The combination of these characteristics provides an ethical, spiritual, cultural and pedagogical essence to interpersonal relationship in Hindu education.

The data together imply that teacher-child interpersonal communication is a coherent system, consisting of verbal, nonverbal, persuasive and collaborative communication with parents. These forms do not exist in isolation but mutually strengthen one another in the maintenance of Hindu religious values and moral integrity. Based on the full data, the research proposes the Transformative Religious Interpersonal Communication Theory. The hypothesis is that interpersonal communication such as transparency, empathy, support, recognition of children, spiritual exemplification, religious practice, and ongoing familial cooperation can change children's understanding of Hindu religious principles into more ingrained religious conduct.

The framework consists of the six connected aspects below. First, communicative openness at first consists on fostering interactions, giving children space to share their thoughts, feelings, experiences and needs. Secondly, empathy and acceptance refer to the ability of teachers to see children in their particular developmental characteristics, without comparisons or bias. Third, spiritual modeling is when instructors consistently demonstrate behavior consistent



with Hindu values, providing youngsters with concrete models to follow thru nonverbal clues. Fourth, religious habituation means that values are sustained thru religious practices and daily behavior till they are internalized. Fifth, interpersonal reinforcement is the support, recognition, encouragement, and constructive criticism that reinforce conduct that is consistent with one's values. Sixth, family cooperation is the ongoing interaction and mutual accommodation between schools and families, in which the children's experiences of values are always linked across contexts .

These six aspects are at work across five phases of value transformation: initiation, significance creation, internal assimilation, habituation, and execution. The introduction takes place when educators express ideals in simple language and concrete experiences. Children construct meaning by relating messages to their daily experiences. Internalization occurs when values are accepted within relationships characterized by safety and love. Habituation is the result of frequent exposure, observational learning and positive reward.

The integration of Hindu religious values in the classroom develops the the daily behavior of students influenced by the values taught by the teachers. This approach is maintained by transparent, compassionate, and inclusive interpersonal conversation, supported by educator exemplification and regular practice. The use of Tri Kaya Parisudha can be shown when young people begin to grow good thinking, speak respectfully, apologize, show affection, and do positive things. Tat Twam Asi is manifested in giving, helping companions, appreciating difference, not mocking others, and empathizing with others.

Children are involved in prayer and worship, respect for teachers and peers, and their habits of cleanliness and caring for the environment are a reflection of the Tri Hita Karana. Thus, the practice of values is not limited to children's ability to understand or express religious concepts, but is demonstrated by their ability to live out such doctrines. The process starts from presentation and interpretation, internalization and habituation, and ends with strengthening understanding of Hindu religious concepts, attitudes, good behavior and moral character.

The idea demonstrates that interpersonal communication is not only about successful delivery of messages. Messages in social interaction transform from knowledge to meaning, from meaning to value, from valuation to routine, and from routine to action. Thus, the novelty of the research can be formulated at three levels. The expansion widens the domain of Hindu communication studies. Hindu communication is to be considered not only about preaching, counseling or religious discourse in society, but also in the field of early childhood education. From this perspective, communication is regarded as an ethical activity, connecting spiritual, humanitarian and educational dimensions.

4. CONCLUSION

This research shows that the interpersonal communication between teachers and students in the Hindu Preschool in Denpasar is a whole, conversational, humanistic, spiritual, and transforming experience. Communication is not only a way of conveying educational contents but also of creating emotional relationships, mutual understanding, habituation and application of Hindu religious beliefs. The communication modes described are verbal communication, nonverbal communication, persuasive communication and collaboration between educators and parents. Oral communication assists children in learning thru simple language, talk, stories, questions and directions. Non-verbal communication

Communication is strengthened by facial expressions, eye contact, posture, gestures, spatial proximity and behavioral examples. Persuasive communication increases children's awareness thru invitations, dialog, motivation, modeling, positive reinforcement and habituation, and avoids undue pressure. The cooperation of teachers and parents helps to keep the shared value experiences in the school and home environments. The effect of communication is shown in the growing awareness of the principles of Hindu religion, the cultivation of the application of values in daily activities, more positive social and emotional attitudes, and the development of a religious and humanistic educational environment. The key finding is that value change occurs as a consequence of interpersonal interactions. Hindu religious concepts are not just knowledge learned by youths but they are developed in phases of acknowledgment, understanding, assimilation, habituation and application

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researchers would like to express deep sincerely gratitude to all lecturers of Universitas Hindu Negeri I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar who have strongly supported during conducting this study. Moreover, the researchers also would like to express high appreciation to all participants of this study for all information given during the study.



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