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RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION: INTERFAITH TOLERANCE IN A MULTIRELIGIOUS SCHOOL IN KEDIRI

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Abstract

Education plays a crucial role in instilling an attitude of interfaith tolerance; it serves not only as a source of knowledge but also as a means to demonstrate how tolerance can be practiced within the diverse lives of students. Employing a qualitative approach combining three months of field observations, interviews with teachers and religious figures, and documentation of school activities the study analyzed data through reduction, presentation, and conclusion-drawing. The research explores how SDN Besowo 2 fosters a school environment where differences are managed effectively, resulting in a harmonious and inclusive atmosphere. Religious tolerance values are implemented at SDN Besowo 2 through activities designed to teach students the importance of respecting differences; for instance, the practice of communal prayer serves as an effective tool for building awareness and mutual understanding among students. The study reveals that the school's religious activities aim to cultivate a character of interfaith tolerance, and the application of these values in various religious practices has proven highly effective—as evidenced by the participation of the entire student body in religious parades. Beyond receiving religious instruction, students are encouraged to interact directly with peers from different faiths; this not only enriches their experiences but also fosters positive communication, thereby creating a sense of mutual respect and understanding. Education thus acts as a bridge connecting diverse religious backgrounds, helping to shape a more tolerant and harmonious generation for the future.
Keywords: *Education, Tolerance, Behaviorism*

Abstrak

Peran pendidikan dalam menanamkan sikap toleransi antar umat beragama sangatlah penting, karena pendidikan tidak hanya sumber pengetahuan tetapi juga sebagai sarana untuk menggambarkan bagaimana toleransi dapat diimplementasikan dalam kehidupan beragam di kalangan siswa. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif yang menggabungkan hasil observasi lapangan selama kurun waktu 3 bulan, wawancara dengan guru dan tokoh agama, serta dokumentasi pada kegiatan sekolah, selanjutnya analisa data dilakukan dengan reduksi data, penyajian data serta penarikan kesimpulan. Penelitian ini menggali bagaimana SDN Besowo 2 dapat menciptakan lingkungan sekolah yang menjadi tempat di mana perbedaan tersebut dapat dikelola dengan baik sehingga menciptakan suasana harmonis dan lingkungan yang inklusif. Implementasi nilai toleransi beragama di SDN Besowo 2 dilakukan melalui berbagai kegiatan yang dirancang untuk mengajarkan siswa tentang pentingnya saling menghargai perbedaan, seperti pembiasaan doa bersama yang menjadi sarana efektif untuk membangun kesadaran dan pemahaman antar siswa. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pelaksanaan kegiatan keagamaan di sekolah ini bertujuan untuk membentuk karakter toleransi antar umat beragama dan penerapan nilai-nilai tersebut dalam berbagai praktik keagamaan lainnya terbukti sangat efektif, hal ini

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dapat dilihat dalam partisipasi siswa pada kegiatan pawai keagamaan yang diikuti oleh seluruh siswa. Selain memberikan dasar ajaran agama, siswa juga dibiasakan untuk berinteraksi secara langsung dengan teman-teman dari agama lain yang tidak hanya memperkaya pengalaman mereka tetapi juga membangun hubungan komunikasi yang positif sehingga tercipta rasa saling menghormati dan memahami di antara mereka. Jembatan pendidikan menjadi penghubung berbagai latar belakang agama, menciptakan generasi yang lebih toleran dan harmonis di masa depan.
Kata Kunci: *Pendidikan, Toleransi, Behaviorisme*

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A. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with diverse ethnicities, races, cultures, customs, and religions, as stated in the preamble to Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution, which states, "The State guarantees the freedom of every individual to embrace their own religion and to worship according to their religion and beliefs." The stipulation in Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution, which states that the state is based on the belief in One Almighty God, implies that the state is obliged to enact laws and implement policies to manifest faith in One Almighty God. According to Article 18, paragraph (3), of the ICCPR, citizens' freedom of religion will be limited by provisions based on law and those necessary to protect public order, health, security, or morals.(Fatmawati, 2016)

In Islam, freedom of religion also receives special attention. Freedom of religion is the right of a person to determine their religion without any obstacles and to freely express their soul in believing whatever their heart chooses. Freedom of religion influences the diversity of religions people embrace in certain environments or regions. Religious diversity also influences how community groups foster harmony and cohesion within their communities. The most important factor in fostering harmony and cohesion in a community is a sense of tolerance and the way residents express it (Latansa, 2020).

Tolerance is an attitude that leads to openness and a willingness to acknowledge the existence of various differences, whether in terms of ethnicity, skin color, language, customs, culture, language, and religion (Verkuyten et al., 2019) (Devi, 2020). As humans, it is fitting to follow God's guidance in dealing with differences in our environment, because the teachings of any religion always teach us to maintain harmony in any environment. Religious tolerance does not mean we are free to adhere to any religion and freely participate in any rituals and worship practices without any binding rules. Rather, religious tolerance must be understood as a form of recognition of the existence of religions other than our own, with all their systems and worship procedures, and allowing each person the freedom to practice their own religious beliefs (Yahya, 2017).

Tolerance can be fostered through basic education. The role of basic education is considered crucial in helping elementary school children develop tolerance within the family, at school, and in the community. In general, tolerance can be developed by

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managing and responding to differences, both in opinions and other forms. Tolerance begins with building togetherness or harmony and recognizing differences. Another way is to recognize that we are all brothers and sisters, which fosters compassion and mutual understanding, ultimately leading to tolerance (Kartini et al., 2025).

Individuals and communities express tolerance in a wide variety of ways. In Besowo Village, Kepung District, one way the community expresses tolerance is by building three houses of worship at a single location, in front of SDN 2 Besowo. Having three places of worship in one location within the elementary school demonstrates the high level of tolerance in the Besowo Village community. This demonstrates that tolerance is instilled in children from an early age, fostering individuals who can foster harmony wherever they are.

Initially, the construction of three places of worship at SDN 2 Besowo raised concerns that it would spark conflict among religious adherents. Although there are non-Muslim students at SDN 2 Besowo, Muslims remain the majority within the school. Therefore, there were concerns about conflicts between students, such as those arising from differences in their religious backgrounds. However, since the construction of the three places of worship, these concerns have not yet occurred. It is hoped that these buildings will serve as a learning experience for students to respect ethnicity, race, and religion.

Besowo Village itself is a multi-religious village in Kediri Regency. Its residents adhere to more than one religion or belief system and embrace many faiths, including Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, and others. Despite the diverse beliefs held by its residents, harmony and peace prevail in Besowo Village. This shows that the people of Besowo Village can express their sense of tolerance well (Khainuddin & Huda, 2024).

The study of religious diversity within educational settings has become increasingly important amidst the rise of identity politics, religious polarization, and intolerance across the globe. Schools are not merely institutions for the transmission of knowledge but also social spaces where religious identities are negotiated, contested, and reconstructed through daily interactions. In a pluralistic society like Indonesia, examining how educational institutions manage religious diversity is crucial for understanding the dynamics of social cohesion and broader interfaith relations (Wahidah & Maristyawati, 2023). Research by Larasati Dewi titled Instilling Attitudes of Religious Tolerance in Schools employed a literature review of various sources on tolerance; the study indicates that members of the school community should demonstrate mutual respect for differences, uphold school regulations, and communicate effectively to resolve any issues arising within the school environment (Larasati, 2021).

Multi-religious schools that accommodate diverse religious communities and provide equitable spaces for worship serve as important empirical sites for exploring the processes of instilling tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Tolerance education often remains at a cognitive-normative level involving value inculcation through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) or Civics (PKn) curricula, the habituation of mutual respect,

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and teachers setting an example, as seen at SDN 3 Purwodadi Malang (Suharsono, 2023) and SDN 2 Dwi Marga Utama (Nellawati, 2023). However, at SDN 2 Besowo, a shift has occurred from discursive tolerance (taught, advised, and discussed) toward spatial and material tolerance manifested through the provision of equal physical facilities for adherents of different religions. The prayer room, Hindu temple, and Christian place of worship standing side-by-side within the school grounds are not merely symbols but rather infrastructure for diversity; they affirm that the right to worship is not a privilege granted by the majority to the minority, but an inherent and equal right for all students.

This study conducted at SDN 2 Besowo, Kediri, contributes to the field of multi-religious schooling by shifting the analytical focus from tolerance as a taught curriculum to tolerance as built infrastructure. It offers fresh empirical evidence for intergroup contact theory within the Indonesian religious context and serves as a concrete model for implementing religious moderation at the primary education level an area rarely explored in existing literature.

B. Method

This study employs a single case study design with a qualitative approach. Qualitative methods are frequently used in research involving natural settings, prioritizing meaning over generalization. Given the natural nature of the subject matter, this approach is also referred to as a naturalistic method; the subject is observed as it exists, without researcher-imposed arrangements. This aligns with the study's focus: the practice of religious tolerance among elementary school students. Bogdan and Taylor define qualitative research as a process of observing individual behavior and reporting the findings descriptively (Miles et al., 2014). SDN 2 Besowo was selected as the research site using purposive sampling specifically, strategy representing a case of "positive deviance" from the typical pattern of elementary schools in Indonesia; the presence of three interfaith places of worship within a single school complex is a rare phenomenon that has been scarcely documented in the literature on multi-religious education. Field data collection was conducted over a three-month period, encompassing participant observation of students' religious activities at school, in-depth interviews with key informants (such as teachers and religious figures), and a review of relevant documentation (including school profiles, historical records regarding the establishment of the places of worship, and school policies concerning the management of students from diverse religious backgrounds).

Researchers also classify data sources into two categories: primary and secondary. Primary data sources consist of data obtained directly through interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with teachers and religious figures; the researcher requested permission from the school and arranged a time to meet for interviews and to document student activities. On the other hand, secondary sources serve as supplementary material that supports the primary sources. These sources may include books, journals, and other materials related to the research topic. To conduct in-depth data

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collection in the field, the researcher used three data collection techniques: (1) Observation, which involves accurately observing and recording events or phenomena observed in the field. Observation was used to obtain primary data, specifically the daily practices of students at Besowo 2 Public Elementary School in Kediri and the overall life of the multi-religious community in Besowo. (2) Interviews, which involve a question-and-answer process between the researcher and the research subjects or informants. Data collection through in-depth interviews is useful for obtaining more detailed information and understanding informants' thoughts and feelingsInterviews were conducted to gather primary data for this study specifically regarding the relationships among students at SD Negeri Besowo 2 (Kediri), stakeholders at the school (teachers and the principal), and community figures in Besowo Village (Kediri) over a three-month period. (3) Documentation was used to substantiate the research findings. Documents serve as permanent records, making them valuable as evidence for verification purposes. This documentation was utilized to support the primary data in demonstrating the practice of religious tolerance among students at SD Negeri Besowo 2, Kediri. (Dodi, 2015).

Meanwhile, data analysis in this study uses the following techniques proposed by Miles and Huberman. First, data reduction, which is the process of summarizing, selecting important elements, and discarding data deemed unnecessary. This data reduction provides a clear picture and facilitates further data collection. Second, data presentation. This data presentation can take the form of brief descriptions, charts, tables, and so on. The purpose of presenting this data is to make it easier to read. Third, drawing conclusions, namely providing conclusions regarding the results of the interpretation and evaluation (Huberman & Miles, 2002). Transcripts of interviews with the school principal, teachers of Islamic, Christian, and Hindu religious education, and a school committee representative were analyzed line-by-line to identify meaningful units regarding the history of the three on-site places of worship, student participation in religious processions, and activities fostering respect for students of different faiths. Subsequently, an in-depth analysis was conducted collaboratively by the research team, and data validity was verified through triangulation—cross-referencing interview findings, documentation, and observations to confirm the data's authenticity. Data obtained from teacher interviews were validated against documentary sources concerning school programs and policies.

C. Results and Discussion

1. The History of the Establishment of a Tolerance Space at SDN Besowo 2

Besowo 2 Public Elementary School is an elementary school located in Besowo Village, Kepung District, Kediri Regency, East Java. SDN Besowo 2 operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Observations and documentation conducted by researchers on November 12, 2024, indicate that SDN Besowo 2 provides three places of worship based on the beliefs of the students and the community. SDN Besowo 2 has 62 students from three different faiths: 52 Muslims, 2 Protestants, and 8

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Hindus. This phenomenon prompted the school to address students' religious needs on school grounds.

The establishment of three places of worship in the courtyard of SDN Besowo 2, in one location, stemmed from an initiative by the Principal, who recognized the diversity of the students and the awareness among religious leaders of the crisis in tolerance values. For this reason, he and local community leaders decided to build three places of worship at a single site: the Al-Amin Mosque for Muslims, the Yohanes Prayer House for Christians, and the Widya Guna Dharma Temple for Hindus. The purpose of these places of worship is to provide a space for students and the community to practice their faith and to provide a sense of security for all congregants.

Building three places of worship in one location was not an easy undertaking. A lengthy discussion ensued among religious leaders, the community, and the Principal of Besowo 2 Elementary School, who proposed building three places of worship in a single courtyard. According to the Principal, many concerns arose when the idea for the construction of the places of worship was proposed, such as the potential for inter-religious conflict due to the reluctance to have their place of worship placed alongside other religions', as well as concerns about the funding needed for the three places of worship. Thanks to the Principal's efforts to reassure all parties and to address concerns regarding funding, construction materials, and other matters, construction of three places of worship in the SDN Besowo 2 schoolyard began on July 13, 2023. The symbolic groundbreaking ceremony was conducted by representatives from three religions: Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism. This ceremony began with a communal prayer ceremony. Uniquely, the prayer ceremony included representatives from the Javanese Kejawen sect, demonstrating the Besowo community's strong tolerance for diversity.

Overall, the construction of the three places of worship in the SDN Besowo 2 schoolyard proceeded according to plan and successfully addressed any concerns that had arisen, particularly regarding funding. The Principal of SDN Besowo 2 stated that donor support, including temple ornaments sent directly from Bali, was a key factor in the project's success. The presence of caring donors willing to contribute directly demonstrates that this initiative has garnered not only local attention but also support from beyond the region. This provides new enthusiasm for all parties involved and proves that collaboration across religions and communities can produce something positive.

The enthusiasm of the Besowo community was also impressive, as they not only contributed physically to the construction process but also actively participated in fundraising through donations. This community participation was significant, as the school committee, previously concerned about construction costs, no longer needed to spend any money. With strong community support, the construction of these three places of worship not only symbolized interfaith harmony but also fostered a sense of belonging and togetherness within the community and within the school community. This success demonstrates that with good intentions and cooperation, challenges can be overcome and the results enjoyed by the entire community.

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After a construction process that lasted approximately six months, the three places of worship were finally completed and stand firmly in the courtyard of SDN Besowo 2. The inauguration of the buildings was held by the Head of the Kediri Regency Education Office, along with religious leaders, on January 10, 2024. This moment served not only as a symbol but also as a commitment by the school committee and the community to prioritize the values and harmony of interfaith communities. Having multiple places of worship in one location is expected to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding among adherents of different religions.

In addition to serving as a place of worship, this third building also serves as a learning space for students based on their respective religious traditions. This place of worship provides easier access for the general public, especially considering that the temple and church were previously quite far from the surrounding area. This not only makes it easier for residents to practice their religion but also strengthens social interactions among them. Thus, this development not only fulfills spiritual needs but also strengthens the community and relationships among residents, making SDN Besowo 2 a center of harmony and tolerance within a diverse community.

Learning at SDN Besowo 2 takes place from morning to evening, six days a week. With the construction of these three places of worship, SDN Besowo 2's vision is to develop intelligent, skilled, and environmentally conscious individuals based on faith and piety. Meanwhile, SDN Besowo 2's mission is to develop students who are intelligent in both academic and non-academic fields; develop knowledge and skills; and develop the spirit of tolerance. To enhance knowledge, technology, and arts and culture in accordance with the talents, interests, and abilities of students; to foster a sense of devotion and piety through the teachings of their religion; and to foster a spirit of togetherness among all school members and the environment to create a clean and beautiful school.

Based on the vision and mission of SDN Besowo 2, which includes adhering to environmental care, creating a religious atmosphere within the school, creating a cool and comfortable school environment, and fostering harmonious cooperation among students. Therefore, the school has built three places of worship aligned with the beliefs of the students and the local community. These three places of worship are named the Al Amin Prayer Room, the Yohanes Prayer House, and the Widya Guna Dharma Temple. The principal conducts daily morning prayer activities aligned with the students' beliefs, with the goal of fostering religiosity among students and tolerance within the school environment.

2. Implementing Religious Tolerance at SDN Besowo 2

Instilling the value of religious tolerance in this school is integral to its vision and mission. Instilling these values of tolerance is crucial from an early age, especially in the elementary school environment, where children begin to develop understandings and attitudes toward differences. To realize this vision, the principal and school committee took the initiative to build places of worship tailored to the needs of students and the

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surrounding community. With three places of worship available, the school not only teaches morning worship but also provides lessons relevant to the students' respective religions.

This initiative is expected to help students develop a sense of mutual respect for the religious diversity within their community. By studying and praying together, students are encouraged to foster a spirit of togetherness and brotherhood, which are essential foundations for community life. Through this approach, SDN Besowo 2 is committed to creating an inclusive and harmonious environment, so that every student feels valued and accepted, regardless of their religious background. Thus, instilling the value of religious tolerance is not only the responsibility of schools but also requires the involvement of all elements of society to create a more tolerant and respectful generation.

Elementary school students will begin to recognize the similarities and differences between themselves and others. This awareness encourages them to consider whether their views differ from others, making it crucial to understand that each individual is unique and to practice appreciating these differences. Increasing tolerance among elementary school students is crucial for developing positive traits, such as appreciating and respecting differences in religion, race, ethnicity, culture, language, and social class. Given that Indonesia is a country rich in diversity, teaching tolerance to children will help shape their character and allow them to interact and communicate with various community groups with greater confidence.

Teaching tolerance to students at SDN Besowo 2 is crucial, given its diverse student body. By understanding and appreciating differences in religion, race, and social class, students will be better prepared to interact and communicate with various community groups. This not only boosts their self-confidence but also prepares them for life in a multicultural society. When students at SDN Besowo 2 learn to respect and appreciate differences, they will be able to build better relationships with their peers, create an inclusive environment, and reduce conflicts arising from these differences. Therefore, teaching tolerance in education at SDN Besowo 2 can lay an important foundation for creating a more harmonious and respectful generation in the future.

First, the application of tolerance values in education at SDN Besowo 2 is evident in activities integrated into the teaching and learning process. For instance, teachers consistently conduct a communal prayer session every morning, during which students are permitted to pray according to their respective faiths. This morning observance takes the form of parallel prayers rather than a joint interfaith service; students gather at three separate locations based on their beliefs, guided by their respective religious teachers simultaneously, yet remaining distinct in terms of physical space and ritual procedures. This activity not only creates a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere in the classroom but also teaches students to respect differences in religion and beliefs. In this way, students learn that despite their diverse backgrounds, they can still gather and pray together in a spirit of unity.

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Furthermore, this communal prayer practice helps build a sense of togetherness and mutual understanding among students. Through this activity, students are taught to respect and honor their peers' beliefs, which can, in turn, reduce the potential for conflict arising from differences. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating these activities, ensuring that each student feels comfortable and accepted, without feeling excluded from mingling with others. Therefore, SDN Besowo 2 focuses not only on academic achievement but also on developing students' character traits of tolerance and respect for diversity, which are crucial for social life.

Second, tolerance values at SDN Besowo 2 are implemented through a ta'aruf parade held in anticipation of the holy month of Ramadan. In this event, all students enthusiastically participate, showcasing their respective religious identities. For example, Hindu students wear traditional Hindu attire and Christian students wear their traditional attire. This ta'aruf parade not only introduces the school's culture and traditions but also fosters mutual respect among students. By wearing attributes that reflect their religious beliefs, students learn to take pride in their identities and appreciate differences.

Furthermore, this ta'aruf parade fosters a sense of togetherness among students from various religious backgrounds. In a cheerful atmosphere, students are encouraged to get to know and understand one another. This activity serves as an important opportunity for students to learn that differences are not barriers, but rather a richness of diversity that should be celebrated. In this way, the SDN Besowo 2 school committee can shape the character of tolerant students who can live side by side in a diverse society.

Third, in line with the ta'aruf parade celebrating Islamic traditions, the Saraswati Day ceremony, an important Hindu tradition, was also held in the schoolyard of SDN Besowo 2. This ceremony involved students and the Hindu community performing rituals and celebrations with great solemnity. This activity not only served as a spiritual moment for Hindus but also served as an opportunity for the entire school committee to learn about and appreciate the cultural and religious diversity around them, as well as to respect and appreciate Hindu cultural knowledge.

To preserve the solemnity of the Saraswati Day ceremony, the school established a rule requiring non-Hindu students to remain in their classrooms so as not to disrupt the proceedings. This measure was taken to ensure the ceremony could unfold peacefully, free from external disturbances. In doing so, the school committee demonstrated its commitment to instilling values of respect for diversity while allowing the tradition to be observed appropriately. The policy also served as a learning opportunity for non-Hindu students to gain insight into a different tradition; even without direct participation, they were able to explain the meaning and significance of Saraswati Day to their teachers. Through this initiative, SDN Besowo 2 not only fostered an environment that values diversity but also encouraged mutual understanding and respect among students, thereby cultivating a sense of unity amidst diversity.

Fourth, the instillation of tolerance at SDN Besowo 2, which has recently attracted attention, is through the SILI (Interfaith Intensive Study) activity, initiated by the

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Balewiyata Theological Education Institute, the GKJW Interfaith Relations Committee, and other religious leaders. This activity aims to introduce the values of tolerance and mutual respect between religions to students and participants. Various communities and religious institutions collaborate to create an inclusive atmosphere. Participants from various religious backgrounds are invited to attend question-and-answer discussions and workshops featuring diverse speakers. In this way, students and participants not only gain knowledge about other religions but also build bonds of brotherhood among themselves.

The SILI (Interfaith Intensive Study) activity is also designed to provide students and participants with firsthand experience of the importance of tolerance in everyday life. Through direct interaction with speakers and participants from various backgrounds, participants were invited to discuss issues related to religious differences and how to address them with mutual respect. These discussions provided a space for participants to ask questions from a variety of perspectives, allowing them to understand one another better. This is expected to foster an open and tolerant attitude toward the differences around them.

Furthermore, the SILI (Interfaith Intensive Study) program includes social and environmental initiatives involving all participants. Participants are invited to engage in reforestation and environmental care activities, demonstrating that tolerance is not only a religious concept but also a means of preserving the earth we share. Through these activities, they also realize that ecology and religion can coexist, enabling the younger generation to grow into sensitive, caring individuals who help create a more peaceful environment and minimize divisions caused by differences in background.

The initiative by the principal and the school committee to provide a place of worship that meets students' needs is a significant step toward instilling tolerance at SDN Besowo 2. With the assistance and support of the surrounding community in providing the necessary facilities, all parties can comfortably practice their religion without feeling pressured or intimidated. This not only provides a space for students to pray but also offers an opportunity for them to learn to respect their peers' beliefs. In a supportive environment, students are taught to respect each other's differences, which is an important foundation for developing tolerant, empathetic character.

More deeply, providing an appropriate place of worship can also help shape students' sense of identity. When students feel valued and accepted as they practice their beliefs, they will be more confident when interacting with others. This is especially important in a diverse school environment, where students from various religious and cultural backgrounds gather. Having an easily accessible place of worship not only allows students to practice their religion but also provides a learning space to share experiences and knowledge about their respective traditions, thereby enriching their understanding of diversity.

Instilling the value of tolerance at SDN Besowo 2 is not solely the school's responsibility but also that of the entire community. By engaging parents, community members, and religious institutions, the school fosters an ecosystem that cultivates mutual

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respect and appreciation. Parental and community involvement makes it easier for children to understand and apply these values in their daily lives. Instilling tolerance from an early age aims to shape young people into sensitive, caring individuals capable of helping to create a more peaceful environment. By understanding and respecting differences, students will be better prepared to face the challenges of a multicultural society. Furthermore, fostering tolerance at SDN Besowo 2 helps minimize divisions stemming from diverse backgrounds. Thus, amidst concerns about the erosion of tolerance today, SDN Besowo 2 plays a vital role in realizing a more harmonious future for Indonesia's diverse society and in nurturing a generation that is not only academically bright but also possesses strong character and deep empathy for others.

The practice of tolerance developing at SDN 2 Besowo Kediri can be analyzed through the perspective of behaviorist theory developed by John B. Watson. Behaviorist theory views human behavior as essentially the result of a learning process shaped by the interaction between stimulus and response. According to Watson, individuals are not born with certain behaviors; rather, these behaviors are learned through experience and ongoing conditioning within their social environment. Therefore, the tolerant behavior exhibited by students does not emerge naturally, but rather results from the educational process, conditioning, and social experiences they receive in the school environment (J. B. Watson, 1913).

In the context of SDN 2 Besowo Kediri, the school environment serves as a source of stimuli that systematically shapes students' tolerant behavior. The presence of students from diverse religious backgrounds, the availability of three places of worship within the school, student involvement in interfaith activities, and the school policy of providing equal space for all religious adherents are social stimuli that students receive daily. These repeated interactions encourage students to understand that religious differences are a social reality that must be accepted and respected.

Within the framework of Watsonian behaviorism, the routine of simultaneous prayers and the ta'aruf (introductory/cultural) parade at SDN 2 Besowo can be understood as repeated environmental stimuli capable of shaping specific behavioral response patterns among students such as a willingness to walk to their respective places of worship without observable resistance, or a readiness to wear traditional attire and participate in interfaith parades. This attitude of tolerance among students appears to extend beyond the school environment; a Hindu community figure noted that their child continues to play with friends of different faiths in their local neighborhood outside of school hours. This indicates that the interfaith interaction patterns established at school have the potential to transfer to the broader social sphere (behavioral transfer or generalization). (Malone, 2014).

From a behaviorist perspective, the practice of tolerance at SDN 2 Besowo Kediri can be understood as the result of a continuous learning process. The school provides various stimuli that support tolerant behavior; students respond with mutual respect and cooperation, and these responses are reinforced through positive social experiences.

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Therefore, Watson's behaviorist theory is relevant to this study because it explains that religious tolerance in students does not develop spontaneously but is the product of a continuous process of learning, habituation, and behavioral reinforcement within the educational environment (Ziafar & Namaziandost, 2019).

This analysis also demonstrates that educational institutions play a strategic role as agents of socialization in developing tolerant character in students. If schools create positive stimuli through inclusive policies, multicultural learning, and healthy social interactions, tolerant behavior will develop into a deep-rooted school culture and can be carried by students into the wider community.

The following is an analysis table between Watson's theory and field findings at SDN 2 Besowo Kediri:

Theoretical Components	Findings at SDN 2 Besowo Kediri
Stimulus	The existence of three houses of worship, joint prayers, Ta'aruf parade, Saraswati celebration, SILI, multi-religious learning.
Respons	Respecting the worship of other religions, working together, accepting differences, maintaining order, building interfaith friendships.
Reinforcement	Teacher appreciation, peer acceptance, safe and inclusive environment, support from community and religious leaders.
Habit Formation	Tolerance becomes a habit and school culture
Outcome	The character of students is formed to be inclusive, empathetic, and able to live side by side in a multicultural society.

D. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the practice of religious tolerance at SDN 2 Besowo Kediri is constructed through a continuous learning process embedded in the school environment. The presence of three places of worship namely, a mosque, a church, and a temple within a single educational setting provides students with direct experience of living amid religious diversity. Through daily interactions, joint activities, and the school's inclusive policies, students are accustomed to respecting religious differences and recognizing diversity as a natural part of social life.

From the perspective of John B. Watson's behaviorist theory, tolerant behavior among students is formed through the stimulus-response process. The school environment functions as a stimulus by presenting students with multicultural experiences, interreligious interactions, and examples of inclusive behavior from teachers and school leaders. These experiences subsequently elicit responses of mutual respect, cooperation, empathy, and a willingness to maintain harmonious relationships with peers

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from different religious backgrounds. Positive reinforcement, such as appreciation for cooperative behavior and opportunities to participate in shared activities, further strengthens the internalization of tolerant attitudes among students.

The findings also indicate that tolerance education at SDN 2 Besowo, Kediri, is not merely cognitive but is practiced through daily habits and social experiences. Tolerance is learned through direct encounters, repeated interactions, and the normalization of diversity in school life. This study recommends that educational institutions strengthen experiential and multicultural learning approaches by providing students with opportunities for interreligious interaction and collaborative activities. Schools should also develop inclusive educational policies that accommodate diversity and encourage the participation of all religious groups. Future studies may employ other theoretical perspectives, such as social learning theory, contact theory, or social identity theory, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the formation of tolerant behavior among students in multireligious educational settings.

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