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# TEACHERS' STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING CHILDREN'S ATTITUDE OF TOLERANCE IN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

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#### Abstract

Inclusive schools are heterogeneous educational institutions in which regular children and children with special needs work together in teaching and learning activities. Therefore, an attitude of tolerance is the main basis for establishing harmonious relationships between children in school. This research examines teachers' strategies for forming children's tolerant attitudes in inclusive schools. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques using 3 methods, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subjects were teachers and children aged 4-6 years in inclusive schools. The data analysis techniques use the Miles and Huberman model, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The results of the research show that there are 3 teacher strategies in building an attitude of tolerance in inclusive schools, namely: adding aspects of tolerance to teaching and learning activities, paying attention to and designing environmental conditions that are effective and efficient, and using flexible learning models.

Keywords: teacher's strategies, tolerance, inclusive school

#### Abstrak

Sekolah Inklusi merupakan lembaga pendidikan yang bersifat heterogen dimana anak regular dengan anak berkebutuhan khusus bersama dalam melaksanakan kegiatan belajar mengajar. Maka sikap toleransi menjadi landasan utama agar terjalinnya hubungan yang harmonis antar anak-anak di sekolah. Penelitian ini mengkaji terkait Strategi Guru dalam Membentuk Sikap Toleransi Anak di Sekolah Inklusi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui 3 cara yaitu observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Subyek penelitiannya merupakan guru dan anak usia 4-6 tahun di sekolah inklusi. Teknik analisis data menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman yakni reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukan terdapat tiga strategi guru dalam membentuk sikap toleransi yaitu: menambahkan aspek toleransi pada saat kegiatan belajar mengajar, memperhatikan dan merancang kondisi lingkungan yang efektif dan efisien, serta menggunakan model pembelajaran yang fleksibel.

Kata Kunci: strategi guru, toleransi, sekolah inklusi

## Introduction

Indonesia is a country rich in diversity, the diversity that is decorated including various ethnicities, cultures, languages, religions, and customs (Mumin 2018). Diversity is one of God's powers that should be thanked and well-maintained (Jumiatmoko 2018) (Azmi, 2022). One of the efforts to maintain it is to implement an attitude of tolerance. Tolerance is an attitude of accepting differences that exist by respecting them or not denouncing the views, beliefs, and beliefs held by a person or group. (Kartikowati and Zubaedi 2020).

According to UNESCO, tolerance is the most fundamental part of the realization of human rights and world peace, the simple form is respecting the rights and identities of others. (Pitaloka, Dimyati, and Purwanta 2021) (Pitaloka et al. 2021). Two forms of tolerance must be instilled in daily life, namely religious tolerance; In this case, a person respects the religion embraced by others by not deprecating, insulting, or committing bad deeds and the other form is social tolerance which is a form of acceptance or respect for differences in the community. (Pitaloka et al. 2021).

Tolerance does not just appear but needs to be build from an early age. Childhood is the beginning of human life (Mustakim et al. 2020). During this period, children experience a period that can only be experienced once in their lifetime, namely the golden age (Kertamuda 2015; Prasetiawan 2019; Trenggonowati and Kulsum 2018) where all aspects of human development and growth are running quickly and rapidly (Prasetiawan 2019). It can also produce billions of new neuron cells and have more connections than adults (Suyadi 2014).

This stage is also the best time for the character. Formation (Suhendro 2020) and is an effective time for the initial formation of tolerance attitudes, with the aim that tolerance attitudes are closely attached to them. Tolerance plays an important role in children's lives because having a good attitude of tolerance indicates good socialemotional development and moral-religious development of children (Herawati 2018). In the formation of tolerance attitudes toward children, it is necessary to instill awareness of the importance of respecting the beliefs, views, and choices of others. (Nugraha, Apriliya, and Veronicha 2017), awareness of maintaining peace by respecting others (Rusydi and Zolehah 2018) and respecting differences in the community environment by not looking at existing differences, especially one's physical and psychological differences (Saefudin and Widyawati 2019).

Environmental factors are the main factor in the building children's character. (Jumiatmoko 2018). The children's environment is not only limited to the family environment or playmates, but the school environment is also an important part of stimulating developmental aspects and building children's character (Anisa & Ramadhan, 2021). To provide stimulation, teachers must design various strategies so that the stimulation provided is to the needs of each student.

The teacher's strategy that must be designed is related to the learning process that will take place. There are four strategies for teachers in designing the learning process:

(1) Analyzing the learning objectives to be achieved. (2) The expected role of teachers and students in achieving learning objectives. (3) Subject characteristics. (4) Conditions of the learning environment. In designing the four strategies, teachers in the learning process must consider the school curriculum policy and each school must have a different curriculum policy, especially if the school is based on inclusion student.

Inclusion schools are heterogeneous educational institutions. (Wardah 2019). There are often views related to the concept of inclusive schools that consider that inclusive schools are another version of special education. (Ilahi and Rose 2013). The inclusion school is one of the reflections of this nation's philosophy, namely Bhineka Tunggal Ika, which means "United in Diversity" (Garnida and Sumayyah 2015). This statement means that an inclusive school is an institution that does not discriminate between students, whether children who have special needs or will not learn together while still getting developmental stimulation that suits their needs (Satrinawati, 2019).

This was reaffirmed by Puslitjaknov who stated that inclusive education is an institution that pays attention to and provides stimulation of the right development according to their needs and develops the potential that exists in students (Yusuf, Widyorini, and Tiel 2020). The international community has ratified a rule related to inclusive education contained in the Conventional on the Right of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol which was passed in March 2007, in Article 24 it is affirmed that every country must organize inclusive education at every level of education (Olivia 2022). This has the goal of giving children with special needs the same opportunity to actively participate in community life.

In Indonesia, inclusive schools have been regulated by the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 year 2003 Article 5 concerning Special Education, that special education is education for students with disabilities or students with extraordinary intelligence and is organized in an inclusive manner (Rasmitadila et al. 2020).

The importance of instilling tolerance in early childhood, especially in the school environment, is an important part that must always be a concern, it is intended so that children are used to respecting others with all the differences that exist. Especially considering that children with special needs are vulnerable to becoming victims of bullying, for this reason, it is important for adults, especially parents, and teachers, to build children's tolerance attitudes.

Several studies explain that special assistant teachers have an important role in fostering children's tolerance attitudes. (Suroyyah and Harmanto, 2022). Further research also explains that teacher cooperation in designing the learning process is the main key to form a tolerant attitude in students. (Zahra and Hayati 2022) (Nursya'bani & Listyaningsih, 2021).

Numerous studies explore tolerance attitudes in inclusive schools, focusing on elementary and high school students. However, there remain only a few studies that investigate teachers' strategies for fostering tolerance attitudes in inclusive schools, specifically among kindergarten, RA (religious education), or similar institution.

Early childhood constitutes a critical period for human development. Inappropriate stimulation during this phase can leave a lasting impact on the child as they grow up. The importance of seeing and re-analyzing the strategies carried out by teachers is very important as a material for evaluating the learning process in the future, especially in inclusion schools where students are heterogeneous.

In this study, the researcher examines how teachers employ strategies to foster tolerance attitudes in inclusive schools, specifically among students in kindergarten or similar institution.

## Method

Based on the problems and research objectives that have been presented, the researcher's approach related to teachers' strategies in building children's tolerance attitudes in inclusive schools uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. According to Basrowi, qualitative research has the purpose of describing a phenomenon or event that is being studied by researchers through an inductive thinking process. (Zahra and Hayati n.d.).

Data is obtained through direct observation and interviews, while documentation aims to accommodate the information or data obtained so that later it can be analyzed more deeply by the researcher. The data analysis in this study uses the Miles and Huberman analysis model which goes through three steps, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles and Huberman 1994).

This research was conducted at Pantara Kindergarten located on Jl. Radin Inten II, No. 9A, RT.09/RW.15, Duren Sawit Village, Duren Sawit District, East Jakarta City, DKI Jakarta. The data sources in this study are teachers and children aged 4-6 years in inclusion schools. The number of teacher subjects in this study is 4 people consisting of one homeroom teachers in each claas (A and B class), school principals, and child psychologists, while the subjects of children aged 4-6 years in this study are 6 people consisting of 3 students in class A and 3 students in class B.

Table 1. Interview Guidelines	
No.	Interview Questions
1	Teachers' strategies in the learning process
2	Forms of tolerance
3	Aspects of tolerance
4	Characteristics of inclusion schools
5	Principles of inclusion schools

## **Results and Discussion**

In this discussion, the researcher will describe the results of interviews and direct observations conducted at Pantara Kindergarten, also Teachers' strategies in the learning process. In the learning process at Pantara Kindergarten, teachers prepare the following strategy:

## Analyze the child's goals, learning needs, and conditions.

Learning objectives are the main part designed by teachers in making or compiling RPPH (Daily Learning Implementation Design). In setting learning goals, teachers at Pantara Kindergarten often analyze the needs and characters of each student with the aim that all students can be stimulated properly because considering that the needs and characters of children are very diverse from children's daily activities while at school.

From the assessment or assessment carried out by the teacher to the students. By the homeroom teacher, the accompanying teacher, and the child psychologist. The assessment used by teachers at Pantara Kindergarten consists of three types, namely: assessment as learning, assessment for learning, and **assessment** of learning. Assessment as learning can also be referred to as an assessment that is carried out as part of the learning process and functions as a formative assessment. The purpose of this type of assessment is to measure the learning needs and initial potential of students, and as a material for developing learning strategies (Primanisa and Jf 2020). This assessment is important so that teachers know from the beginning the needs of students (Raharjo and Wimbarti 2020), especially considering that Pantara Kindergarten is an Inclusion Kindergarten, so teachers need to understand the character and needs of students.

Assessment for learning is an assessment that is carried out to measure the learning process and functions as a formative or summative assessment. The purpose of this type of assessment is as a benchmark to observe the development of students and also as a reference in designing the learning process. (Primanisa and Jf 2020). This assessment is carried out during the learning process. (Hewi and Shaleh 2020).

Assessment of learning is almost the same type of assessment as assessment for learning, the difference for this type is at the end of the learning process which is used as a consideration for student achievement. (Primanisa and Jf 2020). In analyzing and setting learning goals, teachers also apply the aspect of tolerance. This is considering the heterogeneous nature of inclusive schools, where there is a lot of diversity, both religious, psychological, physical, background and other things. Tolerance is not only included in the learning process but also the habituation process.

## The role of teachers and students

The expected role of teachers and students in achieving learning goals, in this case, means that teachers are required to design and prepare the learning process to be applied carefully. The learning plan is prepared with the intention that the expected learning goals can be maximally achieved (Aryana 2020). Teachers are required to design or make plans related to what they will do during the learning process and analyze how children respond.

This simple analysis will minimize time wastage but also ensure that the learning process is more deliberate and focused. In addition, teachers are also required to

analyze the estimated problems that will arise during learning, teachers are encouraged to proactively prepare and establish clear concepts to prevent issues. However, should any problems arise, their responsiveness in overcoming them will be even more effective. The role of teachers in the learning process is one of the supporting factors for learning success, for that it is not enough to only compile RPPH but is also required in designing daily learning. Regarding what media will be used, how to learn how to apply, what songs or claps will be used, and so on.

It must be prepared in great detail and that is what is meant by the expected role of teachers in achieving learning goals. Meanwhile, the role of students is part of the teacher's analysis of what will be done by their students in the learning process.

Considering that Pantara Kindergarten is an inclusive school, designing RPPH, analyzing the learning process in the classroom, and designing learning media are traditions that must be done. In crafting the learning journey, educators incorporate key indicators tied to character development, such as fostering tolerance, promoting helpfulness, and nurturing independence.

These three key indicators will be cultivated through purposeful learning activities, shaping children into individuals who not only possess intelligence but also exhibit a positive temperament.

## Learning Characteristics

The 2013 curriculum which is adjusted to the character of students with special needs is the curriculum implemented in Pantara Kindergarten. Using a multisensory approach and direct experience, the characteristics of the subjects include thematic learning materials, life skills materials, language development activities, physical motor activities, rhythmic movement activities, creativity, and fine motor activities, as well as hands-on experience activities such as planting plants, waste processing activities, cooking, etc.

In addition to the fundamental aspects of learning, there exist various supportive activities that contribute to a well-rounded education. These activities encompass play dates or collaborative play at friends' houses, engaging field trips, special assemblies to commemorate national holidays, experiences with public transportation, and visits to essential public facilities like RPTRA (Integrated Child-Friendly Public Spaces), traditional markets, modern markets, and post offices. Through these learning support activities, students not only acquire knowledge but also develop adaptive attitudes and a sense of tolerance.

## Conditions of the learning environment

The condition of the learning environment is one of the factors supporting the success of learning. In its application at Pantara Kindergarten, the learning environment is very organized and neat. Teachers, especially homeroom teachers, are very concerned about the conditions of the learning environment by the learning theme

that will be applied.

According to the theory of psychiatry initiated by Gestalt, the learning environment is closely related to learning outcomes and student learning achievement (Jumrawarsi and Suhaili, 2020). A conducive learning environment will provide positive motivation for the learning process of students, students will be more enthusiastic and not easily bored. (Pratama and Ghofur 2021)

The learning also not limited to only in the classroom but is carried out flexibly, it is intended so that children are more familiar with the surrounding environment. By accompanied by teachers, children will be directed to a new environment such as when learning with the theme of the profession, then children will be asked to dress according to the profession they want, after which the child will visit one of the places such as the post office, fire department, health center, exectra to get to know the profession more deeply. An interesting and fun learning environment will ultimately have a positive impact on the growth of students' intelligence (Rizal and Kharis 2022).

# Forms of tolerance applied in schools Religious tolerance

Religious tolerance is the act of mutual respect and appreciation for religion and its followers by not giving reproaches, insults, or other negative things. (Rizal and Kharis 2022). At Pantara Kindergarten, teachers and homeroom teachers introduce students to their respective beliefs while promoting tolerance. Given that the student body includes adherents of three different religions-Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism-the approach emphasizes daily habits. These include reciting prayers before and after study sessions, maintaining religion-specific greetings, teaching prayers before and after meals, and emphasizing worship activities. In the context of worship activities at Pantara Kindergarten, a proactive approach is taken to inform all students that each religious adherent holds their unique concept of worship. Consequently, students receive reinforcement to embody their respective religious practices in alignment with their faith. However, it's important to note that the implementation of religious tolerance within the kindergarten remains foundational. Given the tender age of the students, the exploration of deeper theological concepts, such as Tauhid (the oneness of God), is intentionally limited. Meanwhile, in daily activities, for example, such as lining up in front of the class to read prayers before studying, they will be lined up according to their respective religions and then take turns reading prayers according to their respective religions. This exercise aims to cultivate students' appreciation for the diverse ways in which people of varying beliefs engage in prayer.

Based on the researcher's observations of 6 students, it is heartening to note that they do not discriminate based on their own religious beliefs versus those of others. These students freely play and interact with peers of different faiths, without any concern about religious differences.

## Social tolerance

Social tolerance is the behavior of accepting and respecting the background, and economic, physical, psychological, or social differences of a person and or group of people (Rijaal, 2021). In its implementation at Pantara Kindergarten, students are taught to accept diversity in the social environment through daily activities and learning support activities designed by teachers and homeroom teachers. Through the practice of daily activities, students learn valuable life skills. These include the art of sharing food provisions, extending a helping hand to friends in times of difficulty, and collaborating on assignments as a cohesive group. Meanwhile, through learning support activities, students are taught through play dates or playing at friends' houses, all with the noble purpose of cultivating a prosocial mindset and fostering mutual respect across diverse backgrounds. In addition, there are also activities to take public transportation and visit public facilities such as modern markets, traditional markets, orphanages, post offices, etc.

# Aspects of tolerance

# Appreciative attitude

Respect is the main key to tolerance (Tohri et al. 2021). Appreciating tolerance means heeding or allowing something the same or different from him to exist, be present, or even develop (Rusman and Riadi 2021). Based on the observations that the researcher has made of 3 students of class A and also 3 students of class B, the results were that 3 students who sat in class A were good enough to be able to apply an attitude of respecting diversity in their environment, although occasionally an egocentric attitude was still found. For example, when the researcher asked for ideas or ideas related to what colors were suitable for coloring house pictures, SN raised his hand to pour out his ideas and then his friends PN and AP listened enthusiastically.

The attitude of PN and AP is a reflection of an attitude of respect, where this attitude is also listed in STPPA (Standards for the Level of Achievement of Child Development) in the aspect of religious and moral value development which reads "Children know good/polite behavior and know bad behavior" and which reads "Children get used to behaving well".

After SN expressed his opinion, it was not long before PN and AP also expressed their opinion. In the end, the three of them hold fast to their own opinions and do not accept the opinions of others. In children aged 4-5 years, an egocentric attitude is quite prevalent.

Meanwhile, 5-6 year olds who sit in class B, have a better understanding of how to respect other people's opinions. Their imagination and creativity are considered higher, and when others express their opinions, other friends will listen and accept, this is a form of appreciation.

After that, if there are other opinions then they will find a middle way together. As happened in the field, when the researcher asked what colors were suitable for coloring the house picture, SFZ chose blue and white, AN chose brown and red, and then MF chose yellow and red. The differing opinions eventually converged on a middle ground: they decided that each person would contribute by donating a single color.

The application of self-esteem in Pantara Kindergarten is applied through daily activities, both in the classroom and outside the classroom. Teachers will give directions to students to appreciate the diversity that exists in the surrounding environment. Moreover, Pantara Kindergarten has a child psychologist who collaborates with other educators, ensuring that students learn to respect and celebrate each other's unique differences.

## Respectful and prosocial attitude

Through careful observation and research, researchers find that the children at Pantara Kindergarten exhibit remarkable inclusivity. They happily engage with all playmates, regardless of differences whether it's their friends with unique abilities or typically developing children. This open-hearted approach reflects both respect for diversity and a strong pro-social attitude. Additionally, the children at Pantara Kindergarten demonstrate a delightful sense of respect for their elders. When encountering familiar adults, they instinctively offer salutes, warm smiles, and friendly greetings. These intertwined attitudes respectfulness and pro-social behavior underscore the nurturing environment fostered at the kindergarten.

When children exhibit prosocial behavior but fail to respect differences or existing circumstances, they may encounter numerous challenges and find themselves less well-liked in their environment. Conversely, children who are both prosocial and respectful of others tend to be accepted and liked by those around them.

# **Characteristics of Pantara Kindergarten Inclusive Schools**

Ilahi posits that inclusive schools exhibit four key characteristics: (1) a flexible curriculum, (2) diverse learning approaches tailored to individual student needs, (3) an adaptable evaluation or assessment system, and (4) a focus on friendly learning. The latter emphasizes cultivating a welcoming attitude that fosters self-acceptance among students. (Wijaya 2019).

# Flexible curriculum

The curriculum is a set of knowledge and educational programs that are prepared and provided by an educational institution and contain a learning plan that will be applied to students in a period of education. (Kamarga 2021).

The curriculum at Pantara Kindergarten follows the 2013 curriculum which is adjusted to the learning character of students with special needs. With a learning program that includes 6 aspects of development, namely: religious and moral values, cognitive, language, social-emotional, physical, motor, and art. The 2013 curriculum emphasizes the formation of students' character, by maximizing stimulation in affective, cognitive, and psychomotor aspects. (Zulaikhah, Sirojuddin, and Aprilianto 2020). The character values emphasized in the 2013 curriculum are spiritual and social values. The spiritual value is an attitude of obedience to God Almighty while social values include behavior of tolerance, responsibility, discipline, honesty, adaptiveness, caring for the environment, and confidence in interacting with the environment (Sholekah 2020).

## Friendly and varied learning approach

A friendly learning approach is another important part that must be considered prepared and implemented in the learning process, it is intended so that learning runs fun and interesting so that students do not feel bored and enthusiastic in undergoing the learning process (Fahmi 2021).

In the implementation of the teaching and learning process at Pantara Kindergarten, teachers position themselves as observers and also children guidance. In this case, it means that children become the main figures in learning activities. The learning approaches used are also diverse in the learning goals and themes themselves. However, in its implementation, teachers often use a group learning approach with safety, which aims to maximize the stimulation provided to students considering that in Pantara Kindergarten the existing students are heterogeneous.

## Flexible assessment

Assessment is a planned effort that aims to obtain data on student development from the results of the learning process (Irvan, 2020). Assessment is an important part that cannot be separated from the learning process (Firmanzah and Sudibyo 2021).

The assessment used in Pantara Kindergarten is not fixed on only 1 type of assessment but is adjusted to the circumstances and needs. The assessments used include child development, child knowledge, and children's behavior or morals. As previously mentioned by the researcher, the assessment used by teachers at Pantara Kindergarten consists of three types; assessment as learning, assessment for learning, and assessment of learning. While the form of assessment used adjusts to the learning theme, the various forms of assessment used are anecdotes, portfolios, works, and also checklists.

## Principles of Inclusive Learning in Pantara Kindergarten

There are principles in inclusive schools, as explained by (Pratiwi et al. 2018) These are divided into 2 basic principles, Universal design learning is a learning concept that adapts the learning process to the needs of all students. The basic principle of this learning is to create an innovative curriculum that can be accessed by all students from various backgrounds. Another one is Differentiated Instructional Strategies this strategy in the learning process is designed differently to meet the needs of students. In this concept, educators design different learning materials, assessment tools, assignment methods, and instructional strategies for students.

## Universal design for learning

Vol. 6 No. 1 | 96-100 Copyright © 2024 | JECE | P-ISSN 2686-2492 In the implementation of inclusive schools, Universal design for learning is the main principle that must be applied considering that existing students are heterogeneous. If this principle is ignored or forgotten, it will have an impact on stimulating students so that it hinders their development.

After nine days of careful observation, the author concludes that Pantara Kindergarten exemplifies inclusivity by implementing a universal learning design. Their approach considers both regular students and those with special needs.

## Differentiated instruction strategies

Researchers have found that Pantara Kindergarten does not implement differentiated instruction strategies. Students are grouped solely by age: class A comprises 4-5-year-olds, and class B consists of 5-6-year-olds. Children spend their initial 5 years in class A and the subsequent 5 years in class B. Despite not tailoring classes to student characteristics, the meticulously planned learning approach effectively stimulates student development. To maintain an optimal learning environment, teachers limit each class to 10-15 students. Each class is composed of 10-15 students, overseen by two subject teachers, and occasionally supported by a psychologist.

## Conclusion

From the results of observation and research, it can be concluded that teacher strategies have an important role in building children's tolerance attitudes, especially in inclusive-based schools where students are heterogeneous. The designed strategy includes various things including; analyzing learning objectives, paying attention to the role of teachers and students, characteristics of learning subjects, and paying attention to the conditions of the learning environment. The attitude of tolerance that must be instilled is an attitude of religious tolerance and also an attitude of social tolerance, both of which include mutual respect, respect, and prosocial. Considering that students in inclusive schools are very diverse, school administrators or educators need to prepare various things, including a flexible curriculum, varied learning approaches, flexible assessments, and friendly learning approaches.

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