

Study on the Application of Tolerance and Religious Harmony in Primary School

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Article Info

Article history:

Received November 15, 2025

Accepted December 20, 2025

Published December 24, 2025

Keywords:

Character Education;

Pluralism;

Primary Education;

Religious Harmony;

Religious Tolerance.

ABSTRACT

Indonesia is a country with a high diversity of religions and local beliefs, making tolerance an absolute requirement for maintaining social stability from ideological and physical conflict. However, the challenges of modernization often test how these values of tolerance are internalized by the younger generation amidst the free flow of information. This study aims to analyze the perspectives and understanding of the millennial generation regarding the practice of interfaith tolerance in everyday life. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Data was collected through field observations and in-depth interviews with millennial respondents. Data analysis techniques were carried out using the Miles and Hubberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation (data display), and verification or drawing conclusions. The findings indicate that millennials have a very positive and open view of interfaith harmony. Respondents tend to separate theological domains from social interactions, where they consider religion as an individual's right to privacy that should not hinder social cooperation. They are not affected by differences in belief in building professional or personal relationships. Practically, this study provides policymakers and educational institutions with an understanding that the narrative of religious moderation has been well-received by millennials, which can become important social capital in maintaining national integration in the future.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a nation rich in diverse ethnicities, cultures, traditions, and faiths. This diversity compels Indonesia to highly regard the principles of unity and national cohesion (Rahman et al., 2020). Indonesia is neither an atheist or secular nation; rather, it embodies a religious sovereignty defined by the distinct traits and originality of each religion, which may potentially lead to conflict. Indonesia currently hosts a diverse array of religions, including Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Catholicism, and Confucianism (Hakim & Darajat, 2023).

Indonesia is recognized as the nation with the biggest Muslim population globally, with around 87% of its inhabitants practicing Islam. Furthermore, substantial populations of Protestant and Catholic Christians, alongside Hindus, Buddhists, and Confucians, each possess distinct traditions and characteristics (Mashad, 2020). This diversity not only illustrates variations in views but also demonstrates the capacity of the Indonesian populace to cohabit despite substantial disparities (Huda, 2021).

Nonetheless, historical evidence indicates that religious variety frequently incites strife. Concrete instances of prevailing issues, such as bigotry and opposition to the establishment of places of worship, exemplify the challenges encountered. This indicates that despite the Pancasila ideals highlighting the significance of mutual respect, a disparity persists in the comprehension and implementation of religious tolerance (Arnan, 2024).

Numerous prior studies have examined religious tolerance in Indonesia. Research by Urrozi (2019) underscores the significance of fundamental social institutions in addressing this diversity. Tolerance encompasses not just mutual respect for divergent opinions but also fosters a harmonious environment where individuals can practice their beliefs without fear or discrimination (Urrozi, 2019). Article 29, paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution safeguards the right of all citizens to practice religion and worship according to their convictions.

Nonetheless, significant issues remain to be addressed. Numerous instances of bigotry and discord within religious communities indicate that the comprehension of tolerance requires enhancement. The opposition of specific groups to the establishment of places of worship frequently generates community friction (Haga et al., 2022). This contradicts the principles of Pancasila, which emphasize the significance of mutual respect and appreciation (Tarmizi Taher, 1998). Consequently, prioritizing education on tolerance and concord among religious communities is essential for fostering a peaceful society.

Conversely, education significantly contributes to cultivating mutual respect throughout the younger generation. Through religious education encompassing diverse Pancasila beliefs, the younger generation can be instilled with an appreciation for differences and an understanding of the principles of oneness in communal life.

This project will examine interreligious tolerance and propose tangible solutions to address current issues. It is anticipated that communication among religious devotees and social activities involving diverse groups will foster a greater understanding between followers of different faiths. Moreover, social activities encompassing all societal strata might enhance a sense of cohesion and solidarity (Nazmudin, 2024).

This study aims to thoroughly examine the tolerance among religious communities in Indonesia, elucidate the challenges encountered in fostering harmony, propose practical solutions via education and social dialogue, and motivate all stakeholders, including government and community members, to enhance awareness of the significance of tolerance (Astafi et al., 2024).

This paper aims to enhance mutual knowledge of the significant significance of tolerance among many religions as a foundation for fostering a peaceful and harmonious

educational environment. By comprehending and using the ideas of Pancasila in everyday practices, Indonesia has the capacity to serve as a model for other nations about interreligious respect (Iriany, 2014). The active involvement of the entire youth demographic is anticipated to foster an environment where individuals can freely practice their beliefs without fear or discrimination (Husnunnadia & Slam, 2021). The objective of this research is to provide an overview of the existing situation and to promote tangible action towards fostering a more inclusive and harmonious youth generation.

2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a narrative approach. The narrative approach was chosen to capture and understand individual experiences through students' stories or narratives regarding their social interactions in the school environment. With this method, researchers can explore in depth how the values of religious tolerance and harmony are internalized and practiced by research subjects in their daily lives. Research Location and Subjects: The research was conducted at Primary School Karya Unggang KM 28. The research subjects (informants) were selected using a purposive sampling technique, consisting of: (1) a Grade 4 teacher, as a key informant who directly observed the students' character development and interactions. (2) Grade 4 students, as the main subjects, provided narratives about their experiences interacting with peers from different religious backgrounds.

Data Collection Techniques: Data were collected using three main techniques to ensure data validity (triangulation):

1. Participatory Observation: Researchers conducted direct observations of students' behavior, attitudes, and interaction patterns in the school environment, both in the classroom and during recess.
2. In-depth Interviews: Conducted in both structured and unstructured ways. Structured interviews are used to gather baseline data, while unstructured interviews are used to delve deeper into students' subjective perceptions, feelings, and experiences regarding diversity.
3. Documentation: Collecting supporting data in the form of school profiles, school policies regarding tolerance, and photographs of relevant activities.

Data Analysis Techniques: The data obtained were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes the following steps:

1. Data Reduction: Simplifying, classifying, and removing irrelevant data to focus on the themes of tolerance and harmony.
2. Data Display: Presenting organized data in narrative or matrix form to facilitate understanding of patterns.
3. Verification and Conclusion Drawing: Reviewing the data to draw credible conclusions regarding the implementation of tolerance in the school.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Tolerance is the capacity to acknowledge and appreciate the fundamental characteristics, convictions, and actions of others. In Islamic religious literature, tolerance is referred to as *tasamuh*, which denotes the disposition of recognizing, permitting, or accommodating perspectives that differ from one's own. Tolerance is characterized as an attitude that permits the coexistence of differing viewpoints, beliefs, cultures, and behaviors of others. Tolerance encompasses appreciation for the pluralism present among fourth-grade elementary school kids. These perspectives on tolerance culminate in the assertion that tolerance embodies an attitude of mutual respect and acknowledgment of the diversity among students.

The diversity inherent in Indonesia enables pupils to coexist harmoniously amidst differences. Nonetheless, none of them constitute an impediment, much less a threat to the integrity of Indonesia. The disparities present within the educational environment serve to strengthen the fabric of the nation and state. Multiculturalism is not a novel subject of discussion. The significance of understanding diversity is demonstrated by the incorporation of multicultural education into the educational framework. This example significantly contributes to the development of a tolerant character. The use of intercultural education in curricula will foster tolerance in individuals from a young age.

The facets of Tolerance are categorized into three components, specifically: Peace comprises Care, Fearlessness, and Love. Secondly, Respect for Differences and Individuals, which includes mutual respect, acknowledgment of others' differences, and self-respect. Thirdly, Awareness, encompassing appreciation for others' compassion, openness, receptivity, and comfort in life and with others.

The aforementioned components of tolerance delineate the behaviors an individual may exhibit to achieve a condition of tolerance. The pursuit of peace necessitates a shared care for humanity, alleviating our fears regarding our convictions, and fostering love among individuals. These behaviors will engender a sense of tranquility in individuals.

Secondly, the principle of honoring differences and persons can be achieved by fostering mutual respect, acknowledging the inherent variations among humans, and cultivating self-respect. By engaging in these actions, it is posited that the essence of appreciating diversity and individuality will be effectively realized.

Third, the dimension of awareness can be cultivated by acknowledging the benevolence of others, specifically by recalling the kindness they have extended to us; this openness among individuals can prevent negative feelings. A receptive attitude is cultivated by consistently responding to feedback and criticism from others. A comfortable disposition in life is achieved through gratitude for one's possessions rather than envy of others. A comfortable demeanor with others is fostered by engaging socially with all individuals without discrimination. These behaviors are said to enhance awareness in promoting the values of tolerance. The findings from interviews conducted with various students indicate that their sense of tolerance often diverges from the

expected expression of such values among students. The aberrant perceptions exhibited by kids might be shaped by radical beliefs that infiltrate and impact their mindset.



Figure 1. Explaining the Problem of Tolerance and Religious Harmony

The prevailing perception of tolerance indicates a favorable response. The majority of responders predominantly expressed strong agreement on all facets of the topics posed. The comprehension of tolerance indicates that its realization precedes its manifestation through actions. The comprehension of tolerance is essential for every individual, particularly for fourth-grade kids. The educational setting is diverse and multicultural.

The disparities present in educational institutions are a subject of study and practice that should be comprehended by both students and educators. The comprehension of student tolerance indicates that most pupils grasp many facets of tolerance. This comprehension serves as the foundational capital to implement these facets. While most students' responses indicate a favorable opinion of tolerance, it is important to acknowledge that a minority exhibit intolerance. Despite the smaller percentage of pupils who harbor intolerant views compared to those with a tolerant mindset, this issue must be promptly addressed by the government to mitigate it. Students' interpretation of tolerance occasionally results in their openness to various existing disparities. Tolerance, as previously articulated, is characterized by an attitude of reciprocal respect, mutual acceptance, and appreciation amidst cultural diversity, alongside the freedom of expression and human dignity.

Tolerance is essential in both personal and public spheres, since its ultimate goal is to foster peaceful coexistence among diverse groups of students with varying beliefs, historical origins, cultures, languages, and identities. This phrase indicates that the various disparities among students necessitate an open-minded approach to comprehending the current situation. To cultivate a comfortable, safe, and tranquil setting, it is essential to consider elements that introduce a refreshing ambiance inside the educational environment. Religious individuals must endeavor to foster tolerance to ensure social stability, thereby preventing ideological and physical conflicts among adherents of many faiths.



Figure 2. observation and interview sites

There exist two forms of religious tolerance: firstly, passive religious tolerance, characterized by the acceptance of differences as a factual reality. Secondly, active religious tolerance refers to the engagement with others among differences and diversity. The anticipated form of tolerance to be cultivated among students is active tolerance. The acceptance of tolerance is demonstrated via tangible acts within the school environment that foster effective collaboration among individuals of different faiths. Cooperative endeavors to promote tolerance include engaging in group activities without selecting companions based on shared religion or ethnicity, presenting presents or souvenirs upon returning from travels, encouraging effective communication with peers, extending holiday greetings, among several other initiatives. These are instances of quotidian activities that students may engage in. A tangible manifestation of collaboration is evident in Pecalang activities that uphold order within the school environment. Pecalang was established for religious, social, and cultural purposes, demonstrating that collaborative efforts may be made to organize the school environment collectively.

Discussion

Internalization of the Value of Tasamuh in the School Ecosystem: Research results indicate that the implementation of tolerance at primary school Karya Unggang KM 28 aligns with the concept of tasamuh in Islamic literature. Tolerance here is not simply understood as passive tolerance, but as an active act of respecting differences in beliefs and behavior (Vila et al., 2021). The use of the term tasamuh emphasizes generosity and open-mindedness in interactions. At the elementary school level, this is crucial because it is the initial phase of students' social identity formation. Instilling this value through multicultural education helps students view diversity not as a threat, but as a national treasure that strengthens the nation's integrity.

Analysis of Tolerance Character Aspects: From Peace to Awareness Based on research findings, there are three main pillars that shape tolerant behavior in fourth-grade students:

- Peace Aspect: Emerges through a sense of caring and compassion for others without fear. When students feel safe and loved in their environment, they tend to more easily accept differences.
- Respect for Difference: Findings indicate that students who value themselves tend to more easily respect others. This is a form of positive identity validation within the school environment.
- Awareness: This is the highest stage where students demonstrate openness and gratitude. Concrete practices such as socializing without discrimination and being responsive to criticism demonstrate that a growing awareness of tolerance has begun in most of the study subjects.

Active Tolerance vs. Passive Tolerance: This study highlights a significant shift from passive tolerance to active tolerance. Students not only acknowledge that their friends have different religions, but they also engage in concrete actions. Collaborating on group assignments without favoring fellow students, giving holiday greetings, and participating in maintaining school order (such as the Pecalang model in the local cultural context) are manifestations of active tolerance. These activities create a "space of encounter" that breaks down barriers of religious prejudice from an early age.

Challenges and Caution Against Ideological Infiltration: Although the majority of students demonstrated very positive perceptions, this study found a handful of students who exhibited intolerant tendencies. This is a critical finding that the elementary school environment is not completely sterile from outside influences, including the potential for radical thought that can distort students' mindsets. This misalignment in perception, while small in quantity, requires immediate action from school authorities and educators. Fourth-grade teachers play a strategic role as "gatekeepers" who must foster an understanding that differences are a reality that must be accepted openly, not confronted ideologically or physically.

Implications for Islamic Psychopedagogy: Theoretically, these findings reinforce the urgency of developing a curriculum based on the "affective structure" as found in the Qur'anic narratives (Musa, Yusuf, and Luqman). Students' ability to regulate their emotions when faced with differences reflects mature emotional intelligence. Social stability in schools can only be maintained if education can produce individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also emotionally resilient in facing the plurality of Indonesian society.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of research conducted by fourth-grade students at primary school Karya Unggang, most students showed tolerant perceptions. This is reinforced by data showing that most tolerant perceptions showed strong agreement among respondents. Perception also means students' understanding of tolerance. To practice religious tolerance, students also need to understand the aspects of tolerance itself. The attitudes shown towards religious tolerance are in the good category. It is our common concern that efforts are needed to further improve religious tolerance. We must not allow this attitude of tolerance to disappear among current students. The aspect of cooperation between

religious adherents built by students is in a good category. However, the patterns exhibited by students also need attention from stakeholders. There are figures that show that cooperation between religious adherents is in the negative category, or in this case, there are also those who are indifferent to other religious adherents.

As suggestions, Instilling Values of Tolerance from an Early Age Teachers can provide moral and religious lessons that emphasize the importance of respecting differences in beliefs. For example, through picture stories and fairy tales. Organizing Joint Activities Regardless of Religion Schools can organize joint social or community service activities, such as community service, classroom cleanliness competitions, and national holiday celebrations that involve all students regardless of religion. Encouraging Mutual Respect Teachers and students need to practice interfaith greetings, refrain from mocking other people's religious practices, and respect friends who are praying or fasting. Encouraging Positive Dialogue and Communication Teachers can hold light discussions in class about the differences and similarities between religions so that children learn to speak politely and openly without offending others. Creating a Tolerance Corner at School Schools can create a tolerance corner containing quotes or images with themes of peace, diversity, and harmony so that children become accustomed to these values.

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