

## The Practice of Interfaith Tolerance Values in Schools

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### Abstrak

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Tujuan penelitian untuk mengetahui praktik toleransi yang diterapkan oleh guru dan siswa di sekolah. Untuk meninjau serta melihat praktik toleransi yang dilakukan oleh guru dan siswa dalam bersosialisasi sehari-hari di lingkungan sekolah pluralis, serta mengetahui cara penyelesaian konflik yang terjadi di sekolah yang pluralis. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan yaitu kualitatif. Pendekatan yang dipakai ialah sosiologi agama dengan metode emis-etik. Teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi dan interview (wawancara). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan, bahwa, pertama, toleransi telah mengajarkan nilai-nilai positif dalam tata cara untuk menghargai terhadap orang yang mempunyai latar belakang yang berbeda. Kedua, adanya berbagai acara keagamaan dapat memunculkan sikap serta nilai-nilai toleransi antar guru dan juga siswa. Ketiga, setiap permasalahan yang terjadi harus ada mediator untuk melerai serta membereskan masalah yang terjadi, sehingga konflik dapat diselesaikan secara baik dan kembali menjunjung tinggi sikap pluralis.

**Kata Kunci:** *Toleransi; Multikultural; Harmoni.*

### Abstract

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This research explores the tolerance practices teachers and students in schools apply. It aims to analyze the tolerance practices by teachers and students in daily life in a pluralist school environment and find out how to resolve conflicts in pluralist schools. The research uses the qualitative method. The used

approach is the sociology of religion with the emic-ethical method. The data collection techniques are observation and interviews. The results show: first, tolerance has taught positive values to respect people with different backgrounds. Second, various religious activities can bring out attitudes and values of tolerance between teachers and students. Third, for any problems, there must be a mediator to intervene and resolve the problems that occur so that conflicts can be resolved properly and back to upholding a pluralist attitude.

**Keyword:** *Tolerance; Multicultural; Harmony.*

## **Introduction**

The educational sphere is hence considered to get exposed to intolerance and radicalism. Based on a 2016 study conducted by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat, PPIM) UIN Jakarta, many Islamic religious education textbooks in schools contain content that promotes intolerance, extremism, and violence. Those are in the form of explanatory text, which tends to condemn religious practices or opposing views.<sup>1</sup> This finding leads to Muslims having negative attitudes toward adherents of other religions, even though Islam respects everyone and provides religious freedom.

The results of the PPIM UIN Jakarta study in 2021 reinforced the similar finding that students tend to be more intolerant/very intolerant with different Muslim groups (51.1%) than with adherents of other religions (34.3%).<sup>2</sup> Other findings show that 48 percent of Muslim students do not want to live alongside non-Muslims. The decision was a result of the Islamic religious education they received.<sup>3</sup> These results indicate that Islamic religious education does not promote tolerance because the material focuses on faith, piety, and worship at 63.47 percent, noble character and morals at 31.36 percent, *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) at 3.82 percent, and the glory of Islam at 1.34 percent. Only 12.96% of the content pertains to others' moral and ethical standards.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>PPIM, *Diseminasi Paham Eksklusif Dalam Buku Ajar SD Sampai SMA* (Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat, 2016).

<sup>2</sup>Yunita Faella Nisa et al., *Gen Z: Kegagalan Identitas Keagamaan*, ed. Didin Syafruddin and Ismatu Ropi (Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat, 2018).

<sup>3</sup>PPIM, *Api Dalam Sekam: Keberagaman Generasi Z* (Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat, 2018).

<sup>4</sup>PPIM.

The reality of a pluralistic society creates the potential for intolerance and even leads to conflict.<sup>5</sup> This potential can be minimized or even eliminated through awareness of the existence of various religions in society.<sup>6</sup> The increasing collective awareness will enable the realization of attitudes and perspectives that are mutually tolerant and see diversity as an ally that must be meaningful rather than an enemy that must be fought.<sup>7</sup> This awareness must be instilled early, especially in the educational environment.<sup>8</sup> The educational environment to initiate this awareness is the elementary school level.

Instilling and practicing tolerant values in an educational environment is one step to encouraging increasing tolerant awareness.<sup>9</sup> Educational environments can sow seeds of tolerance, establish harmony in life, and prevent intolerance between the realities of cultural diversity.<sup>10</sup> Intolerance

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<sup>5</sup>Elma Haryani, "Intoleransi Dan Resistensi Masyarakat Terhadap Kemajemukan: Studi Kasus Kerukunan Beragama Di Kota Bogor, Jawa Barat," *Harmoni* 18, no. 1 (2019): 73–90; Yonatan Alex Arifianto, "Peran Gembala Menanamkan Nilai Kerukunan Dalam Masyarakat Majemuk," *Voice of HAMI: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen* 3, no. 1 (2020): 1–13; Waterman Sulistyana Bargawa, Eko Kurniawan Wibowo, and Muhammad Tri Aditya, "Tolerance in A Plural Society: Revealing The Humility of The Sampetan Village Community," *Social, Humanities, and Educational Studies (SHEs): Conference Series* 4, no. 4 (April 2021): 194, <https://doi.org/10.20961/shes.v4i4.50611>; Peter L Berger, *The Limits of Social Cohesion: Conflict and Mediation in Pluralist Societies* (London: Routledge, 2018).

<sup>6</sup>R Ardi, "Religious Schema and Tolerance towards Alienated Groups in Indonesia," *Heliyon* 7, no. 7 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07603>.

<sup>7</sup>J Menchik, *Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: Tolerance without Liberalism, Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: Tolerance without Liberalism*, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316344446>.

<sup>8</sup>Ana Luísa Oliveira and Maria Helena Ançã, "'I Speak Five Languages': Fostering Plurilingual Competence through Language Awareness," *Language Awareness* 18, no. 3–4 (October 2009): 403–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658410903197355>; Jennifer Sanders, Kris Foyil, and Jennifer M. Graff, "Conveying a Stance of Religious Pluralism in Children's Literature," *Children's Literature in Education* 41, no. 2 (June 2010): 168–88, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-010-9102-3>; Bradford A. Anderson, Gareth Byrne, and Sandra Cullen, "Religious Pluralism, Education, and Citizenship in Ireland," in *Islam, Religions, and Pluralism in Europe* (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 2016), 161–72, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-12962-0\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-12962-0_12).

<sup>9</sup>A F N Ainna, "Multicultural Education and Student Tolerance at Islamic Senior High School in Bali, Indonesia," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 9, no. 11 (2019): 77–88.

<sup>10</sup>Carol Ferrara, "Religious Tolerance and Understanding in the French Education

must be eradicated from education because extremism and violence have infiltrated the school environment in many ways, especially through the theme of Islamic religious education.<sup>11</sup>

This study provides a different perspective on the problem of tolerance in schools at both ideas and practices, especially at the elementary school level. The researcher focuses on the practice of the values of interfaith tolerance carried out by teachers and students of Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School. The researcher chooses this school because it is one of the schools that uphold plurality. This school applies tolerance and mutual respect among people of different religions. Both students and teachers interact with friends of different beliefs there. They can make good friends. In addition, the teachers' good actions so students can increase tolerance values are why the author is interested in doing this research.

In the study of instilling the tolerance values for interfaith harmony at Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School, the researcher used the Sociology of Religion approach, which is emic-ethical.<sup>12</sup> In terms, emic refers to the views of the people being studied (native's viewpoint), whereas *ethics* refers to the researcher's view (scientist's viewpoint). In the frame of *emic-ethical*, researchers conducted data collection in this study directly through library research and field research.

Data collection techniques in this study also used observation and interviews. Observations aim to collect information about practicing religious tolerance values, religious behavior, and interactions among fellow students or between students and teachers at Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School, Cirebon City. In each observation, the researcher explores the cultural meaning of each observed object. It can be successful if the researcher can link the information received with the social context because the researcher can get the religious meaning of action from the relationship between the

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System," *Religious Education* 107, no. 5 (October 2012): 514–30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2012.722481>; Maali Mohammed Jassim Alabdulhadi, "Religious Tolerance in Secondary Islamic Education Textbooks in Kuwait," *British Journal of Religious Education* 41, no. 4 (October 2019): 422–34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2019.1585329>.

<sup>11</sup>Bagong Suyanto, Mun'im Sirry, and Rahma Sugihartati, "Pseudo-Radicalism and the de-Radicalization of Educated Youth in Indonesia," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 45, no. 2 (2022): 153–72.

<sup>12</sup>Wawan Hernawan, *Seabad Persatuan Ummat Islam* (Bandung: YMSI Cabang Jawa Barat, 2014).

information and the context.<sup>13</sup> Interviews were conducted at Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School, Cirebon City, to collect information about interfaith tolerance values, religious behavior, and interactions among fellow students or between students and teachers. Thus, the researcher could learn more about how respondents view tolerance values based on their perspective or seek *emic* information. Then, the *emic* information is arranged descriptively by the researcher, thus leading to the *ethic* of the researcher's view of the data.<sup>14</sup>

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Cirebon Elementary School: A Diversity School

This article is field research in 2020 at one of the schools in Cirebon, namely Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School. Out of 218 students in 2020, most are Muslim, Christian (Catholic and Protestant), and only a handful are Hindu (see Table 1). During doing research, the researcher was directly on location and participated in activities at school. In addition, the researcher also participated in extra-curricular activities outside of school, especially those related to religious activities.

Table 1 Number of students based on religion

Class	Islam	Catholic	Protestant	Hindu	Total
1	23	1	4		28
2	25	3	3		31
3	41	3	3	1	48
4	41	2	3		46
5	29	1	2		32
6	27	1	5		33
Total	186	11	20	1	218

Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School Cirebon City was chosen as the research location because it could become a model school that applies religious tolerance due to students' religious diversity, and so does the

<sup>13</sup>Wawan Hernawan, Usep Dedi Rostandi, and Didin Komarudin, "Maintaining Moderate Islam in West Java: The Perspectives of Five Islam Mass Organizations Concerning Intolerance Cases," *Madania: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 23, no. 1 (July 2019): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.29300/madania.v23i1.1933>.

<sup>14</sup>Wawan Hernawan, *Gerakan Islam Moderat Di Jawa Barat: Pandangan Lima Ormas Islam Moderat Terhadap Kasus Intoleransi* (Bandung: LP2M UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2018).

teachers' religious diversity. In addition, the school is also in a pluralistic society which is close to worship places of various religions. To the right of the school is the GKI Pengampon Church. The school's cross is the GKI Rahmani Church, only limited by the main road. Then, not far from the school, there is the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace, a royal symbol with an Islamic pattern in Cirebon. Within 700 meters from the school, there is also the St. Yusuf Catholic Church, and 550 m to the south of the school is Vihara Vimala Kirti. The school's position surrounded by worship places of several religions indicates a pluralistic community, making this school ideal for this research.

## **2. Tolerance Practice in the Classroom**

### ***a. Morning Prayer***

One of the routine activities at school, before entering the classroom, the students from grades 1-6 of Pengampon 1 public elementary school carry out character-strengthening education or pray at the provided place. This prayer activity is carried out simultaneously but in separate places for each religion. Muslim students pray in the field of the school complex, in front of and inside the class (figure 1). At the same time, those who are Protestant Christians are in the school hall in the front of the building directly opposite the school gate (Figure 2). Furthermore, those who are Catholics are in particular classes for Catholicism, namely classes for learning activities for Catholic religious subjects (figure 3). As for the places of prayer for Buddhist and Hindu students, they join with Protestant Christian students because there are few.

Figure 1. Character Strengthening Education/Morning Prayer  
Conducted By Muslim Students



Source: Personal Documents



Figure 2. Character Strengthening Education/Morning Prayer



Source: Personal Documents

Figure 3. Character Strengthening Education/Morning Prayer



Source: Personal Documents

Muslim students and teachers pray in the school field, in front of the class, and then pray led by one of the Muslim teachers or students. For Muslim students, the prayer time is relatively longer than others because the teacher usually invites them to recite the *Asmaul Husna*. After praying, they shake hands with their teachers. Here, the researcher finds uniqueness because other students of non-Muslims see the prayers of Muslim students without making any noise. They do appreciate it when Muslim friends pray.

Sometimes some students make a noise like chatting, but then, they fall silent again and realize not to disturb other praying friends.

Christian and Buddhist students are placed in the school hall to pray every morning. Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu students pray together in one room because their way of praying is almost the same as Christianity. Therefore, they pray with the same readings. It is just that the goal toward God is different. Catholic students pray in Catholic religious classes led by a Catholic teacher or student.

Every Friday, Muslim students and teachers carry out *Yasinan* (reading Surah Yasin) in the school field, while non-Muslim students carry out prayer activities in their classrooms. In addition to *Yasinan*, there is also Friday sharing at school. Either Muslim or non-Muslim students donate. The donation is not restricted only to Muslim students but also to non-Muslim students. The donation is used to visit a sick friend or friend whose parents died. If a non-Muslim parent dies, the teacher and several students will also visit the funeral home as their condolences from the school.

### ***b. Great Religious Day***

In addition to praying every morning, tolerance is also implemented through activities during religious holidays. For example, during Chinese New Year celebrations, students and teachers usually receive gifts from parents of Chinese students or Lose, a mandarin teacher.<sup>15</sup> Schools are closed for this Chinese New Year celebration because they follow the red day of the calendar. The teacher introduces Chinese New Year holidays in rituals such as *Cap go meh* (Chinese new year) and Barong sai (lion dance). So the teacher at Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School only introduced and informed about the event.

In addition, there were visits to Sunan's grave and the Church and religious activities, such as the Isra Mi'raj holiday, conducted at school. All students were involved. However, Muslim students are usually more concerned with attempting to understand the Isra Mi'raj itself. Non-Muslim students are only allowed to attend school and eat together.

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<sup>15</sup> Lose is a name for a teacher who teaches mandarin and lose is a teacher's call in mandarin.



During Ramadan, Muslim students and teachers carry out fasting and Islamic boarding school activities. Non-Muslim students also attend Islamic boarding school activities. Muslim students and teachers wear Muslim clothes, while non-Muslims wear casual clothes. Non-Muslim students bring food to the school but eat in certain places, not in any place. This attitude is a form of respect for fasting students, said the non-Muslim student.

**c. *Pilgrimage to the Grave of Sunan Gunung Jati***

Another activity of this school is a visit to the grave of Sunan Gunung Djati, located in Cirebon. Then, the teacher brings all students from grades 4-6, consisting of various religious backgrounds, to introduce the grave of Sunan Gunung Djati in the Sunan Gunung cemetery complex. There are not only Muslim graves or Muslim clerics but also graves of elders of Sunan Gunung Djati who have different religious backgrounds, especially Confucian. According to the Islamic religion teacher, Mr. Risanto, in his interview, Sunan Gunung Djati's family adhered to Confucian because Cirebon was visited by many invaders at the time, resulting in Sunan's family being descended from Confucian. So far, we know that Cirebon was formerly colonized, and numerous prior colonists brought religion from varied backgrounds. So that is one of the causes that resulted in several values of tolerance in Cirebon.

The practice of tolerance in schools is necessary for all people in the school environment to carry out. The school is the starting point for students to meet the various characters of the people they meet and the people they will get to know. In the school environment, as the saying goes, "*If do not know, then do not love,*" all teachers and students must know their friends, especially those from different backgrounds such as race, ethnicity, culture, and even religion.

The schools carry out tolerance practices in the presence of religious activities that can increase the faith of each religious student and provide education to have a positive attitude and be open-minded within and outside the school environment. Each student and teacher need open-minded because of several religious activities. It is hoped that all elements in the school can respect one another if there are celebrations on holidays in each religion. The practice of tolerance in this school reflects the existence of multicultural education, so education there reflects Indonesian identity. Students and teachers can manage pluralism in the school environment so that these practices are highly reflected in their daily lives. Good management

of education in terms of tolerance, plural, and multiculturalism can make people in this school become part of the planning and enlightenment of national and state life for the future.

It is obvious what this school has done, the implementation of religious activities which include: student visits to the grave of Sunan Gunung Djati Cirebon, in which students of grades 5 and 6 students from the religions of Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. The Sunan Gunung Djati Cirebon burial complex is occupied by Sunan Gunung Djati, Muslims, and also non-Muslims adherents and families. In other activities, such as religious holidays, teachers were invited to attend a Christian religious event at a church in Cirebon. This invitation was to establish friendships and have meals together. (Interview with Mr. Risanto, an Islamic Religious Education Teacher).

Every activity at Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School reflects a school that has taken a step forward in the practice of tolerance. Other public schools should follow and implement it with good goals and open up opportunities for mutual respect and more love for the country with diversity because it becomes an obligation for citizens who live in this multicultural country. Learning about other religions does not imply belief in them but rather knowledge and eliminating negative stigmas that could lead to problems in the present or future. Interfaith activities are not simply about "going the wrong way." The essence is one of the ways to strengthen faith and knowledge by keeping an open mind.

In practicing the values of tolerance, the teacher provides good education and role models in the teaching and learning process, either in classroom activities or outside activities. The teacher does not distinguish one student from another. The teacher provides the same service to his students to learn. In addition, the teacher also appreciates the differences in his students' abilities as one of the tolerance models. The teacher also helps students who are still experiencing difficulties in completing assignments and gives them a slight appreciation. The reason for being a role model is that students can follow good deeds related to tolerance.

#### ***d. Textbooks***

Interviewing a Catholic religious teacher named Mrs. Agatha, the researcher asked about the textbooks delivered by the teacher on Catholic

subjects and other matters related to the Catholic religion. In addition, the researcher asked about school that was labelled Pluralist schools. Mrs. Agatha is a senior teacher at this elementary school and has been teaching at this school for a very long time, so after the end of this semester, she will retire. Mrs. Agatha is very proud of this school because being the only one that is the most pluralist and has high tolerance values. It is very different from other schools in general. Other schools usually only accommodate students to study without introducing particular learning about pluralism and tolerance. So, the teacher's role in this school is friendly and even equalized regardless of their religious background. Teachers also work together to always provide the best for their students, especially in terms of pluralism and tolerance. As has been written on the walls of the Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School, the number one commitment is "Upholding Pluralist Values."

The Catholic class has the most students after Islam and Protestant Christianity. There is only 1 Catholic teacher, but the school's learning methods are equal for each class. When the Catholic subject come up, Catholic students will automatically rush to the Catholic class that has been specifically provided, such as the Protestant Christian class. Each Catholic and Christian students get a particular class because the number of students is quite a lot, and the majority of students at this public elementary school are Muslim. Hence, it is impossible if religious classes are used interchangeably.

This class is used for every Catholic religious activity, such as character-strengthening education/morning prayer and teaching and learning activities (figure 4). Usually, after praying, the students' praise is accompanied by piano music played by students or teachers. At this school, there are music lessons specifically for Christianity, whose goal is for students to become ministers in their respective churches. Nevertheless, music lessons are not running, as usual, because of the absence of a music teacher.

Figure 2. Catholic Class



Source: Personal Documents

The textbooks used by students of Catholic students are available from the Education Office. This book is based on thirteen curricula. In this book, Mrs. Agatha explained that the first thing introduced was in class 1. It is about knowing the Lord Jesus. In the following grade, students learn about the Catholic religion, including the resurrection and death of Jesus and so on. Then, Mrs. Agatha explained that the book explains the tolerance and pluralism contained in class 4 materials and above.

Every year in the implementation of school examinations, whether Mid-test or Final test, Catholic teachers always make their questions without asking the Church, from the exam grid, exam questions to each answer. Sometimes, several other elementary schools in Cirebon City which have Catholic students ask this school for exam questions.

Figure 3. Catholic Religious Textbook from Grades 1-6



Source: Personal Documents

The researcher interviewed Mr. Risanto, an Islamic religion teacher, regarding Islamic subjects and the tolerance contained in the Qur'an and hadith. He talked about the students in the elementary school, and he concluded that even though this school is pluralist, the students are still encouraged to believe in their own beliefs, and they hang out and socialize quite well with friends at the school.

The researcher met Mrs. Gracia, a Mandarin teacher, on the second day. She talked about Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School in ancient times when she was one of the students. This school has continuously been inhabited by Chinese people and has become a particular school for the Chinese. Lose Gracia belongs to the community of Chinese people called the Hope Residents. There are 5 Mandarin teachers, all of them are alums of Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School in the past and belong to the Hope resident community. They only teach at set times because most have other jobs besides teachers. Based on the interview with Mrs. Gracia, this school is getting better, especially after being labeled a pluralist school. She saw many different backgrounds, but it makes this school respect every student's rights and teachers with different backgrounds.

On the third day of research (3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2020), the researcher interviewed students from Protestant Christianity and Catholicism. In addition, the researcher visited each elementary school in the Pengampon complex to obtain the things needed to strengthen the research results.

Interviews with students from Christian and Catholic religions found that they enjoyed attending this elementary school because they had many friends with different backgrounds, which allowed them to get to know and understand one another. Usually, non-Muslim students often see Muslim students' ways of worship, such as the Dhuha and Dzuhur prayers held at school. Non-Muslim students appreciate it when Muslim students pray. For example, they stay in class when the prayer is in progress and do not disturb other praying students. Here, the values of tolerance are obvious, and indeed it is very much implemented in the school.

Non-Muslim students do not feel awkward when interacting with Muslim students. Some non-Muslim students admire the clothes of Muslim students wearing the Hijab. According to one of the students interviewed by the researcher, they sometimes feel sorry to see their Muslim friends wearing Hijab because they think that it would only make them hot and sultry. However, they realize and understand that it is an obligation and a right that their Muslim friend performs. Precisely it made the two close friends and respected each other.

After conducting interviews with non-Muslim students, the researcher visited a Christian class. Before the teaching and learning activities began, the researcher asked permission from the religious teacher to see the atmosphere of the class and its students. The Christian class is at the end of Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School at the back and in the corner of the school. It is adjacent to the canteen and approximately 15 steps from the school prayer room.

Figure 4. Christian Classroom Atmosphere



Source: Personal Documents



Discussing the results of research conducted in the field, the researcher will describe the answers to the questions contained in the formulation of the problem, which includes: the tolerant attitude of teachers and students at Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School, the practice of tolerance there, and ways of resolving conflicts to make harmony there.

***e. Tolerance of Teachers and Students***

All parents trust the teacher as an educator at school, the teacher to educate their children. In contrast, in the school environment, students are trusted by their parents to study diligently and disciplined, so the teacher's role becomes number one in the school environment. So, both teachers and students must have their respective responsibilities. The teacher teaches several subjects and human attitudes, one of which is tolerance.

This tolerance is an attitude of caring for fellow human beings, even with people from different backgrounds. At Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School, both teachers and students do reflect the attitude of tolerance in everyday life. The school also implements several daily activities so students and teachers can have a harmonious attitude and behavior. Several religious activities become school rules, including praying every morning, which each religion carry out. Every student and teacher gets space and time to carry out the habituation every morning by praying before the teaching and learning process. Each students carries out the habit of praying in different places due to their religion.

Harmony in space and time is perceived and implemented in the school. Teachers who consistently assist their students remain tolerant and do not discriminate against students of other religions. Everyone is treated equally at school and gets character education, which can teach students to be tolerant both inside and outside the school. Parents who want to send their children to this school also promote tolerance, and the duty of parents in helping their children is to be tolerant and plural. The first commitment must preserve a plural attitude in the school environment, as evidenced by the written record of school commitments among teachers, students, and parents.

Parents are concerned about their children attending Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School because they believe that children can grow in pluralist schools and become tolerant of and respectful of differences. Parents

frequently send their children there to check if the school is the right solution for their child's education. Some students even have to travel long distances to attend school there. Aside from producing outstanding alums, this school has become a favorite for those who want to engage pluralists and get along with people from different backgrounds, particularly from different religious beliefs.

The enthusiasm of a student going to school there is dominated by various activities that make them grow. Besides, habituation every morning or character-strengthening education is why students and parents want their children to study there. Students are pleased and enjoy every education they involve in, although sometimes they play a lot for the children's age. Nevertheless, it is very reasonable, and paying attention to the many positive sides that students take in interacting with other students is necessary. Based on the interview with one of the students, they enjoyed attending Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School because they had many friends of various religions and could see the differences they previously knew. The students also respect each other because it is one of their obligations as human beings who must get the right to choose their path due to their conscience.

Apart from the quota that requires students of different religions to be in one class, every class in this school must have students who are Muslim and non-Muslim. This school that upholds pluralist values need to socialize well so that there is harmony among them in the classroom, the school environment, and the outside environment. The teaching and learning process also take various forms, including group assignments in class. This group assignment can build a sense of concern and good cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslim students.

Habituation with differences needs to be instilled early, so the elementary school level is the right level to be a model for practicing religious tolerance. Some results show how elementary school students do not mind religious differences in social relations with friends and teachers. In-field observations showed that Muslim students who wore "hijab" looked familiar to their friends who wore "cross necklaces." Based on observations and interviews, many students said their close friends came from different religions.

The practice of tolerance at school will not realize if there is no support from the school. School policies greatly determine the success of tolerance

practices. The school where the research took place is very focused and concerned about this issue. As a public school, in principle, it must accommodate all students from various backgrounds, including religious backgrounds. Mr. Mustarin, the school principal, said there was no difference in treatment when admitting new students. All children who meet the administrative requirements have the right to become our school's students.

School policies that teachers and parents of students also appreciate and respect differences. As has been shown in the written record of school commitments among teachers, students, and parents, the first commitment must uphold a plural attitude in the school environment. Parents of students are not worried about their children studying at Pengampon 1 Public Elementary School because parents believe that children can develop in a pluralist school and be tolerant and respect differences. Parents usually send their children there to see that this school is very suitable for a child's education.

Pengampon I Public Elementary School carries the theme "Pluralist School." The promotion of this theme is not without basis. The fact that students and teachers have different religious backgrounds and the support of several parties make it recognized as a pluralist school. As a solution, the schools tried to provide places of worship for various religions, although this was not accomplished due to financial constraints. This school has only one place of prayer for Muslims, known as a *mushalla*. However, the school continues to make efforts to facilitate various religious activities. The school has a specific room reserved for Catholic students. This area is often used for Catholic classes and morning prayer activities. Students who are Protestant Christians get a prayer space in the hall. Usually, very few Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian students are enrolled in the same classroom as Protestant Christians.

## **Conclusion**

Elementary schools play an important role in producing educated, disciplined students with the best religious morals. Various religious activities can raise tolerance attitudes and values among teachers and students. Religious events unrelated to *aqidah* (belief) include visits to Susan Gunung Djati's grave, Chinese New Year celebrations at schools through food sharing, and Islamic boarding school activities during Ramadan. Someone

learns about other religions not to believe in them but to gain knowledge and to reduce negative stigmas that could lead to problems in the future.

Interfaith conflicts are uncommon in elementary schools. Any problems will be settled peacefully. If there is a problem between students of various religions and they debate religious issues, a mediator will be there to resolve the conflict. The mediator is a teacher from each religion who acts and mediates so that conflicts between students are quickly handled to have a good solution. Suppose it arises amongst members of the teaching staff or teachers. In that case, they will resolve it by clarifying and reviewing it and finding solutions to existing problems with their mature attitude.

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