



LIFE LESSON IN SCHOOL: EXPLORING TOLERANCE AMONG STUDENTS OF SMP N 1 BONTANG

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Abstract

The problem of tolerance in schools arises due to a lack of understanding of diversity, social, communication difficulties, and injustice in treatment so that the role of education is needed in shaping students who have an attitude of tolerance. The purpose of this study is to explore the level of understanding and practice of tolerance among students. This research is a quantitative study, with data acquisition through the survey method. The data collected will be analyzed descriptively to identify the level of understanding of students' tolerance attitudes in everyday life in the school environment. The results of this study indicate that although students at SMP N 1 Bontang are divided into several classes, and have religious differences, the students have a good level of understanding and practice of tolerance as evidenced by the results of the analysis assessment. This illustrates that the educational efforts and school environment at SMP N 1 Bontang was successful in promoting tolerance among students who have diverse backgrounds.

Keywords: Tolerance; Student; Explore

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Introduction

Merdeka Belajar Program is one of the new policies of the Ministry of Education and Culture which aims to realize an innovative learning process and meet the needs of students. In the independent learning program, there is a concept known as the Pancasila Student Profile which has 7 project themes, namely, Build the Soul and Body, Engineering and Technology to build NKRI, Sustainable Lifestyle, Local Wisdom, Entrepreneurship, and Voice of Democracy. Through this new program, the government expects the development of students' potential to form positive attitudes and characters. Mature attitudes and personalities will foster character in accordance with the goals of character education (Alfansuri et al., 2018). One important aspect of character education is tolerance, which is an attitude and action that respects differences in religion, tribe, ethnicity, and opinions of others who are different from themselves, this aims to strengthen the unity and integrity of the successor of the Indonesian nation.

Tolerance is the act of accepting other individuals' differences without trying to force personal beliefs on them, without imposing negative attitudes because of differences in beliefs, views, or opinions, and without judging someone based on their background, appearance, or habits (Yaumi, 2014). In the context of education, tolerance is very relevant because in the school environment, learners must interact with a variety of peers who come from various backgrounds, including religion, ethnicity, race, and different points of view. Therefore, learners need to have an attitude of tolerance in order to prevent conflicts related to intolerance.

Tolerance conflicts in Indonesia have an increasing trend as evidenced by research data conducted by the SETARA Institute for Democracy and Peace which states that as

many as 24.2% of research subject students fall into the category of passive intolerant students. Meanwhile, some students who fall into the passive intolerant category are also transforming into active intolerant, which is illustrated by the figure of 2.4% in 2016 to 5% in 2023. Likewise, in the exposed category, it increased from 0.3% to 0.6%. The impact of a lack of awareness of tolerance can lead to acts of violence both verbally and non-verbally (Hasani, 2023). This is in line with what UNESCO (2008) stated that indications of intolerance can be many things, including discriminatory behavior, physical and non-physical harassment, intimidation, persecution and bullying and all forms of violence in schools. On that basis, UNESCO requires education to be an ideal place to foster what is now referred to as peace education (Davies, 2008).

The complexity of Indonesian society, which consists of social, cultural and religious diversity that tends to be conservative, demands the urgency of multicultural education in schools. The attitude of tolerance in students can be trained, instilled and developed in the classroom and outside the classroom. Therefore, there needs to be an effort to instill tolerance values in school activities, both intracurricular and extracurricular. It is important to implement tolerant education so that students behave and have a tolerant and inclusive view of the reality of diverse societies, both culture, ethnicity, race, ethnicity, and religion (Mahfud, 2013). So far, the cultivation of tolerance values in schools has not been optimal because it is still limited to knowledge, not accompanied by a process of tolerance awareness among students. Several studies on this topic show that Indonesian education has not adopted or implemented a clear concept of multiculturalism to be taught in schools.

Research in 2011 mentioned that the government did not develop a clear vision for multicultural education that could bind other components in the school cohesively to educate students about multiculturalism (Raihani, 2011). Another study implies that there are no dedicated teachers in teaching multicultural values to students (Hoon, 2013). Research on multicultural entography education for Indonesian students suggests that there are inconsistencies between policies and practices of multicultural education due to the lack of explicit policies and the incompetence of decision-makers and teachers in the field of education (Raihani, 2018).

The previously mentioned studies are very useful as references to explain how multicultural education in Indonesia has been developed and implemented, but still partial in its approach. So that in this research, the researcher chose SMP N 1 Bontang as a research site. SMP N 1 Bontang is one of the leading schools that has the most students in the city of Bontang and consists of a variety of different ethnicities, cultures, religions, and social statuses. This research aims to explore the level of understanding and practice of tolerance among students of SMP N 1 Bontang which has multicultural distinctiveness. The results of this study can be a means of reference, replication, modification, dissemination, and innovation in the implementation of multicultural education strengthening programs among educational institutions. It is also useful for strengthening program implementation guidelines in schools in the future.

Method

This type of research is quantitative research, with data processing through survey methods that follow the procedures and guidelines of Creswell and Clark (Guetterman et al., 2015). Survey research is considered more appropriate when used to quantitatively describe certain aspects of a particular population, whose findings are likely to be generalized to a larger population (Nardi, 2018). In this study, a survey was conducted by collecting data through Google Form and measured using a Likert scale. Likert scale is a method used to measure the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a person or group of people towards social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2016)

Assessment using a Likert scale consisting of four scale indicators, namely "strongly agree (SS)," "agree (S)," "disagree (TS)," and "strongly disagree (STS)," has special measurement rules. For statements that are positive (+), the scoring starts from the highest to the lowest value, which is 4, 3, 2, and 1. Thus, on this scale, "strongly agree (SS)" has a score of 4, "agree (S)" has a score of 3, "disagree (TS)" has a score of 2, and "strongly disagree (STS)" has a score of 1. However, when we are dealing with statements that are negative (-), the scoring order is reversed. Here, the measurement starts from the highest value to the lowest on the scale of "strongly disagree (STS)," which has a score of 4, then "disagree (TS)" with a score of 3, then "agree (S)" with a score of 2, and finally, "strongly agree (SS)" with a score of 1.

The instrument used in this study is the students' tolerance attitude (STA) instrument totaling 25 items of questions developed by (Triyono, 2020) and compiled and modified according to the needs of researchers. The participants in this study were all 9th grade students of SMPN 1 Bontang, totaling 256 students, with 116 males, 140 females, 4 religions (Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism) gathered in 8 classes (9A, 9B, 9C, 9D, 9E, 9F, 9G, 9H). The validity of the instruments used in this study was evaluated through empirical validity. Empirical validity was measured by testing the instrument on 32 respondents who were not included in the main population. The results of the empirical validity analysis were carried out by calculating the correlation coefficient using the Product Moment method, and the results showed that all instrument items were considered valid.

The reliability of the instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha, and a value of 0.983 was obtained. This result indicates a high level of consistency in the instruments used in the study. In analyzing the data collected from the questionnaire regarding the level of students' tolerance attitudes, a rigorous research methodology was employed. The primary approach utilized for data analysis was the descriptive statistical method, which involves systematically calculating various key statistics. These statistics included the mean (average), mode (most frequently occurring value), median (middle value), minimum value (smallest value), maximum value (largest value), standard deviation (a measure of data spread), and the percentage of questionnaire results. Each of these statistical measures played a crucial role in providing a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the tolerance attitudes held by the participating students.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the research findings, a multi-step process was followed. Firstly, the collected questionnaire data were carefully organized and cleaned to eliminate any inconsistencies or errors. Subsequently, the descriptive statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS 23. The mean was calculated to determine the average tolerance attitude among students, while the mode identified the most commonly observed attitude. The median provided insight into the central tendency of the data, and the minimum and maximum values highlighted the range of attitudes expressed.

Furthermore, the standard deviation was computed to quantify the degree of variability or dispersion within the tolerance attitude data. This measure helped assess the consistency or diversity of responses among the surveyed students. Additionally, the percentage of questionnaire results was calculated to present a proportional breakdown of different tolerance attitudes.

This meticulous combination of data analysis techniques and research procedures not only ensured the robustness of the findings but also allowed for a comprehensive portrayal of the spectrum of tolerance attitudes among the student population. The insights gained from this analysis contribute significantly to our understanding of the prevailing attitudes and can serve as a valuable foundation for further research and interventions in the realm of fostering tolerance within educational environments

Result and Discussion

The implementation of research on the level of students' tolerance attitudes by distributing google form links to 256 students, obtained the data listed in Tables 1-3. Based on Table 1, the majority of students, both male and female, tend to show a very agreeable attitude towards tolerance. Although there is a small difference between the two, with the average tolerance attitude of male students 86.1 slightly higher than that of female students 85.7, this difference is not very significant. While the distribution of scores, range of scores, and mode were similar between the two groups, the maximum score for male students of 98 was slightly higher than that of female students of 95. Overall, the data showed that none of the students showed a negative attitude towards tolerance, and the majority of students of both genders showed a willingness to accept differences in a very positive manner.

Table 1 Students' Tolerance Attitude Level Based on Gender

CATEGORY	GENDER	
	Male (n= 123)	Female (n=133)
Strongly Disagree (25-43,75)	0	0
Disagree (43,76-62,5)	0	0
Agree (62,51-81,25)	20	15
Strongly Agree (81,26-100)	103	118
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS		
Mean	86,1	85,7
Modus	84	84
Median	88	87
SD	7	6,6
Minimum Score	65	65
Maximum Score	98	95
Percentage	48	52

Table 2 Students' Tolerance Attitude Level Based on Religion

CATEGORY	RELIGION			
	Islam (n=222)	Christian (n=28)	Catholic (n=4)	Hindu (n=2)
Strongly Disagree (25-43,75)	0	0	0	0
Disagree (43,76-62,5)	0	0	0	0
Agree (62,51-81,25)	28	7	0	0
Strongly Agree (81,26-100)	194	21	4	2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS				
Mean	85,5	84,1	91,3	91
Modus	88	87	89	90
Median	87	91	91	88
SD	6,9	9,6	2,2	1,4
Minimum Score	65	65	89	90
Maximum Score	96	98	94	92
Percentage	86,7	11	1,6	0,8

Table 2 showed that the majority of students from various religions (Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, and Hinduism) have a high level of tolerance, especially in the "Strongly Agree" category with the highest percentage. The average value of tolerance attitude of students of Islam is 85.6, while students of Christianity have an average of 84.1,

students of Catholicism 91.3, and students of Hinduism 91. The highest mode is found in the range of 88 to 90 for all religions. This indicates a similarity in tolerance attitudes among the different religions in this study, with the majority of students agreeing or strongly agreeing towards tolerance.

In Table 3, we know that the tolerance attitude of students from various classes (9A, 9B, 9C, 9D, 9E, 9F, 9G, 9H) tends to be very positive, with the majority of students from each class stating "Strongly Agree" to the statements given. The highest mean was in class 9A with a value of 87.4, while the highest mode was 88. The level of variation in students' tolerance levels was also diverse, with the standard deviation (SD) ranging from 4.3 to 8, indicating differences in the distribution of students' answers across grades. Nonetheless, all classes had the same percentage (12.5%), indicating that a relatively even sample was taken from all classes in this study.

Table 3 Students' Tolerance Attitude Level Based on Class

CATEGORY	CLASS							
	9A (n=32)	9B (n=32)	9C (n=32)	9D (n=32)	9E (n=32)	9F (n=32)	9G (n=32)	9H (n=32)
Strongly Disagree (25-43,75)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree (43,76-62,5)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agree (62,51-81,25)	5	7	3	4	2	4	6	4
Strongly Agree (81,26-100)	27	25	29	28	30	28	26	28
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS								
Mean	87,4	84,1	86,8	87	87,5	86,3	84,6	85,1
Modus	88	88	88	88	84	87	89	88
Median	88,5	86,5	86,8	88	87,5	88	87	87,5
SD	6,4	7,1	4,9	5,3	4,3	6,8	8	7,6
Minimum Score	70	65	76	74	75	68	66	65
Maximum Score	98	94	98	96	96	94	96	95
Percentage	12,5	12,5	12,5	12,5	12,5	12,5	12,5	12,5

The results of a survey conducted on 256 students at SMP N 1 Bontang show that students at SMP N 1 Bontang have a good level of understanding and practice of tolerance. Students are more accepting of differences in culture, religion and other backgrounds, and are able to have positive interactions with different friends. This improvement creates a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment, which has the potential to shape students' character and their contribution in creating a more harmonious society in the future. This supports the results of research which explains that tolerance is important to be developed and demonstrated by individuals and society, especially in the face of increasing diversity in contemporary democracies (Hjerm et al., 2020).

This finding has significance in the context of education, as increased tolerance among students shows the positive impact of the results of the educational process. For example, a study published in the Oxford Academic journal found that education can further ethnic tolerance, strengthening findings in prior research and supporting the hypothesis that education plays a role in promoting tolerance (Adman & Gschwind, 2023). Another study in the Sage Journals discusses the role of tolerance education in promoting a culture of peace and acceptance of others for well-being and diversity management (Sakallı et al.,

2021). Additionally, a study that higher education may increase tolerance on specific issues, and some studies have shown that one of the major creators of tolerance is higher education (Webb-Halpern, 2003). These findings suggest that education can have a positive impact on tolerance, highlighting the significance of the educational process in promoting increased tolerance among students. Tolerance is an individual quality that enables them to appreciate differences in the personal qualities of others. It opens the door for them to accept new views and beliefs, and respect others regardless of ethnicity, gender, appearance, culture or beliefs (Aeni, 2014). While these findings are robust, it is important to consider other factors outside of school that may have contributed to these changes, such as the influence of family and friends outside of school.

The implication of this research is that education that encourages tolerance should be given more attention in schools. Curricula that integrate tolerance values and character education programs can help improve the understanding and practice of tolerance among students. However, this study also has limitations, such as focusing on only one school. Therefore, future research can expand the sample and use more comprehensive methods to explore the development of tolerance in schools and consider the influence of other factors, such as family, environment and mass media. Future research could also look at the long-term impact of tolerance education on students' lives in society.

Conclusion

The findings of this exploration study of level tolerance, indicate that students at SMP N 1 Bontang have a good level of understanding and practice of tolerance. The results show the important role of schools in shaping students' social attitudes and creating an inclusive learning environment. The implication of the findings show that promotes tolerance education's need more attention in schools, by integrating tolerance values in the curriculum and character education programs. The study also suggests that future research needs to include other variables that influence students' tolerance and look at the long-term impact of tolerance education on students' lives in society. This conclusion makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the importance of education in creating a more inclusive and harmonious society.

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Concept – HS, Design – HS, LA; Instrumen MH, EI; Resources – HS; Materials – HS.; Data Collection and/or Processing – HS, LA; Analysis and/or Interpretation – HS, NA; Literature Search – HS, LA, MH, EI, NA; Writing – HS; Critical Reviews – MH, EI, NA, LA.

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