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## Application of Positive Psychology in PAI Learning for the Development of Tolerant Character of Students of SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya


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***Abstract***

*This study aims to examine the application of positive psychology in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya and its impact on the development of students' tolerant character. In an increasingly pluralistic educational context, positive psychology approaches that emphasize the development of individual positive aspects such as empathy, gratitude, and optimism, are considered important to form tolerant attitudes in students. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study design, which involves observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis to explore the experiences of teachers, students, and principals in applying positive psychology principles in the classroom. The results show that the application of positive psychology in PAI learning, through techniques such as group discussions, role-playing, and self-reflection, can strengthen students' tolerant character by increasing empathy and acceptance of differences. Support from schools and parents plays a key role in the success of this implementation. Despite the challenges of changing the mindset of students who are accustomed to traditional approaches, the application of positive psychology has proven effective in creating an inclusive and mutually respectful environment. This study suggests further development in curriculum and teacher training to optimize the application of positive psychology in religious education.*



***Keywords***: *Positive Psychology, Islamic Religious Education (PAI), Tolerant Character, Elementary School, Inclusivity*


## Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesia has a very important role in shaping the moral character of students, especially at the basic education level. This is driven by the need to build a character of tolerance among students who come from various social and cultural backgrounds. A study conducted by Khosiah et al. shows that teachers' strategies in transferring religious values focus on strengthening tolerance for differences that are in line

with PAI values, effective in creating an inclusive and harmonious learning environment, where students can understand and respect each other[1]

This research was carried out at SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya, which is implementing a learning program with the integration of positive psychological values in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum. The selection of this location is based on the school's initiative to prioritize a positive psychological approach in the diversity of students' social and cultural backgrounds. This diversity is important to describe the challenges and opportunities in building a character of tolerance among students.[2] In the context of education, diversity can provide valuable insights into how students from diverse backgrounds interact and adapt to education based on positive values.[3]

The integration of positive psychology into the Islamic Religious Education curriculum at SDN Banjarsugihan V also allows for a deeper exploration of its influence on the formation of students' tolerance character.[4] Educational programs that focus on tolerance can provide learning experiences that encourage students to respect differences and develop mutual respect.[5] By involving students from diverse backgrounds, it is hoped that the implementation of positive psychology can reduce intolerant behavior and create a more inclusive environment, as shown in research on the application of character-based education in multicultural contexts.[6]

Through an approach that focuses on positive psychology, this research aims to make practical and theoretical contributions to the improvement of learning methods in elementary schools. By raising the issue of diversity and the application of positive psychology, it is hoped that there will be the development of learning models that are more adaptive and responsive to the needs of students.[7] This research not only focuses on academic learning outcomes, but

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[1] N Khosiah et al., "Strategi Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Menanamkan Nilai-Nilai Religius Peserta Didik Di Sekolah Dasar," *Al Ibtidaiyah Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* 3, no. 2 (2022): 84–96, https://doi.org/10.46773/ibtidaiyah.v3i2.432.

[2] P U Asrianti, U Supriadi, and S Anwar, "Studi Kritis: Pembelajaran Toleransi Dalam Buku Ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Budi Pekerti Sekolah Dasar," *Briliant Jurnal Riset Dan Konseptual* 9, no. 1 (2024): 27, https://doi.org/10.28926/briliant.v9i1.1850;

[3] M Mawadda et al., "Tolerance Learning in Islamic Religious and Character Education Textbooks," *Analisa Journal of Social Science and Religion* 8, no. 1 (2023): 51–66, https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v8i1.1901.

[4] Y Fijriyah et al., "Religious Development of Students as an Effort to Prevent Radicalism in High Schools in Bandung," *Journal of Social Science* 2, no. 4 (2021): 532–45, https://doi.org/10.46799/jss.v2i4.178.

[5] F Mustafida and L N A B Dina, "Establishment of Religious Tolerance Through Multicultural School Culture in Taman Harapan Elementary School Malang City," *Elementary Islamic Teacher Journal* 9, no. 2 (2021): 265, https://doi.org/10.21043/elementary.v9i2.11559; A D Suhardini and G Muhammad, "Implementasi Nilai-Nilai Multikultural Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Untuk Pembentukan Karakter Cinta Tanah Air," *Bandung Conference Series Islamic Education* 5, no. 2 (2025), https://doi.org/10.29313/bcsied.v5i2.21430.

[6] A Janah, A Hidayati, and S Maulidin, "Pengaruh Pemahaman Moderasi Beragama Terhadap Pembentukan Sikap Toleransi Siswa SMK Walisongo Semarang," *Vocational Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Kejuruan* 4, no. 2 (2025): 42–50, https://doi.org/10.51878/vocational.v4i2.4133.

[7] M T Ciptadi, A Haris, and Ishomuddin, "Islamic Education Material With a Sociological Approach," *Imtiyaz Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman* 7, no. 2 (2023): 168–82, https://doi.org/10.46773/imtiyaz.v7i2.834; S E Wahyuningsih and A Munawaroh, "Incorporating Religious Moderation Values Into English Language Teaching: A Portrait of an Indonesian Vocational School," *IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education)*, 2023, 409–27,

also on strengthening character values and tolerance, which are key to forming civilized individuals.[8]

Challenges in implementing positive psychology principles in PAI learning still exist. Many educators lack a clear understanding of how to effectively implement these concepts.[9] Therefore, it is crucial to identify the factors that support and hinder the implementation of positive psychology in the classroom. Research has found that support from schools, including training for teachers and cooperation with parents, can strengthen positive psychology practices in education, while a lack of understanding and resources can be a significant obstacle.[10]

This research brings important attention to the theoretical and practical gaps in religious education in Indonesia, especially in the application of positive psychology theory in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Although there is a lot of discussion about positive psychology theory in the literature, its application in the context of PAI in elementary schools is still very limited.[11]

This research is expected to make a new contribution by integrating positive psychology theory in the context of PAI, as well as producing empirical evidence that supports its effectiveness in building students' tolerant character. This is in line with the results of research by Asrianti et al. which show that the integration of character values in education can have a positive impact on the development of tolerance and empathy attitudes among students.[12]

Tolerance is a very important value in an increasingly complex and diverse society like Indonesia. Positive psychology theory states that individuals who are equipped with empathy skills, focus on self-strength, and be able to appreciate differences tend to be better able to build harmonious relationships with others.[13] Hadi and Laili emphasize that religious education has a strategic position in shaping tolerance behaviors among students, although this responsibility does not solely lie with religious education. The application of a multicultural-based curriculum in PAI can broaden students' perspectives and help them understand the diversity that exists in society.[14]

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https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v10i2.28946.

[8] A Azhar, "Promoting Religious Moderation Through Islamic Education Studies Amid the Covid-19 Pandemic in Bima," *El-Hikmah Jurnal Kajian Dan Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 16, no. 2 (2022): 115–34, https://doi.org/10.20414/elhikmah.v16i2.6238.

[9] R L Ulfa, I Ikhtiati, and F A Putri, "The Use and Impact Socialization of Religious Moderation Values Through Media of Hand Puppet Theater Stages Toward Forming Character of Tolerance in Primary School Students," *International Journal of Islamic Thought and Humanities* 3, no. 1 (2024): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.54298/ijith.v3i1.169.

[10] H Hanifudin and K Idawati, "Implementation of Islamic Counseling Guidance in Forming Student Character in Madrasah," *Al-Ishlah Jurnal Pendidikan* 16, no. 2 (2024): 718–26, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v16i2.5129.

[11] Z Pamuji et al., "Implementation of Religious Culture to Develop Children's Character in Early Childhood Education," *JPUD - Jurnal Pendidikan Usia Dini* 18, no. 1 (2024): 81–98, https://doi.org/10.21009/jpud.181.06.

[12] Asrianti, Supriadi, and Anwar, "Studi Kritis: Pembelajaran Toleransi Dalam Buku Ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Budi Pekerti Sekolah Dasar."

[13] M F Hadi and S Laili, "Multicultural-Based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMP Sapta Andika Denpasar," *Halaqa Islamic Education Journal* 6, no. 2 (2022): 79–87, https://doi.org/10.21070/halaqa.v6i2.1614.

[14] Hadi and Laili.

Social conditions in society also greatly influence the application of positive psychology in religious education in Indonesia. In a pluralistic society, many children grow up with different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. This diversity, while it can be a source of wealth of values, often gives rise to sharp differences of views. The inability to effectively manage these differences can lead to adverse conflicts, both in the school environment and in the wider community. Research shows that religious education should serve as an instrument that fosters mutual respect and tolerance among students, but in many cases, this goal is often not achieved due to a lack of an effective approach to managing diversity.[15]

Religious education should indeed be a bridge to build unity and tolerance in the midst of diversity. In practice, many schools have not fully implemented positive psychological principles that are expected to improve relationships between students. A study underscores the importance of integrating religious moderation in the Islamic education curriculum that can support the development of tolerant character among students.[16]

Research explains that spiritual education and religious values can play a role in filtering individual behavior, contributing to the development of stronger positive attitudes and mutual respect in the context of a plural society.[17] Research by Seligman (2011) shows that the application of positive psychology in an educational environment can improve students' happiness and psychological well-being as well as improve social relationships among them.[18] Peterson et al. (2007) posit that positive psychological characteristics such as gratitude, hope, and optimism can strengthen social interactions and improve academic achievement.

Recent research shows that strengthening social interaction in the context of education based on creativity and collaboration can encourage students to not only learn religion, but also appreciate the differences between them.[19] Research that is more relevant to the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) often ignores the positive psychological aspect in building students' tolerance character. In this case, research by Asra (2018) shows that religious education in Indonesia tends to focus more on teaching religious teachings without integrating positive psychological values that support the formation of inclusive and

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[15] N Nurudin, "Implementasi Kebijakan Pendidikan Agama Di Sekolah-Sekolah Katolik: Studi Kasus Kota Blitar Provinsi Jawa Timur," *Edukasi Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan*, 2020, https://doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v11i2.433.

[16] S Suprapto, "Integrasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Edukasi Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 18, no. 3 (2020): 355–68, https://doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v18i3.750.

[17] E Sutrisno, "Aktualisasi Moderasi Beragama Di Lembaga Pendidikan," *Jurnal Bimas Islam* 12, no. 2 (2019): 323–48, https://doi.org/10.37302/jbi.v12i2.113.

[18] E FitzSimons, "Character Education: A Role for Literature in Cultivating Character Strengths in Adolescence," 2015, 135–50, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9667-5_7.

[19] T L Renshaw and R M O Steeves, "What Good Is Gratitude in Youth and Schools? A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Correlates and Intervention Outcomes," *Psychology in the Schools* 53, no. 3 (2020): 286–305, https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21903.

tolerant characters.[20] This study seeks to close this gap by delving deeper into the application of positive psychology in PAI learning at SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya. By providing new insights into the integration of positive psychology values into the curriculum, it is hoped that this research can be a source of reference for the development of more innovative and effective learning methods in creating inclusive learning spaces.[21]

This research presents several novelties that distinguish it from previous studies, especially in the application of positive psychology in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at the elementary school level. Most previous studies have paid more attention to positive psychological aspects in general education or character education that do not specifically include religious approaches. For example, research by Nurcholis (2024) emphasizes the importance of developing tolerance attitudes in the PAI curriculum and shows that education at the elementary level can serve as a platform to instill the values of tolerance among students. Through this path, this study tries to fill the existing gaps by integrating the concept of positive psychology into the PAI curriculum and assessing its impact on students' tolerance character.[21] The main purpose of this study is to examine the application of a positive psychology approach in the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya and to evaluate its impact on the development of students' tolerance character.

The results of this research are expected to be used as a reference for the development of more effective curriculum and teaching methods in the context of religious education. The involvement of various parties, including the education community, in designing programs that integrate positive psychological values can bring significant changes in the educational environment.[22]

## Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the application of positive psychology in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya, particularly in fostering students' tolerance character. This approach enabled the researcher to explore social and cultural phenomena in depth and to identify both supporting and inhibiting factors influencing the implementation of positive psychology, including challenges related to supporting facilities as also found in inclusive education studies (Norjanah et al., 2022; Wijaya et al., 2023). The main informants consisted of PAI teachers, students, and the principal, each of whom provided important perspectives on how positive psychology values were integrated into the curriculum, learning process, and

[20] W A Yahyani, R Kurnianto, and A Ariyanto, "The Role of Integrated Schools in Improving Islamic Education in Muslim Minority Areas of Cambodia," *Al-Hayat Journal of Islamic Education* 4, no. 2 (2020): 163, https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v4i2.123.

[21] M T Nurcholis, "Mengembangkan Sikap Toleransi Dalam Pembelajaran PAI Pada Kurikulum Merdeka Di Kelas IV SDN 2 Pusakasari," *JPE* 4, no. 2 (2024): 52–62, https://doi.org/10.55656/jpe.v4i2.208.

[22] I N A Latif, "Pendidikan Agama Islam Sebagai Bekal Moral Dalam Kehidupan Bernegara," *Tadris Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam* 15, no. 1 (2021): 36–51, https://doi.org/10.51675/jt.v15i1.125.

classroom atmosphere; teachers' perceptions and instructional roles are particularly important in supporting higher-order thinking and positive learning practices (Kosasih et al., 2022). Data were collected through desk review, observation, and in-depth interviews. The desk review involved examining relevant school documents, including the curriculum, lesson plans (RPPs), and records of learning activities, to understand the policies, strategies, and learning context underlying the implementation of positive psychology, in line with the importance of document analysis in developing and evaluating effective learning scenarios (Wagiyem, 2022). Direct classroom observations were conducted to examine teacher–student and student–student interactions during PAI learning and to understand how positive psychology practices contributed to the formation of tolerance character, as observation can provide a realistic picture of learning implementation and classroom dynamics (Fitriani et al., 2023). In-depth interviews with PAI teachers, the principal, and selected students were conducted using predetermined interview guidelines to obtain consistent and comprehensive information regarding the implementation of positive psychology and its impact on students' tolerance character, since interviews are effective for exploring individual perspectives and experiences in educational contexts (Aluf et al., 2024). Data analysis was conducted systematically, beginning with data condensation to select, simplify, and summarize information from various sources and identify key themes relevant to the research objectives, reflecting the importance of systematic analysis in understanding character education through educational texts, practices, and documents (Ainina, 2022).

## Results and Discussion

### A. Research Results

The results of the study show that the application of positive psychology in the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya is carried out through the integration of positive values into the learning process, social interaction, and student habituation. The most prominent values in learning practice include empathy, gratitude, optimism, respect for differences, openness, and the ability to build positive relationships with others. PAI teachers not only convey religious material in the cognitive realm, but also direct learning to experiences that allow students to understand, feel, and practice the value of tolerance in daily life.

#### 1. Forms of Positive Psychology Application in PAI Learning

The findings of the study show that the application of positive psychology in PAI learning is realized through several main strategies, namely group discussions, *role-playing*, the use of inspirational stories, self-reflection, and the habituation of positive interactions. Group discussions are used to provide opportunities for students to express their opinions, listen to the views of friends, and discuss differences in religion, culture, customs, and social experiences. Through these activities, students are trained not to directly assess differences negatively, but to view them as part of social life that needs to be understood and appreciated.

The practice *of role-playing* is used to train students' ability to put themselves in the shoes of others. Teachers provide certain situations related to differences, cooperation, help, and appreciation for friends. Through these activities, students learn to understand the feelings of others while developing empathy in social interactions. In addition, teachers use inspirational stories about characters or events that display the values of mutual respect, care, patience, and tolerance. The stories are then associated with students' life experiences so that the values learned do not stop at knowledge, but can be applied in daily behavior.

Self-reflection is another part of the application of positive psychology. Students are directed to evaluate how they treat their friends, how they respond to differences, and what actions need to be improved. The reflection activity helps students recognize their own attitudes while developing awareness that respectful, cooperative, and non-discriminatory behaviors are part of the practice of religious values.

**2. Supporting Factors for the Application of Positive Psychology**

The results of the study show that the success of the implementation of positive psychology does not only depend on the ability of PAI teachers, but is also determined by the support of the school environment. The support of the principal is manifested through policies that provide space for teachers to develop learning that is not only oriented towards academic achievement, but also on strengthening students' character. Schools also provide training and reinforcement to teachers to be able to integrate positive psychological values into learning activities.

Parental involvement is also an important supporting factor. Schools build communication with parents about the importance of character education and tolerance so that the values developed in school can be strengthened through habituation at home. Support between school and family creates a continuity of character education because students get a relatively consistent message about the importance of respecting others, cooperating, and accepting differences.

A school environment that provides space for diversity also supports the application of this approach. Interaction between students is a real medium to practice empathy, tolerance, cooperation, and respect for differences. Thus, positive psychology is not only applied as a learning strategy in the classroom, but becomes part of the social experience of students in the school environment.

**3. Factors Inhibiting the Application of Positive Psychology**

In addition to supporting factors, the study found a number of obstacles. The first obstacle is related to the mindset of some students who were previously more accustomed to conventional learning patterns and oriented towards academic results. These conditions cause character development, self-reflection, and social experience-based learning to require an adaptation process.

The next obstacle is the uneven understanding of students and parents about the benefits of positive psychology approaches. Some still view the success of education as

primarily based on academic achievement, so that strengthening character, empathy, tolerance, and social skills has not always been positioned as an important part of learning success. To overcome these conditions, schools conduct socialization, communication with parents, and strengthen teacher capacity.

Thus, the obstacles found in the study are not mainly in the form of rejection of PAI learning, but are related to the process of changing the learning paradigm from a dominant academic orientation to learning that balances cognitive, affective, social, and character aspects.

**4. The Impact of the Application of Positive Psychology on Students' Tolerant Character**

The findings of the study showed that there was a positive change in students' social attitudes after positive psychological values were integrated into PAI learning. The most visible change was the increase in students' openness in interacting with friends who have different backgrounds. Students became more willing to work together in groups, more open to accepting other people's opinions, and did not use differences in religion, culture, or habits as barriers to interaction.

Other changes are seen in increased empathy and mutual respect. Students are increasingly able to understand that friends can have different views, customs, and backgrounds without having to be treated negatively. Learning that provides space for discussion, hands-on experience, and reflection helps students connect religious teachings with the social life they experience.

In addition, the application of positive psychology contributes to the formation of a more inclusive learning environment. Students begin to understand that differences are part of a shared life that needs to be managed through cooperation, appreciation, and positive communication. Thus, the tolerant character that emerges is not only reflected in students' understanding of tolerance, but also in the behavior of cooperating, helping each other, respecting friends, and accepting diversity.

**Tabel 1. Summary of Research Findings on the Application of Positive Psychology in PAI Learning**

| Focus of Findings | Key Findings | Form of Implement action | Positive Psychological Value | Behavior all Indicators Found | Influencing Factors | Meaning of Findings |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Integration of positive psychology in PAI | Learning not only emphasizes religious knowledge, but Also the developme nt of social and emotional aspects | Group discussions, *role-playing*, inspirational stories, self-reflection | Empathy, optimism, gratitude, openness, positive relationships | Students listen to their peers' opinions, respect different views, and are more open to interacting | Teacher competence and school support | PAI functions as a space for internalizing religious values as well as developing social character |
| Group discussions | Students are given a space to share views and experiences regarding diversity | Case discussions, experience sharing, Q&A | Openness, appreciation, empathy | Students begin to accept differences of opinion and learn to communica te without demeaning friends | Classroom management and teacher roles | Dialogue is an important means of developing tolerance |
| Role-playing | Students learn to understand the feelings and positions of others | Simulation of social situations relatedto differences and cooperation | Empathy, care, social awareness | Students are better able to consider the feelings of friends before acting | Student engagement | Direct experience reinforces the internalization of tolerance values |
| Inspirational stories | Teachers use stories to explain the practice of tolerance and reward | Character stories, life experiences, examples of positive behavior | Optimism, virtue, appreciation | Students are able to relate religious values to daily life situations | Teacher's ability to contextualize material | Examples make it easier for students to understand abstract values |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-reflection | Students evaluate attitude and behaviors toward friends | Post-learning reflection and behavioral evaluation | Self awareness, Responsibility, self-control | Students begin to recognize behaviors that need to be corrected | Consistency of reflection implementation | Tolerance develops through self-awareness and self-evaluation |
| School support | The school supports the developme nt of character-based learning | Teacher training, school policies, strengthening programs | Positive relationships, social support | Teachers are more free to use character-oriented learning strategies | Principals and institutional policies | Institutional support strengthens the sustainability of the program |
| Parental involvement | Parents help strengthen the character developed by the school | Meetings, communication and discussions about character education | Social support, care | The value of tolerance can be strengthene d through habituation at home | School-family cooperation | Consistency of school and family education increases the effectiveness of character internalization |
| Mindset barriers | Some students are used to academicall y oriented learning | Adaptation to reflective activities and character learning | — | Some students need time to be active and open | Previous learning experience | Learning transformation requires a paradigm shift |
| Limited parent/student understanding | The benefits of positive psychology are not yet ully understood | Socialization and communication | — | Initial support is not always uniform | Understanding of character education | Socialization is an important element in the successful implement action |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tolerant character changes | Students show better openness and acceptance of differences | Learning activities and social habituation | Empathy, appreciation, positive relationships | Cooperation, helping each other, accepting differences, respecting friends | Integration of learning and school environment | Positive psychology supports the transformation of tolerance from knowledge to behavior |
| Creating an inclusive environment | Relationships between students become more positive | Class interactions and daily activities | Openness, caring, appreciation | Students do not use different backgrounds as an obstacle in working together | School culture | Tolerance develops as a social practice, not just a concept |

## B. DISCUSSION

### 1. Integration of Positive Psychology in PAI Learning as Strengthening Tolerant Character

The findings of the study show that positive psychology in PAI learning at SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya is realized through strengthening empathy, optimism, gratitude, openness, and appreciation for differences. These findings show that PAI learning has a broader function than just the transfer of religious knowledge. PAI can be a space to develop students' personal and social qualities so that the understanding of religious values can be realized in positive social relationships.

These findings are related to a positive psychology perspective that places character strength as an important element of individual development. Park et al. (2004) explain that character strength has a relationship with individual well-being. In the context of education, strengths such as gratitude, care, openness, and the ability to build positive relationships can be psychological capital to help students interact more healthily with their social environment.[23] Therefore, the integration of positive psychology in PAI can be understood as an effort to bring together the religious dimension with the development of students' psychological and social qualities.

These findings are also in line with the study of Islamic education which shows that the internalization of religious values does not stop at conceptual understanding, but needs to be realized through social behavior. Khosiah et al. (2022) explained that PAI teachers have an important role in instilling religious values in elementary school students. In the context of this research, the instillation of these values is expanded through strengthening empathy, acceptance of differences, and students' ability to build positive

[23] N Park, C Peterson, and M E P Seligman, "Strengths of Character and Well-Being," *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 23, no. 5 (2004): 603–19, https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.23.5.603.50748

relationships with friends.[24]

Thus, the important novelty of the findings of this study lies in the placement of positive psychology not as a separate material, but as an integrated approach in PAI learning. Religious values become the normative foundation, while positive psychology provides a framework for developing personal strengths that allow these values to be realized in tolerant behavior.

**2. Discussion, Role-Playing, Inspirational Stories, and Reflection as Strategies for Internalizing Tolerance**

The second finding shows that the internalization of the value of tolerance takes place through active and reflective learning experiences. Teachers use group discussions, *role-playing*, inspirational stories, and self-reflection to help students understand differences more concretely. The strategy shows that the formation of tolerant character requires a learning process that involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects simultaneously.

Discussions provide space for students to encounter different perspectives. In the process, students not only learn the concept of tolerance, but practice listening, expressing opinions, and responding to different views proportionally. These findings are in line with Fanani and Aziz (2023) who show that communicative learning activities can be used to develop students' religious tolerance. PAI thus not only conveys what tolerance is, but provides a social space for students to practice it.[25]

The use of *role-playing* strengthens the dimension of empathy because students are asked to see problems from the perspective of others. In the context of positive psychology, the ability to understand other people's perspectives is one of the important foundations for the formation of healthy interpersonal relationships. This strategy becomes relevant for elementary school students because abstract values are easier to understand when translated into concrete experiences.

Inspirational stories also have an important function because they bring together values and examples. Students not only get normative rules about how they should behave, but also get a picture of real behavior that can be imitated. Meanwhile, self-reflection helps students shift their focus from just knowing good behavior to the ability to evaluate themselves.

These findings show that the formation of tolerance is more effective when learning provides students with the opportunity to know values, experience values, practice values, and reflect on those values. In this way, tolerance moves from the conceptual dimension

[24] Khosiah et al., "Strategi Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Menanamkan Nilai-Nilai Religius Peserta Didik Di Sekolah Dasar."

[25] A Fanani and R Aziz, "Pengembangan Toleransi Beragama Siswa Melalui Aktivitas Pembelajaran Di Kelas Dengan Metode Komunikatif," *Jurnal Penelitian* 17, no. 1 (2023): 61, https://doi.org/10.21043/jp.v17i1.20313.

to the internalization of character.

**3. School and Parent Support as an Ecosystem for Strengthening Positive Psychology**

The research found that the support of principals, teachers, and parents is an important factor in the successful implementation of positive psychology. These findings confirm that character education cannot be completely imposed on PAI teachers. The formation of tolerant character requires an educational ecosystem that presents consistent messages and experiences.

School support through teacher training and learning policies shows the importance of institutional roles. Hanifudin and Idawati (2024) show that the formation of student character in madrasas is related to a structured mentoring process.[26] Meanwhile, tolerance education based on school culture shows that the school environment has a strategic role in fostering appreciation for diversity.[27]

In this study, parental support extends the process of internalizing values from school to the family environment. When tolerance, empathy, and respect for others are habited consistently at school and home, students gain a stronger context to form character. Conversely, if there are differences in messages between schools and families, value internalization may be less optimal.

These findings show that positive psychology in PAI learning should not be understood as an individual teaching technique for teachers, but as an ecosystem approach. Schools, teachers, parents, and the culture of interaction between students are interrelated components in building tolerant character.

**4. Mindset Change as an Obstacle to the Implementation of Positive Psychology**

Although the application of positive psychology shows constructive results, the study found obstacles in the form of a learning mindset that is still predominantly oriented towards academic achievement. Some students and parents do not fully understand that educational success also includes character development, social skills, and the ability to build healthy relationships.

These findings are important because they show that the problem of implementation is not only in the aspect of learning methods. Learning transformation requires a change in understanding of the goals of education itself. Learning that was previously more centered on the achievement of values needs to be expanded towards overall individual development.

These barriers to understanding explain why socialization and training are important. Suprapto (2020) emphasizes the need to integrate moderation values in the development of the PAI curriculum. In practice, this integration requires the readiness of

[26] Hanifudin and Idawati, "Implementation of Islamic Counseling Guidance in Forming Student Character in Madrasah."

[27] Mustafida and Dina, "Establishment of Religious Tolerance Through Multicultural School Culture in Taman Harapan Elementary School Malang City."

teachers and institutions so that the expected values are not just written in the curriculum document, but can be realized in learning.[28]

In the context of this study, teacher training and socialization to parents serve as a strategy to equalize the orientation between school and family. This shows that the implementation of positive psychology requires a process of changing educational culture, not just the application of a set of methods in the classroom.

**5. The Impact of Positive Psychology on Empathy, Openness, and Acceptance of Differences**

The most important finding in the study was the emergence of changes in students' social behaviors. After engaging in learning that emphasizes empathy, reflection, dialogue, and appreciation for differences, students showed better openness in interacting with friends from different backgrounds. They were more willing to cooperate, more able to accept differences, and showed greater appreciation for friends.

These findings are in line with Aluf et al. (2024) who link religious moderation learning to strengthening student tolerance.[29] Asrianti et al. (2024) also show the importance of learning tolerance in PAI and Ethics materials in elementary schools.[30] This shows that tolerant character can be developed when diversity values are not only discussed conceptually, but integrated into the learning experience.

Increased empathy is a very important finding because empathy is a bridge between understanding differences and tolerant behavior. One may know that differences should be respected, but without the ability to understand the feelings and perspectives of others, such knowledge does not necessarily result in tolerant behavior. In this study, *role-playing* activities, discussions, inspirational stories, and reflections provided opportunities for students to develop these skills.

These findings also show that tolerance is not just a passive attitude in the form of allowing differences. Tolerance appears in the form of active behaviors such as cooperating, supporting friends, respecting opinions, and maintaining positive relationships with different individuals. Thus, positive psychology helps transform tolerance from normative concepts to social competence.

**6. Establishment of an Inclusive Learning Environment through Positive Psychology-Based PAI Learning**

The findings of the study show that the impact of the application of positive psychology is not only seen in individual students, but also in the social atmosphere of

[28] Suprapto, "Integrasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam."
[29] W A Aluf, I Bukhori, and A Bashith, "Evaluasi Pembelajaran Moderasi Beragama Untuk Mengukur Penguatan Toleransi Siswa Di MIN 2 Pamekasan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Indonesia (JPPI)* 4, no. 4 (2024): 1623–34, https://doi.org/10.53299/jppi.v4i4.825.
[30] Asrianti, Supriadi, and Anwar, "Studi Kritis: Pembelajaran Toleransi Dalam Buku Ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Budi Pekerti Sekolah Dasar."

learning. Increased openness, cooperation, empathy, and respect for differences contribute to the formation of a more inclusive learning environment.

These findings are in line with Hadi and Laili (2022) who show that multicultural-based PAI has a role in developing appreciation for diversity.[31] Mawadda et al. (2023) also emphasized the importance of tolerance learning in Islamic Religious Education and character education.[32] This strengthens the argument that religious learning can be an important instrument in developing a harmonious coexistence if it is conveyed through an open and inclusive perspective.

The inclusive environment in this study is not only interpreted as the existence of students with different backgrounds in one school, but further related to the quality of interaction between them. Students are given a relatively safe space to express their opinions, learn to understand differences, and build cooperation. Thus, diversity changes from a potential source of conflict to a source of social learning experience.

These findings provide important implications that the development of tolerant character needs to be placed in the school culture. Teachers can begin the process through PAI learning, but its sustainability requires the support of daily interactions, examples, school policies, and parental involvement.

**7. Synthesis of Findings: A Model for the Application of Positive Psychology in PAI Learning**

Based on the overall findings, the application of positive psychology in PAI learning at SDN Banjarsugihan V Surabaya can be understood as a process consisting of three interrelated layers. The first layer is core values, namely empathy, gratitude, optimism, openness, appreciation, and acceptance of differences. The second layer is pedagogical strategy, namely group discussions, *role-playing*, inspirational stories, self-reflection, and habituation of positive interactions. The third layer is the supporting ecosystem, which includes teachers, principals, parents, school policies, and a culture of interaction between students.

These three layers produce changes in students' tolerant character which is reflected in increased empathy, openness, cooperation, respect for differences, and the ability to build positive relationships. These relationships can be formulated as follows:
**Positive Psychology Values → PAI Learning Strategies → Social Experience and Reflection → Internalization of Values → Behavior Change → Tolerant Character.**

The model is one of the important findings of the research because it shows that tolerant character is not formed only through the delivery of material about tolerance. Character develops when positive values are translated into learning experiences, strengthened through reflection, and supported by the school and family environment. Therefore, the effectiveness of positive psychology in PAI learning lies in its ability to

[31] Hadi and Laili, "Multicultural-Based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMP Sapta Andika Denpasar."
[32] Mawadda et al., "Tolerance Learning in Islamic Religious and Character Education Textbooks."

bridge students' religious knowledge, psychological experiences, and social practices.

## Conclusion

The conclusions of this study emphasize the importance of applying positive psychology in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at the elementary school level to develop students' tolerant character. By integrating values such as empathy, gratitude, and optimism, schools can create a more inclusive learning environment that supports appreciation for differences. Although challenges remain, particularly in changing the mindset of students who are accustomed to traditional learning approaches, techniques such as group discussions, role-playing, and self-reflection-based activities can encourage students to become more open and respectful toward others. The success of this approach is also strongly influenced by support from principals, teachers, and parents, while limited understanding among some parents and students regarding the benefits of positive psychology needs to be addressed through socialization and training. The findings further indicate that integrating positive psychology into religious education not only strengthens students' understanding of religion but also contributes to the development of better social character, which is increasingly important in a pluralistic society. Overall, this research contributes to the development of more effective curricula and learning methods by demonstrating that a positive psychology-based approach can optimize the formation of tolerant character and help produce students who are not only academically capable but also thoughtful and respectful in interacting with diversity.

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