Early Childhood Tolerance in Minority Areas: A Foundation for Facing Issues of Intolerance in Indonesia

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received July 08, 2023
Accepted October 23, 2023
Available online December 25, 2023

Kata Kunci:
Toleransi, Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Daerah Minoritas

Keywords:
Tolerance, Early Childhood Education, Minority Area

ABSTRACT

Cases of intolerance, fanaticism, radicalism, and terrorism in Indonesia still occur frequently, causing commotion. Amid the commotion of this issue, it is essential to take preventive measures from an early age. This research aims to analyze tolerance implementation from an early age in minority areas in early childhood education institutions. This research method uses qualitative field research with a case study approach. Data collection techniques used passive participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The analysis used was thematic analysis with validity testing in the form of triangulation of sources and techniques. This research shows that Gajahwong School implements tolerance by starting with initial, core, and closing activities. The values of tolerance developed are mutual respect, care, respect for friends’ opinions, and cooperation between children. The impact of tolerance from an early age at Gajahwong School provides a foundation for children to tolerate each other, improving human, family, and environmental resources. The findings of this research contribute in the form of knowledge and an overview of the implementation of tolerance from an early age in dealing with radicalism in Indonesia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika which consists of various cultures, races, ethnicities, and religions, social and so on. Historically, Indonesia is the country with the largest island in the world (Agustiningsih et al., 2017; Mahpud, 2010). This means that Indonesian society is pluralistic. So it is important that tolerance is taught from an early age with a variety of learning methods (Aditya et al., 2022; Cahyaningrum et al., 2017; Dwiningrum, 2019; Stephens et al., 2018; Stephens & Umland, 2011). Tolerance in early childhood education is an important element to encourage children to increase their creative potential (Tegano et al., 2006). Tolerance and social justice in children can be achieved by teaching them...
the differences in skin color on their hands (Zakin, 2012). Teachers in implementing tolerance in early childhood in Indonesia by example, habituation, storytelling, use of media, games, and giving directions (Pitaloka et al., 2021). Tolerance in early childhood education can be done using folklore-based big book media (Purnamasari & Wuryandani, 2019).

Various cases of intolerance often occur in Indonesia. Recently there was destruction and burning of a mosque in West Kalimantan by a group acting in the name of the Siantang Islamic Community Alliance (Persada, 2021). Indonesia is currently still facing serious challenges in the form of intolerance, fanaticism, radicalism and terrorism. There is a group who wants Indonesia to be one color (Wibowo, 2021b, 2021a). Based on the results of the PPIM UIN Jakarta survey, 30.16% of students have a low tolerance attitude. This low tolerance is often found on religious college campuses compared to official universities, state and private campuses (Kurnia & Mukhlis, 2023; Sani, 2021). Moreover, the problem in minority areas is that there are differences in unequal or unfair treatment between one community and another (Arifin, 2019; Rahim, 2012). A minority area is a non-dominant group of individuals with certain national, religious or linguistic characteristics that are different from the majority of the population (Rahim, 2012). However, minority communities, especially those of non-Muslim religions, prioritize education rather than religious identity (Arifin, 2019).

The theory in this research uses the theory developed by Emmanuel Levinas, facial appearance theory (Bertens, 2001). “face” is not meant to be related to the physical/empirical, but as another person. That is, lips, nose, handsome, young and so on are not important. This is because the face declares itself as a “visage significant” or the face has direct meaning, there is no middleman. The face is an ethical event, if it greets me then I should not stay or be indifferent. Then, practice justice and kindness (Djuniasih & Kosasih, 2019; Rahmatawati & Harmanto, 2020). Facial appearance can mean that our face can be seen by other people/fellow humans. So that other people can articulate the meaning of our face with multiple perspectives. Therefore, harmony in life needs to be instilled in order to create mutual tolerance between people without distinguishing between religion, ethnicity, race and so on. This is certainly different from what the researchers studied, namely institutions located in minority areas, namely the Gajahwong School. Gajahwong School is an educational institution that was formed to facilitate underprivileged children to receive education. Gajahwong School is located in a small alley that fits a pedicab. On average, their livelihoods are scavengers, pedicab drivers and animal husbandry. Problems with sanitation, crime, ensnaring poverty and evictions are common. The various religions adhered to by Ledhok residents do not mean they are not tolerant of each other. Basically, tolerance in education is very important to implement (Drerup, 2019; Marintan Marintan & Priyanti, 2022; Pitaloka et al., 2021; Ratnawati, 2017). Considering tolerance has a positive relationship between distress tolerance, self-compassion and posttrauma (Basharpoor et al., 2020). Apart from that, research from Olena Bartosh et al, explains that multicultural tolerance training for students can provide positive changes (Bartosh et al., 2021).

Previous findings suggest that tolerance in early childhood education is very important (Nadar et al., 2019). Instilling an attitude of tolerance in early childhood through habituation patterns (Kurniasih, Ida, 2021; Marintan Marintan & Priyanti, 2022; Wilyanita et al., 2023). The difference between the research above and the research studied is that the focus of this research study examines the tolerance of young children in minority areas in non-formal institutions. Thus, it is necessary to have a foundation for tolerance education as an effort to prevent intolerance in Indonesia’s future. Early age is the right age to use as a foundation for tolerance education. This means that children easily remember the learning process both visually, audio and audio-visually. This research certainly has urgency in early childhood as an effort to conduct a comprehensive study, especially with regard to the general description of early childhood education at Gajahwong School, the tolerance that is carried out at Gajahwong School, and what tolerance is taught, as well as the impact of tolerance that occurs on children. Gajahwong School early age. This research aims to analyze early childhood tolerance in minority areas, a foundation for facing issues of intolerance in Indonesia.

2. METHOD

This research method uses qualitative field research and library research with a case study approach at the Gajahwong School, Yogyakarta City. The data source for this research is field data at Gajahwong School consisting of: principal, educators, parents and students. The research data source was determined by saturated sampling. Then the research object was determined by referring to the research focus, namely: tolerance of early childhood education. For each research subject, data on tolerance that occurred at Gajahwong School was explored. The parent’s subject is to dig up data to synchronize the data to see if there are similarities or differences in what the child does at home or at school. Meanwhile, the data source is literature in the form of book data and relevant research. This research data collection technique
uses passive participant observation techniques, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. In collecting research data, the researcher carried out observations first using passive participant observation, where the researcher came directly to the research location without being involved in learning activities. Meanwhile, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews in the form of interviewing educators, parents and students at Gajahwong School. In the documentation, researchers photographed the activities carried out by students and educators. The draft research interview questions can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. The Interview Guidelines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>What is the environmental condition of the Gajahwong school community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Does the community adhere to various religions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>What about the majority of community environmental work at Gajahwong School?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>How tolerant is the community environment at Gajahwong School?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>What is the history of the founding of Gajahwong School?</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Why this school is named Gajahwong School?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Do students at Gajahwong schools adhere to various religions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Do early childhood students (root class 3-5 years) and grass class (5-7 years) adhere to various religions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Why is 3-5 years old called the root class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Why 5-7 year olds are called grass class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>How to apply tolerance in roots class and grass class?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>What kind of tolerance do children have in the roots class and the grass class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>What are the obstacles in applying tolerances in the roots class and grass class?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>How do facilitators overcome obstacles in implementing tolerance in root and grassroots classes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>What impact would there be if the root class and grass class were taught tolerance from an early age?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Research data analysis uses thematic analysis developed by (Louis et al., 2018). This thematic analysis consists of understanding the data, compiling codes, and looking for themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Meanwhile, testing the validity of this research data uses triangulation of sources and techniques. The analysis can be seen clearly in Figure 1. Figure 1 explains that analyzing this research begins with collecting data in the field, then data coding is carried out to select which data fits the theme or not. After the data is selected according to the theme, the results of the data are then narrated. The thematic analysis design is presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. The Thematic Analysis**

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Gajahwong School is located at Ledhok Timoho RT 50 RW 05 Balirejo. Mujamuju, Umbulharjo, Yogyakarta. This location is a riverbank area in the city of Yogyakarta with a lower middle class population. This is characterized by the residents' work as pedicab drivers and picking up second-hand goods. Basically, the Gajahwong school has a strategic location behind the Ganesha Timoho housing complex or behind the APMD (Village Community Development Academy) High School, but the entrance to the Gajahwong school can only accommodate two-wheeled vehicles and trishaws. The results of interviews with student parents show that the Ledhok area itself is classified as urban poor. Where the livelihoods of residents are varied, such as pedicab drivers, scavengers, domestic workers, construction workers, factory workers, and street food vendors. The educational background of the residents in Ledhok has mostly had formal education up
to elementary school and some have even had no formal education at all. Gajahwong School was founded in 2009 as an effort to break the chain of poverty in the Ledhok area through free or free education. The resident who pioneered this education was named Faiz Fakhrudin. He and his fellow administrators hope that by establishing this school, children will not be busking on the street or scavenging, who should be of age to gain knowledge. He believes that children should get education in their world, namely playing. Since he joined TAABAH (Underflow Advocacy Team) he has been active in the fields of education and humanity and then took the initiative to establish an educational institution. As per the results of an interview with Faiz Fakhrudin, Gajahwong school started with a room measuring 7x6 meters which was built independently with hard work and mutual cooperation, such as slowly taking sand to make bricks for the walls of the room.

Year after year, the Gajahwong school experienced improvements until finally in 2017 the Gajahwong school had 2 classrooms that could be used for learning. The wall design is filled with children's work in the form of finger painting directly on the wall and several creations from used items. Learning at Gajahwong School is held Monday-Friday starting at 08.00 WIB until 11.00 WIB. Then, Saturday classes are used for parent meetings. The educators at Gajahwong School are volunteers from various regions in Yogyakarta. In terms of curriculum, Gajahwong schools have a special curriculum which contains diversity, local wisdom, love of the environment or nature, and the community environment. Classes at Gajahwong School are divided into two classes, namely: the root class and the grass class. Currently, Gajahwong School has four programs, namely: raising waste donations, organic gardens, cooperatives, resource center campaigns and goat farming. Currently the location of the goat farm has been moved to Kaliurang because the land used was taken by the owner. Learning at Gajahwong School as observed is divided into four activities, namely: initial activities, core activities, breaks and final activities. First, the initial learning activities at Gajahwong School, both grass and root classes, start at 08.00 WIB. Initial learning activities begin with singing, movement and songs, as well as playing games. The opening activity lasted approximately 60 minutes. After that, continue praying to start the activity. Initial activities are presented in Figure 2.

Second, core activities at Gajahwong School start at 09.00 WIB, where educators hold discussions with children to create several agreements and mechanisms for learning activities. Before carrying out the core activities, the educator first asks the children about the day, date, month and year as in Figure 3. The children then write the letters one by one according to the child’s wishes on the board provided by the educator. The core activities at Gajahwong School include: projects, areas, motorbikes, and trips. The introduction of the day, date, month and year is presented in Figure 3.
In introducing tolerance, the educator explains using the project method. This project can be done by making a Christmas tree together. As the results of interviews with educators show, the introduction of tolerance in early childhood education at Gajahwong schools involves carrying out activities for all religions by adjusting when the big holidays or commemorations of each religion are. For example, at Christmas celebrations, children make Christmas trees. Eid al-Fitr, children and educators carry out halal bi halal (Interview, 23 September 2022). The core activities at Gajahwong school take place within 60 minutes.

Third, rest at Gajahwong school starts at 10.00 WIB. This break is used by children to eat together. As usual, before eating the children pray together using Indonesian. Children are free to play when they have finished eating until 10.15 WIB. Fourth, the last activity is closing. In this final activity, the educator conducts recalling to the children about today's activities and explains what values the children have obtained. Recalling is implemented by educators by asking the children again. When the children feel they understand enough, the educator then closes the activity with a prayer together.

Tolerance implemented at Gajahwong School includes: mutual respect, care, respect for friends' opinions, and cooperation between children. First, the attitude of mutual respect at Gajahwong School can be seen during learning activities, where when children explain their work drawings on the wall, other friends pay close attention. The children's activities for presenting their work are presented in Figure 4.

![Figure 4. The Children Presenting Their Work](image)

Mutual respect can also be seen when children celebrate the holidays of each religion. For example: in December there is a Christmas tree making activity. In this activity, children participate directly regardless of religious background. Considering that students at Gajahwong School have various religious backgrounds. In addition, when Eid al-Fitr arrives, the children and educators carry out halal bihalal activities together in both root and grass class classes. This shows that the children at Gajahwong school have an attitude of mutual respect between students. Second, the caring attitude at Gajahwong School carried out by children is in the form of sharing fairly every time they eat together. Apart from that, when playing in a group, a group member fell to help him and asked him to take a break and not play together.

Third, the attitude of respecting friends' opinions can be seen when children express opinions about a day, month and year by educators. Every time a child answers, the other children listen carefully. If the opinion is not appropriate, the educator will tell you the truth. Apart from that, when the children explained their work on the wall, the other children listened carefully and paid attention until there was a question and answer session. During the question and answer session, each child may ask more than one question. While the child is explaining and asking questions, the educator is tasked with supervising the children and not interfering with the child’s opinions. Whatever is conveyed by children is part of the child’s creative knowledge. Fourth, the student’s cooperative attitude can be seen during the Christian Christmas celebration, where Gajahwong school carried out a Christmas tree making project. In making a Christmas tree, children work together to make a Christmas tree. As per the results of interviews with educators, such activities are routine activities carried out at Gajahwong schools as an effort to increase children’s cooperative attitudes.

The impact of tolerance on early childhood education consists of: providing a foundation for children to tolerate each other, improving human, family and environmental resources. First, the foundation of tolerance for children is an important thing that must be instilled from an early age, especially as Indonesia is a country with diverse religions and cultures. So that by being tolerant of each other from an early age, children will strengthen the unity and integrity of the country.
Tolerance in early childhood education at Gajahwong School has been carried out well. This shows that students can respect each other, care for each other, respect the opinions of friends, and collaborate with children. This is in line with the third principle of Pancasila, namely: the unity of Indonesia, where mutual respect in the Indonesian state is very much needed so that it remains well maintained between religious communities (Rosidin & Aeni, 2017; Ubaiddillah & Efendi, 2022). The findings of this research provide an illustration that the development of tolerance that occurs in Indonesia is instilled from an early age. Early age is the right age to lay the foundation so that later there will be a generation that respects each other, cares for each other, and so on. This early age is indeed the right time to be aware of tolerance towards anyone (Marwany et al., 2022; Nadar et al., 2019; Saugi et al., 2022). The implementation of tolerance at Gajahwong School is carried out in the classroom with various activities, including: learning activities starting with initial activities, core activities, breaks and closing activities. This activity is in line with Tahir et al.'s research findings that instilling tolerance in schools can be carried out in the classroom and outside the classroom by maintaining local wisdom characters such as mutual ajinang (mutual respect), tertip-terpi (orderly), solah peratek (kind), soloh (tolerance), bemerton (brotherhood), ra’i (empathy) (Tahir et al., 2023). Remembering this character is a reflection of behavior in everyday life (Marinta Marintan & Priyanti, 2022; Purnamasari & Wuryandani, 2019). Moreover, the local character in implementing tolerance varies from region to region (Purna, 2016). Therefore, learning from an early age is very necessary in teaching and maintaining tolerance from an early age.

Learning activities carried out at Gajahwong School are carried out with stories, project activities and familiarization by educators. Educators in learning at Gajahwong School have the task of accompanying children during learning. So that project or other activities are carried out independently by the child. Tolerance from an early age can be done with fairy tale books and habituation in PAUD institutions (Kurniasih, Ida, 2021; Marwany et al., 2022). Apart from that, telling stories can also instill tolerance from an early age (Aguniasit & Khatima, 2022; Ruiyat et al., 2019). Likewise, Problem Based Learning can improve the character of tolerance with multicultural education (Kurnia & Mukhlis, 2023). This is done by educators, because they believe that if learning is done by the child himself, it will provide a unique experience for the child. However, teachers (educators) can be effective in instilling an attitude of tolerance in children by integrating them into learning (Wilyanita et al., 2023). Of course, there are not only factors from teachers but also factors from other environments in implementing tolerance from an early age. As research findings show at Gajahwong School, the environment and family have an impact on tolerance from an early age. So, there is synergy between parents and teachers to build the character of tolerance from an early age by means of teachers having to adapt to the times so that they can introduce tolerance with quality media (Asih, 2022; Elisa et al., 2019; Rahnang et al., 2022). Moreover, the family environment is very important for choosing a parenting style that is suitable for implementing tolerance, such as democratic parenting can influence the tolerance attitude of early childhood (Marinta Marintan & Priyanti, 2022). Remembering that the family is an effective means of teaching tolerant characters in the form of caring, compassion and empathy (Misahapsari & Stevanus, 2023).

Tolerance in early childhood education is very important (Nadar et al., 2019). Instilling an attitude of tolerance in early childhood through habituation patterns (Kurniasih, Ida, 2021; Marinta Marintan & Priyanti, 2022; Wilyanita et al., 2023). Thus, the implementation of tolerance at an early age at Gajahwong School, which is in fact a minority area, can be implemented well and is supported by various relevant previous studies. The limitations of this research focus on forms of tolerance from an early age and the impacts that occur at an early age, especially in minority areas. It is recommended that further research be studied in more depth by looking for different locations and subjects, not only in minority areas, such as areas with low income levels, areas with strong ethnic culture and so on. So that further research can produce new findings from a new perspective.
4. CONCLUSION

Tolerance in early childhood education at Gajahwong School is implemented by starting with initial activities, this activity, rest and closing activities. The values of tolerance applied at Gajahwong School are mutual respect, care, respect for friends’ opinions and cooperation between children. The impact of implementing tolerance from an early age at Gajahwong School can provide a foundation for tolerance from an early age, improving human, family and environmental resources. The findings of this research have a contribution in the form of knowledge and practice of tolerance from an early age as an effort to prevent current intolerant issues so that future generations can live in mutual respect and respect for each other.

5. REFERENCES


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