


# The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Religious Tolerance Values in Schools

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## Abstract

This study aims to examine the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in instilling the values of religious tolerance in schools. Using qualitative methods and descriptive approaches, data were obtained through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and analysis of related documents. The results showed that Islamic Religious Education teachers play a crucial role as models and facilitators in instilling the value of tolerance through dialogic learning, interfaith activities, and integration of these values in the curriculum. The challenges faced include time constraints, student resistance, and the influence of the external environment. However, in general, students showed positive responses and there was increased interaction between students of different religions, creating a more inclusive school environment. This study concludes that the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers is crucial in shaping attitudes of religious tolerance among students and further policy support and teacher training are needed to overcome the challenges and strengthen the inculcation of religious moderation in schools.

## A. Introduction

Indonesia, as a country with a very rich diversity of religions and cultures, faces a major challenge in maintaining harmony and tolerance between religious communities. Education is one of the most effective means to instill the values of tolerance from an early age (Suri & Chandra, 2021). In this context, Islamic Religious Education teachers have a very vital role. They are not only responsible for teaching Islamic teachings, but also for shaping the character of students to become tolerant individuals who appreciate differences (Pujianti & Nugraha, 2024).

Religious tolerance is an attitude of respect and acceptance of the diversity of religious beliefs and practices in society (Arifin et al., 2019). In an increasingly connected world, tolerance is key to creating peace and preventing conflicts caused by religious differences (Yazdani, 2020). Education that instills these values helps students understand that differences are not barriers to living together in harmony (Fajri, 2024).

According to Umar Hasyim, tolerance is the granting of freedom to fellow human beings or fellow citizens to practice their beliefs or live their lives and determine their own destiny (Matin et al., 2022). As long as in practicing and determining their attitudes it does not violate and does not conflict with the conditions for the creation of order and peace in society.

In this connection, understanding religious tolerance becomes very important because basically religion is able to become a lysator to prevent disintegration in society. Religion gives birth to norms or rules of behavior for its adherents, although basically the source of religion is transcendent values, religion provides the possibility to function as a guideline, and a guide to behavioral patterns and social patterns. This is

where religion can be used as an integrative instrument in society (Hodge et al., 2020; Schnitker et al., 2019).

This study aims to determine: a) the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in instilling the values of religious moderation in schools, b) analyzing the effects of the role of teachers in forming the attitudes of religious moderation in students in schools, c) seeing the impact of religious tolerance education on students in schools.

## B. Research Methods

This is a qualitative study designed to analyze the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in embedding religious tolerance values in schools. Qualitative research, by its nature, involves data collection conducted in the field. The study was conducted at SD IT Semarak Rejang Lebong. Data was collected through in-depth interviews. Question interview arranged based on theory theory related title study. The interview consisted of two key questions. The interview results were analyzed using qualitative data analysis, which involved data collection, data reduction, and data interpretation. This process focused on systematically identifying and organizing the collected data.

## C. Result and Discussion

### Values of Religious Tolerance

Planting comes from the word plant which means the activity of planting. Planting itself is a process, a way, to plant or instill. Values are a set of beliefs or feelings that are believed to be an identity that gives a special character to the state of thought patterns, feelings of attachment and behavior.

Values are interpreted as ethics, derived from the word ethics which means values related to morals. So instilling values is the process of instilling morals. Instilling values is a process of instilling something valuable that is attached to an object (Nurdini, 2023). To realize the planting of religious tolerance values. So education is considered an important instrument because "education" until now is still believed to have a big role in shaping the character of the individuals it educates. Education is a conscious effort to prepare students through guidance, teaching and or training activities for their role in the future (Setiyani et al., 2020).

In its implementation in schools, schools should pay attention to the following steps:

1. Local laws, or school regulations that are applied specifically in a given school, should be created and implemented by schools. Naturally, the law's ban on all types of religious discrimination in schools is one of its key themes. It is believed that by putting this regulation into effect, everyone involved—teachers, principals, staff, administration, and students—will learn to always show respect for those who practice various religions in their community.
2. Schools must actively promote religious or interfaith conversation, which naturally stays under the supervision of the school's teachers, to foster understanding amongst pupils of diverse religious backgrounds from an early age. One of the most successful ways to help kids become accustomed to speaking with people of different religions is through interfaith discourse.
3. The curriculum and textbooks used in schools are another crucial component of putting tolerance instruction into practice. One of the most important requirements for putting this educational technique into practice is a multicultural education curriculum. A multicultural education curriculum is essentially one that incorporates the principles of religious tolerance and diversity. Books, particularly religious texts utilized in classrooms, should also help pupils develop a contemporary and inclusive view of diversity. Since they are the objective of this educational approach, educators play a crucial role in multicultural education. A teacher who understands diversity in a moderate way will be able to teach and model diversity principles for his students.

### The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Religious Tolerance

Islamic religious education has a very strategic role in providing a correct and proper understanding of religion (Taufik, 2020; Ucan & Wright, 2019). Correct understanding of religion from an early age is very important for the development of students' religion. A wrong understanding of religion will result in religious behavior that is deviate.

Since they are the focus of the instructional plan, educators play a crucial role in multicultural education. A teacher who understands diversity in a moderate way will also be able to educate and model diversity principles for pupils in the classroom (Paul-Binyamin & Haj-Yehia, 2019).

Islamic education is based on the Qur'an as the main source, then supported by the Sunnah and then in the development of the era with *ijtihad* (Zubaidillah, 2018). Tolerance is a bridge in the midst of social diversity and it is hoped that the values contained in the Qur'an can be a provision for humans to navigate a pluralistic life. Establishing good social relations between humans is the desire of all levels of society. The creation of peace and harmony between religious communities is a dream for every human being, so that there is no chaos and social inequality between each other. Education is a means of life, especially to face problems in life itself. Therefore, a role model is needed who can be a role model in all aspects of life, namely the Prophet Muhammad. The teachings and instructions contained in the Qur'an is the basis for humans in living life (Zakiah, 2023).

This study examines how Islamic Religious Education instructors contribute to the teaching of religious tolerance in schools using a qualitative method and a descriptive approach. Direct observation during learning activities, in-depth interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers, and document analysis were used to gather data. The study's findings indicate the following key conclusions.

1. **The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Learning:** Islamic Religious Education teachers play a very significant role in instilling the values of religious tolerance. They not only deliver religious material, but also serve as role models in demonstrating attitudes of tolerance inside and outside the classroom. In the learning process, Islamic Religious Education teachers consistently integrate the values of tolerance through discussions, case studies, and stories that encourage interfaith understanding.
2. **Tolerance Teaching Strategies:** Islamic Religious Education teachers use a variety of strategies to instill the values of tolerance. One of the main strategies is the dialogic approach, where students are encouraged to discuss and share views on religious issues. Teachers also organize interfaith activities, such as visits to other places of worship and collaboration on social projects involving students from various religious backgrounds.
3. **Challenges Faced:** Despite efforts, Islamic Religious Education teachers face several challenges in instilling values of tolerance. These challenges include the limited time available in the curriculum for in-depth discussion of tolerance, as well as resistance from some students who already have stereotypical or exclusive views regarding their own religion. In addition, there are also challenges from external factors such as the influence of a social environment that does not support an attitude of tolerance.
4. **Student Responses to Tolerance Education:** In general, students showed positive responses to the tolerance education provided by Islamic Religious Education teachers. Many students stated that they better understood the importance of living peacefully with people of other religions after participating in this learning. They also felt more open to discussing and interacting with friends who have different beliefs (Nurhovivah & Alfiyah, 2024).
5. **Impact on School Environment:** The implementation of tolerance education by Islamic Religious Education teachers has a positive impact on the social climate in schools. There is an increase in interactions between students of different religions, with fewer incidents of discrimination or religious-based conflict reported. Schools become more inclusive, and students show a higher level of respect for religious differences.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The results of this study indicate that Islamic Religious Education teachers have a crucial role in instilling the values of religious tolerance in schools. Despite various challenges, the efforts made by Islamic Religious Education teachers in using inclusive and dialogical teaching strategies have had a positive impact on students' attitudes towards tolerance and interfaith relations. To optimize these results, further support is needed, both in terms of educational policies and teacher training, to overcome existing challenges and strengthen the instillation of tolerance values in schools.

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