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## Creating the Habitus of Tolerance in Indonesian Schools: Normative, Praxis, and Symbolic Dimensions

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## Creating the Habitus of Tolerance in Indonesian Schools: Normative, Praxis, and Symbolic Dimensions

### Cover Page Footnote

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# Creating the Habitus of Tolerance in Indonesian Schools: Normative, Praxis, and Symbolic Dimensions

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## Abstrak

Dalam masyarakat multikultural, toleransi merupakan prasyarat penting untuk menjaga ketertiban sosial dalam kehidupan bermasyarakat. Sekolah merupakan salah satu lokus terpenting untuk pembiasaan karakter dan budaya toleransi. Namun, sebagian besar kajian yang telah dilakukan cenderung lebih fokus pada masalah intoleransi di sekolah, dan belum menggali bagaimana habitus toleransi dapat diciptakan dan dipraktikkan. Penelitian ini merupakan studi tentang bagaimana sembilan sekolah di tujuh kota berbeda di Indonesia telah mengembangkan habitus toleransi mereka sendiri. Kami menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan telaah dokumen. Kajian menunjukkan bahwa pembiasaan toleransi di sekolah diwujudkan melalui tiga dimensi. Pertama, dimensi normatif, yaitu melalui nilai, norma, dan peraturan. Kedua, dimensi praktis, yaitu melalui proses pembelajaran di sekolah berupa kegiatan dan kebiasaan yang diciptakan. Ketiga, dimensi simbolik, yaitu melalui penggunaan simbol-simbol material.

## Abstract

In a multicultural society, tolerance is an important prerequisite for maintaining social order in communal life. Schools are one of the most important loci for habituating a character and culture of tolerance. However, most studies that have been carried out tend to focus more on the problem of intolerance in schools, and have not explored how the habitus of tolerance can be created and practiced instead. This research is a study on how nine schools in seven different cities across Indonesia have developed their own habitus of tolerance. We employed a qualitative research method with in-depth interviews, observa-

tion, and document review data collection techniques. The study shows that the habitus of tolerance in schools is realized through three dimensions. First, the normative dimension, namely through values, norms, and regulations. Second, the practical dimension, namely through the learning process at school in the form of activities and created habits. Third, the symbolic dimension, namely through the use of material symbols.

Keywords: Habitus, tolerance, school, education, Indonesia.

## INTRODUCTION

In the multicultural Indonesian society, people coexist in various groups of different beliefs, ethnicities, races, religions, social classes, genders, sexual orientations, ages, and cultures. To live in such a diverse society, a character and culture of tolerance are not only quintessential for realizing a peaceful and civilized social life, but also act as the initial capital which allows social integration and solidarity to occur. However, Indonesia is also often plagued by cases of intolerance, particularly in the form of discriminatory actions against minority groups. Although these cases of intolerance are by no means limited to religious conflicts, social discrimination on the basis of religion is a serious concern in the nation.

The problem of intolerance in Indonesia had been pointed out by various studies, including research conducted by Wahid Institute (2020), Setara Institute (2021), and the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah (2021). Studies also found that intolerance has taken place in education institutions, including formal schools. This is shown by the high number of students and teachers who hold intolerant views, which prompted some of them to take part in discriminatory actions (PPIM, 2020). Surveys conducted by *Kompas* (2021) show that students are exposed to intolerant teachings through certain extracurricular activities, and schools are complicit in legitimizing them through discriminatory school policies. Public schools are particularly vulnerable to radicalism, as revealed in the research results of Maarif Institute (Tirto, 2021).

Ideally, schools should become the loci of education that contribute to creating tolerant and multicultural citizens through direct encounters with differences (Raihani, 2018). The rise of religious intolerance in education institutions suggests that policymakers and experts have yet to consider how tolerance is disseminated through the non-cognitive and latent aspects – or “hidden curriculum” – of school life. Schools should be seen as “arenas” where different values, including that of tolerance, are socialized, internalized, and negotiated in daily interactions between

members of the school community. This process might culminate in a “habitus of tolerance”, namely where a student’s character and culture facilitates how different groups within the school environment interact without prejudice or discrimination when faced with the diversity of religions/beliefs, races/ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, socio-economic conditions, and physical limitations.

When intolerance occurs in schools, it entails that serious reforms are needed within the school institutions themselves. However, previous research tends to focus on the overt “religious dimensions” of school life, while the process of habituating tolerance should also take into account the more mundane, daily interactions amongst members of the school community. Studies by Kurniawan (2018) and Baidhawiy (2006), for example, examine the latent aspects of intolerance in the public schools, ranging from classroom curricula to how the state separate religious lessons in accordance to the students’ registered beliefs , which could foster insensitivity towards diversity and difference.

Previous studies also focused more narrowly on the problem of intolerance, rather than on how the habitus of tolerance can be fostered in schools. Meanwhile, our initial research shows that there are schools in Indonesia that have attempted to create and practice their own habitus of tolerance. These habitus are manifested in three dimensions, namely the normative, the practical, and the symbolic. This paper aims to describe, in-depth, how the habituation of tolerance works through these three separate dimensions.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach, which seeks to delve into and analyze issues in society (Creswell 2014: 40). Our specific unit of analysis is the habitus of tolerance in schools that were chosen from a preliminary study. These schools are located in seven different cities, namely Medan, Jakarta, Tangerang, Yogyakarta, Salatiga, Pangandaran, and Negara.

This study employs three data collection techniques. The first is in-depth interview, which is the process of digging open and focused information pertaining to our research topic. The interlocutors for this research include teachers, principals, students, alumni, as well as foundations (in the case of private schools).

The second method is document study, which was conducted by analyzing official school documents, such as their vision and mission statement, regulations, as well as school and/or foundation policies. This study aims to obtain an overview on how the habitus of tolerance in these schools are affected by their formal histories, as well as providing research material for our inquiry on the normative dimensions of this habitus.

The third data collection technique involves observing the everyday school activities conducted by students and teachers, both inside and outside the classroom. In addition, we also conducted observations on the material symbols found in these schools, which corresponds to the symbolic dimension of the habitus of tolerance. These artifacts include the school building, murals, bulletin boards, wall decorations, paintings, sculptures, names of rooms, supporting tools for activities, as well as other objects.

The schools that serve as the loci of our study consist of both formal and non-formal schools (PKBM), and encompass schools that are affiliated with certain religions, schools that are not affiliated with a particular religion, schools affiliated with certain teachings, as well as one state school. These schools are: 1. Sultan Iskandar Muda High School in Medan; 2. Canisius College High School in Jakarta; 3. Pahoa Junior High and High School in Tangerang; 4. Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi High School in Jakarta; 5. Bakti Karya Vocational School in Parigi, Pangandaran, West Java; 6. BOPKRI 2 High School in Yogyakarta; 7. PKBM Sanggar Anak Alam in Yogyakarta; 8. PKBM Qaryah Thayyibah in Salatiga, and; 9. State High School 1 Negara in Jembrana, Bali.

#### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: HABITUS OF TOLERANCE

Two concepts are used in the analysis of this research: “habitus” and “tolerance”. Both are synthesized into the unified concept of “habitus of tolerance”, which serves as the key concept of this research. As quoted by Lecordier (2012), Durkheim defines “habitus” as a learning process—the dispositions that students acquire during their education. Here, habitus can be interpreted broadly as “the way to be”. At the same time, habitus also forms and instills models of behavior, as well as ways of perceiving and judging which are internalized and become the basis of culture. As such, habitus is also the total sum of values that are instilled in the habits and experiences of everyday life of each individual.

Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) further elaborated habitus as not only the sum effects of living within one milieu, but that of the different environments an individual will encounter throughout their lifetime. According to Bourdieu, habitus can be defined as a system of “objectively acquired generative schemas” adapted to the particular conditions in which it is formed. Habitus is also associated with strong feelings of embodiment of social and cultural messages, including how people carry themselves, along with their thoughts and feelings.

In the context of education, habitus can also be understood as a medium of cultural cultivation and production; an act of learning which amounts to the long-lasting socio-generative disposition of an individual, guiding and perpetuating their various practices and habits (Grenfell, 1998). Observing habitus in schools are useful for understanding the dispositions generated by social activities and education practices. Upon entering an educational institution, students are confronted with an aggregate diversity of individual predispositions and behavior. This, in turn, can become the basis for structuring their own various individual experiences.

In 1995, UNESCO published the Declaration of the Principles of Tolerance (Cartasev, 2006). The declaration contains the principles of tolerance that can be used as a reference for global social life. The first principle comprises a number of attitudes: respect, acceptance, as well as an appreciation for diversity, world cultures, forms of expression, and ways of being human. The second principle emphasizes the distinction between tolerance and mere concessions, or attitudes that are considered to be condescending or indulgent. According to this principle, tolerance can only be named as such if it entails *active* attitudes driven by the recognition of universal human rights and fundamental individual freedoms. The third principle is the responsibility to uphold human rights, pluralism (including cultural pluralism), democracy, and the rule of law. Finally, the fourth principle explains that the practice of tolerance also does not mean tolerance of social injustice, and should not involve the neglect and/or weakening of one’s own beliefs.

By elaborating both the concept of habitus in education as initiated by Durkheim, Bourdieu-Passeron, and Grenfell, as well as the general concept of tolerance espoused by UNESCO, we define “habitus of tolerance” as the long-standing socio-generative disposition in a person, acquired through the act of learning, which guides and perpetuates various practices and habits that help to structure their individual ex-

periences. These long-standing dispositions, eventually, enable them to learn and practice respect, acceptance, and appreciation for the diversity of cultures, forms of expression, and ways of being human. In the context of schools, we identify the habitus of tolerance by observing three operational dimensions, namely the *normative* dimension of values, norms and regulations; the *practical* dimension of learning processes, particularly in the form of activities and formed habits; as well as the *symbolic* dimension, which we identify through the creation and use of material symbols found in schools.

### SOCIAL DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE IN SCHOOLS

Of the nine schools that we studied, most contain a diversity of ethnic and religious identities within their communities. Some schools are dominated by certain ethnic and religious groups. Most students at Canisius College High School are Chinese-Indonesian and Catholic. At Pahoa School, most of the students are Chinese-Indonesian and Buddhist. Meanwhile, the students of PKBM Qaryah Thayyibah are almost entirely Javanese and Muslim. However, the homogeneous student composition within these three schools has not prevented the creation of tolerant characters and culture, as the schools run specific programs oriented towards pluralism and introducing diversity .

Meanwhile, the schools and other learning communities that are not affiliated with a particular religion showcase a more diverse composition of students. Bakti Karya Vocational School in Parigi, Pangandaran, West Java, exemplifies this by providing opportunities for students from Eastern Indonesia to study there. These schools also boast a wider diversity of socio-economic backgrounds. Several schools pay great attention to the equal distribution of educational opportunities among underprivileged groups, implementing mechanisms such as cross-subsidy for tuition fees. For example, the Sultan Iskandar Muda School in Medan employs a unique policy named “Cross-Border Foster Children”, in which foster parents can provide scholarships to underprivileged students from a different ethnicity or religion.

The schools also displayed ethnic and religious diversity among its teachers and education personnel. Although teachers in schools that are affiliated to a certain religion tend to be dominated by a particular religion or ethnicity, this has not prevented the school from launching diversity-oriented programs for their students. We found that the teach-



ers, students, principals, and foundations of the nine schools generally convey themselves as tolerant characters. This tolerant predisposition is rendered visible in their daily attitudes and behavior towards differences in religion, ethnicity, race, gender and sexual orientation, as well as how they cater to students with special needs. In addition, this tolerant character is reflected in how our informants respond to issues of interfaith leadership, religious conversion, interfaith marriage, women's leadership, and the existence of LGBTs and other sexual minorities.

Most members of the nine school communities that we studied accept interfaith leadership, religious conversion, and interfaith marriage. Most informants said that religious conversion and interfaith marriages are individual human rights, and thus should be respected. Some informants, however, also added that interfaith marriages have "greater risk" due to differences in beliefs; nonetheless, they admitted that such marital arrangements are ultimately a matter of individual choice that should not be interfered with.

A tolerant attitude was also shown by most school communities regarding women leadership. In other words, they accept the existence of female leaders. Almost all of the informants mentioned that the quality of a leader is not determined by their religion or gender, but rather by one's ability to lead. However, there was one teacher who assumed that men naturally possess more leadership qualities compared to women.

Our informants displayed a more ambiguous attitude when it comes to LGBTs. While most of them asserted that non-heteronormative sexual orientation is deeply connected to inalienable individual rights, some informants stated that "LGBT people" still should not actively persuade or advocate for their sexual orientation in the wider community. While most of the people we talked with admitted that they are willing to become friends with LGBTs, several informants also claimed that individuals with non-heteronormative sexual orientation were "deviants", and needed to be "returned to the right path". Thus, the conception of "tolerance" in school communities towards sexual minorities remains a problematic, nuanced issue that warrants a separate inquiry.

Although the everyday interactions among members of the school communities portray an overall tolerant disposition, several cases of intolerance had also taken place within the schools we studied. In one school, a religion teacher required students of a certain religion to wear head covering, which they claimed to be in accordance with religious teaching. Meanwhile, several schools only provided places of worship

for certain religions, leaving students who adhere to different faiths unable to conduct their worship within school grounds. A number of schools also found themselves unable to facilitate conducting religious lessons for all beliefs, forcing several minority students to take religion classes that differ from their own. Finally, several cases of intolerance also occurred due to differences in race or skin color among students. According to several teacher informants, this conflict was caused due to students “lacking prior exposure” to their peers from a different race. Nonetheless, the habituation of tolerant values had succeeded in changing their perspective, so that over time, students became more acquainted with and appreciate how their skin colors differ from one another.

#### HABITUS OF TOLERANCE: THE NORMATIVE DIMENSION

The normative values espoused within school activities are usually able to be traced back to the school’s main vision, which serves as the main principle that guides various actions and decisions of the school community. These values were proclaimed by the founders of the school and implemented by the entire community throughout their daily learning process. The nine schools that we studied have their own values, norms, and regulations that reflect the spirit of tolerance, which are applied in various ways and characteristics.

The most common value we found pertaining to tolerance is mutual respect. All schools translate the value of mutual respect as norms against discriminating others, treating others with respect, and acknowledging the rights of each individual. Overall, the value of mutual respect is exemplified by appreciating other people who have similarities and differences in their social identity, including those of ethnicity, religion, and social class. In upholding the value of mutual respect, schools do not provide space for intolerant ideas such as racism, discrimination, or feelings of supremacy by one group over another.

Every school recognizes the fact that the Indonesian nation is composed of diverse social groups. In recognizing this diversity, schools are compelled to instill values that embrace multiculturalism, religiosity, and nationalism in students. These values are considered to be an inseparable part of everyday life, and socialized to students as a reference in seeing the diversity of ethnicity, religion, and social class identity. Furthermore, all schools consider Indonesian diversity as quintessential

to realizing peaceful daily social interactions, and as such need to be nurtured and defended.

Virtually all schools highly uphold the value of mutual respect, albeit in different forms. In schools that orient themselves based on the philosophy of Buddhism and Confucianism, respect towards one's parents is seen as a principal foundation of morality. These schools emphasize respect towards the family (namely parents and siblings) as the smallest and most immediate social institution, before asserting respect towards peers, teachers, school administrators, and the surrounding community. In addition, the value of mutual respect is not only limited to fellow humans, but also encompasses non-human living things, including animals and plants (the environment), as is taught at Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi High School.

Another important value socialized by schools is that of compassion. This value includes cultivating sympathy, empathy, and sensitivity to the difficulties that befall upon others, especially those who are less fortunate and marginalized. Schools embody the value of compassion by involving students to help and serve others in need. At Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi High School, the value of compassion is even manifested as an independent school subject, namely the Humanist Culture unit, which aims to raise the sensitivity of students to the needs of other humans around them and to preserve the environment.

All schools also uphold the value of honesty, which is often explicitly stated within school regulations. Violating norms pertaining to honest behavior will result in the imposition of sanctions. The sanctions take on different forms, which could depend on the degree of violation. Canisius College High School, for example, can expel a student who is caught cheating, and emphasizes this provision within their school regulation. All schools assert that honesty is an important asset for individuals to build public trust, as well as to strengthen their relationship with the society and community.

In some schools, such as Pahoia High School and State High School 1 Negara, the value of excellence holds an important place within their vision and mission. Excellence is defined as a high aptitude in the physical, intellectual, and mental aspects of an individual, in which these qualifications are needed to face the challenges of rapid technological change and social transformation. The schools encourage students to become superior individuals not only in the academic field, but also in

their social skills, which will be especially beneficial when they later fully become members of society.

#### HABITUS OF TOLERANCE: THE PRACTICAL DIMENSION

All schools conduct various activities to instill tolerant values and behavior. “Live-in” is a common extracurricular program: for approximately one week, students would live in the homes of village folks or people in other poor settlements. They follow the homeowners through their daily activities – working, having meals, and doing household chores. In a different form of live-in, students would live with religious leaders or administrators in charge of places of worship. Students, especially those of a different religion, are introduced to these figures and follow them throughout their activities as religious leaders or administrators.

Canisius College, a Catholic school, conducted their live-in at a *pesantren* – an Islamic boarding school. Throughout the live-in period, the Canisius and *pesantren* students would mingle together, conducting group activities and holding discussions. On different occasions, Canisius students (or “Canisians”) would also spend one week of interfaith live-ins in a Buddhist School, or other similar places. These programs help students to directly experience a life that is different from theirs and witness difficulties that they may have never felt before.

At times, two or more different schools would also hold events together, such as inter-school sports competitions and art exhibitions. The Student Council (OSIS) of State High School 1 Negara conducts religious dialogues with students from other public schools, Catholic schools, and Islamic *madrasas*. Delegates from each school would talk about issues between adherents of different religions in Indonesia, and envision solutions to the problems of religious relations. Other activities include social services, such as giving donations to victims of natural disasters, as was done in BOPKRI 2 High School, Yogyakarta, as well as Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi High School.

The excellence-oriented Pahoa School Foundation regularly organizes events that enable all its school members to keep up with national developments, often in the form of lectures and dialogues delivered by experts in the field. Furthermore, students are also asked to write down their hopes for the nation, as well as to envision how Indonesia would look like in the future. These activities encourage them to concretely

delve into national vision and foster a sense of responsibility as Indonesian citizens.

Meanwhile, Bakti Karya Vocational School in Parigi, Pangandaran, have organized a “peace workshop” on tolerance, inviting prominent figures or institutions to deliver materials for students. The school also conducts a number of social programs, such as volunteering activities where students teach local children, as well as building an open library for the general public. To celebrate the National Month for Language as well as the historical 1928 Youth Pledge, the school organizes the “28 Language Festival” in October, where participants are asked to convey ideas using their local language. Students would speak about their culture, but also on other interesting things they don’t find in their place of origin. Throughout the cultural festival, students would play traditional games, sing folk songs, and share stories about their customs. These activities not only instill admiration for the nation’s cultural diversity, but also encourage them to preserve these cultures as well.

For all schools, National Day celebrations are common events to celebrate cultural diversity. Every year, schools carry out ceremonies, competitions, games, and exhibitions during the Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia on August 17, the “birthday” of Pancasila on June 1, as well as *Hari Kartini – the country’s National Women’s Day, which falls* on April 21.

Several schools, such as Pahoa School and Bakti Karya Vocational School, also hold celebrations of various religious holidays. These activities involve the entire school community and are organized together by students of different faiths. A student of Bakti Karya Vocational School said that during Eid prayers, their non-Muslim friends would organize celebrations and prepare food; in turn, Muslim students would help organize worship services and do cleaning during Christmas. Students and teachers who adhere to the religion are involved in worship, but the celebration is attended by all school members. Other schools celebrate religious holidays in different ways. As the number of teachers and students who adhere to Islam in State High School 1 Negara are small, they celebrate Islamic holidays in collaboration with other nearby high schools, conducting worship together in one of the schools, or in a mosque.

When it comes to teaching religion as a school subject, some schools aspire to provide teachers and classrooms for students of all religions, no matter if the number of adherents is small. This principled practice

was carried out by Paho School, State High School 1 Negara, and the Sultan Iskandar Muda High School in Medan. Several schools, such as Canisius College, Paho School, and BOPKRI 2 High School in Yogyakarta, would also hold religious retreats for several days apart from the formal religion classes. These retreats are conducted by gathering students of the same religion into one big group, and have them guided by religious leaders such as priests, pastors, and clerics (*ustadz*).

By learning in a diverse school community, students are provided with opportunities to learn about the teachings of other religions during their daily interactions. In Paho School, students are allowed to take religious lessons that differ from their own religion for the entire three years of their junior high or high school experience, as long as they have received their parents' approval. Students are also able to learn of other religions just by virtue of studying and mingling together in a diverse religious group: one alumnus of Paho School recounted how their peers would share stories of their respective religious lessons to friends of other faiths. A teacher in a Catholic School in Jakarta echoed this as well:

“Catholics and students of other faiths are free to find out what *wudhu* (Islamic pre-prayer ablution) means to increase [their] knowledge, and that is good” (YH, a teacher)

Students and teachers carry out prayers every day, typically at the beginning and/or end of school time. Some schools perform prayers of a certain religion, while other schools hold interfaith or “universal” prayers instead. In BOPKRI 2 High School, Sultan Iskandar Muda High School, State High School 1 Negara, and Paho School, students and teachers are provided facilities to conduct worship within the school area. Meanwhile, Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi High School regularly holds a “Worship Friday”, where both students and teachers are able to use worship facilities provided by the school to conduct prayers according to their own religions. A Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi teacher, PU, explained that the weekly activity is meant to provide opportunities for school residents to conduct their rights of religious worship. In addition, students are also encouraged to be mindful and tolerant to followers of other religions.

At the end of every school day, all students of Canisius College are asked to conduct self-reflection, or *examen conscientia*. Within this

brief moment, students are asked to look back on their experiences throughout the day, to recognize and be grateful with the blessings they received, while also asking for strength, patience, and optimism to live for the next day. The self-reflection takes around 10-15 minutes, in which students write down their thoughts in a designated book, and end with a prayer.

Similarly, the teachers and students at PKBM Sanggar Anak Alam Yogyakarta, Pahoa School, Sultan Iskandar Muda Senior High School and PKBM Qaryah Thayyibah Salatiga are also encouraged to write, albeit in a more structured book or article form. Students usually write down their stories and experiences, while teachers write according to their field of science, on the state of their schools, pedagogical reflections, and so on. In doing this, both students and teachers are trained to creatively express themselves and their knowledge in written form.

Another simple habit is to politely and respectfully greet and salute one another, which seems to be a common courtesy conducted by students, teachers, guests, and other community members in all schools. Pahoa High School reminds its students of the “3S”: *Sapa* (Greeting), *Senyum* (Smiling), and *Sopan* (Being Polite). They also encourage the habit of cleaning tables and chairs after use, reminding students the importance of being orderly, maintaining cleanliness, and ultimately providing comfort and respect for others who will use the amenities afterwards.

#### HABITUS OF TOLERANCE: THE SYMBOLIC DIMENSION

Apart from inculcating tolerant values and norms through rules, activities, and habits, schools also create a habitus of tolerance through the presence of “material symbols”. In general, the material symbols we observed correspond to at least one of these three dimensions. The first pertains to fulfilling a functional need: a house of worship, for example, is built on school grounds to facilitate religious activities. Second, material symbols can also be a method of experiential learning, as students and teachers alike encounter symbols that represent various groups, thereby asserting diversity as a social fact of their community. Finally, there are also material symbols that explicitly encourage the celebration of diversity.

The material symbols in schools range from places of worship, objects that contain certain symbolic meanings (such as certain statues or

species of plants), murals on walls, slogans, pictures, photos, to naming classrooms and school buildings with icons or symbols of tolerance, as well as messages that reflect universal humanism. Although some schools may put greater emphasis on these symbols compared to others, our study shows that material symbols have become an important element for experiential learning in all schools.

Places of worship are arguably the most prominent among other material symbols: to provide a place or room for worship entails allocating a considerable amount of funds in the first place, and not all schools are able to provide these facilities. In this regard, we can classify schools as adopting one of three approaches when it comes to building their own spaces for religious activities.

The first are schools that aim to cater as much as possible to the religious diversity of their community. The Sultan Iskandar Muda High School in Medan, for example, built four medium-sized houses of worship at the back of their school: a Hindu temple, a church, a mosque, and a Buddhist temple. The four houses of worship are located close to one another, with two buildings standing side-by-side and facing another pair. In the center of this area, two velvet apple trees (*Diospyros blancoi*) were planted as a symbol of universal appreciation of all life. On one hand, the trees provide oxygen for all human beings regardless of their religion, ethnicity, race, and other differences; on the other hand, the trees themselves were created by God - the source of life for all living beings. Furthermore, the trees are dioecious, in which one is male and the other female. This pairing implies that the male and female have to coexist in tandem to bear fruit, where the absence of one will not yield any harvest.

Figure 1. The four houses of worship at Sultan Iskandar Muda Senior High School and the velvet apple trees in the center of the area. The trees symbolize appreciation for all living things without distinction of identity.

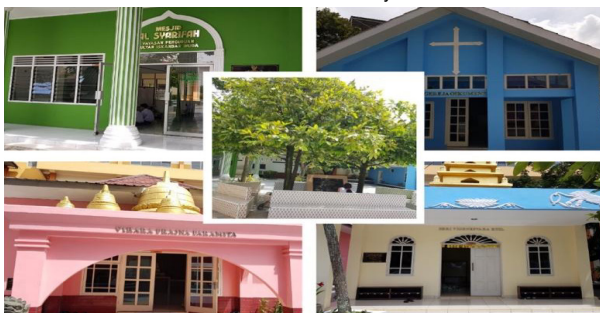


Photo by: Lucia Ratih Kusumadewi



This entire complex stands as an unmistakable symbol of religious diversity in the school, and students are taught to respect people of other religions who are praying by maintaining calm in the area. Not far from this plaza, there is also a fairly large hall named “Bung Karno Auditorium” that can be used for various events, including religious or interfaith activities.

Several religion-based schools also provide spaces for adherents of other faiths to pray within the school area. Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi High School is based on Buddhist teachings, but they provide two prayer rooms for Muslim students, as well as allowing the auditorium to function as a makeshift chapel or temple when Christian and Buddhist students conduct mass worship. We find a similar situation in Pahoa High School, which provides education based on universal Confucian ethics, but accepts students from various religions. To facilitate worship, the school provides a large Islamic prayer room, as well as allowing other rooms and their auditorium to be used for joint religious activities. Finally, the Christian BOPKRI 2 High School in Yogyakarta also has a designated prayer room for their Muslim students.

The second type are schools that only provide one room or place for worship—usually for the faith that is adhered to by the majority of students. At Bakti Karya Vocational School, there is only one room within the school area that functions as an Islamic prayer room, while their Christian students attend their weekly mass at a nearby church every Sunday. Nonetheless, the classrooms, courtyard, and school hall can all be utilized for joint activities, including for religious events that are co-organized by every member of the school community. Similarly, Canisius College High School only has a chapel, as the institution is founded by Jesuits and the majority of their students are Catholic. Nonetheless, their Muslim students are welcome to pray at the nearest mosque.

Finally, there are schools that do not provide any place of worship, such as PKBM Sanggar Anak Alam, Yogyakarta, and PKBM Qaryah Thayyibah, Salatiga. Both schools orient their teachings around universal humanitarian philosophies, and thus aim to prevent as much as possible to privilege or discriminate students based on their religious groups. PKBM Sanggar Anak Alam does not even provide religion as a school subject as they see religious matters to be within the purview of parents. Even so, this does not mean that the school refuses to acknowledge religion and spirituality as a facet of individual and social

life, and there is a habit of conducting universal prayers together. At PKBM Qaryah Thayyibah, all of the students are Muslim, and they are welcome to pray at a mosque located next to the school.

Another group of material symbols are illustrations of figures, slogans, classroom names, statues, and murals drawn on the school walls. It seems that visual symbolism is present in all the schools that we studied. The walls of Bakti Karya Parigi Vocational School are filled with slogans such as “Multicultural is Me”, a mural of founding fathers Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta, as well as a fairly large inscription of *Pancasila*—the nation’s ideological pillars—along with the injunction to “Learn from Anyone, and Whenever”. In the teacher’s room, a painting of founding father Tan Malaka is present along with his infamous aphorism: “The purpose of education is to sharpen intelligence, strengthen willpower, and refine feelings.” Finally, a slogan saying “Stay Positive and Live [sic] in Harmony” is painted on the floor of the practice room. The school also provides a communication board that can be freely used to disseminate information, post wall magazines, and share stories, including those related to diversity.

Figure 2. Murals at Bakti Karya Vocational School, Parigi, Pangandaran, West Java



Photo by: Lucia Ratih Kusumadewi

Other schools also adorn their environment with vibrant murals. At PKBM Sanggar Anak Alam, a mural with colorful pictures accompany

the Javanese proverb “*Niteni, Niroke, Nambahi*”, or “Observing, Replicating [Good Deeds], and Building Upon”. “*Mendengar Saya Lupa, Melihat Saya Ingat, Melakukan Saya Paham, Menemukan Sendiri Saya Kuasai*” or “Hearing I Forget, Seeing I Remember, Finding I Understand, Finding I am Powerful” and “*Salam, Sekolah Apa Ini?*” or “Greetings, What School Is This?”. The school is also filled with illustrations of Javanese *wayang* (shadow puppet) characters, and each room is named after a virtuous *wayang* character from traditional Hindu epics such as Mahabharata and Ramayana. At PKBM Qaryah Thayyibah, a picture of the school founder is accompanied by the slogan “*Kamu Berkarya Maka Kamu Ada*” – “You Create, therefore You Exist”.

Figure 3. Murals at PKBM Sanggar Anak Alam Yogyakarta and PKBM Qaryah Thayyibah Salatiga



Photo by: Lucia Ratih Kusumadewi

At Sultan Iskandar Muda High School, classroom doors are painted with pictures of national figures that championed diversity such as Bung Karno, Abdurrahman Wahid, Buya Syafii Maarif, as well as global peace figures such as Mother Teresa and Kofi Annan. These pictures are accompanied by short descriptions of the valiant efforts and services these figures have done for the nation. Pictures of other national heroes from different regions can also be seen throughout the school, and they are intended to remind that Indonesia was not only formed by certain groups, but is the aggregate result of the struggles of different groups from various regions. In addition, the school also displayed pictures of educational figures such as Ki Hadjar Dewantara, Rohana Kudus, and Ahmad Dahlan.

We also encountered similar symbols in BOPKRI 2 High School, Paha High School, Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi High School, and State High School 1 Negara. At BOPKRI 2 High School, paintings and photographs with themes of tolerance, diversity, peace, and care for the en-

vironment adorn the school walls. These visual works are mostly made by students, and they contain phrases such as “Tolerance, or Nothing at All”, “Peace is Beautiful”, “Caring for Unity, Respecting Diversity”, “The Beauty of Togetherness in Diversity” and “Indonesia Exists because of Diversity”. In addition, school walls are also decorated with photos of national heroes and a map of Indonesia.

Figure 4. Photos and paintings about tolerance at BOPKRI 2 High School.



Photo by: Indera Ratna Irawati Pattinasarany

At Paha School, writings about Confucian values and the school’s vision, mission, and history can be found on the walls along with photos of national heroes and a description of their services. There is also a statue of the school’s founder, as well as a school history museum. This is similar to that found at the Cinta Kasih Tzu Chi High School, where we encountered the picture of a highly respected Buddhist leader along with quotes from teachings of universal humanism in the school walls. Meanwhile, at State High School 1 Negara, there is a statue of Ganesha as the patron god as well as a statue of Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge.

Finally, some schools pay considerable attention to the preservation of Indonesian culture.. At BOPKRI 2 High School, cultural artifacts of a specific region such as clothing, musical instruments, sculptures, and paintings are displayed in the main arrival hall and library, and they would be periodically alternated with artifacts from other regions. In the library, a special “Multicultural Corner” is also created. The school also provides *batik* lessons, where the students’ *batik* works are displayed on the walls, as well as *gamelan* musical instruments. Meanwhile, students at Bakti Karya Vocational School would wear traditional clothes during the “28 Language Festival”. In collaboration with the local community, the school foundation established an education-tourism village called

“*Kampung Nusantara*”, where the walls of houses are painted with views of landscapes and traditional houses from various regions in Indonesia, providing a unique material symbolism.

Figure 5. Edutourism Village “Nusantara” in Pangandaran



Photo by: Lucia Ratih Kusumadewi

## CONCLUSION

The habitus of tolerance in schools can be created through three dimensions. Firstly, the normative dimension, namely by implementing values, norms, and rules that encourage tolerant behavior and dispositions. The second dimension is practical, and pertains to the various activities and habits that foster a culture of tolerance. The third dimension, namely the symbolic, pertains to the material symbols that are related to or directly encourage tolerance in schools. The intersection of these three dimensions help members of the school community to experience “real diversity” through encounters with others and their differences. They recognize that those who are different from them deserve to be respected and treated humanely, but also accept diversity as a social fact that cannot be denied, and deserves to be addressed or even celebrated properly.

There certainly remains many challenges in creating and practicing the habitus of tolerance in schools. However, this study shows that it is possible to foster such tolerant dispositions and attitudes.. The schools

we studied do not only encourage a character and culture of tolerance among different social groups, but have also been able to build a sense of solidarity between social classes and develop social awareness to less-advantaged social groups. Those who have more will provide aid for the less fortunate; the strong will cater to the weak—and all this in spite of visible cultural differences. Ideas of anti-discrimination, fraternity, peace, humanity, and *gotong royong* (cooperation and mutual assistance) thrive in all these schools.

We believe that the government and policymakers should learn from the practices in these schools to formulate and implement a habitus of tolerance in education institutions. Further collaboration with researchers, academics, as well as various other schools will be quintessential when conducting further studies. These studies can focus on examining models of tolerance habituation that may be replicated at various levels of education, while paying attention to the local community context in respective regions. Another important point is to learn about the various challenges that may arise from implementing these models. All of this will be beneficial to improve a national policy that seeks to develop a culture of tolerance in schools across Indonesia.

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