

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY IN SHAPING CHARACTER AND PROMOTING TOLERANT VALUES AMONG STUDENTS OF THE RISTEK NUSANTARA JAYA COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

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Abstract: *Religious education plays a crucial role in instilling tolerance and building students' character. This study uses a qualitative approach to investigate how religious education policies shape character and promote tolerance at the Ristek Nusantara Jaya Community Learning Center (PKBM). Data collection methods used in this study included observation, document analysis, and interviews. The results indicate that moral and spiritual values improved when religious education policies were incorporated into the PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya curriculum. These findings also support the theory that inclusive religious education can be an effective tool for promoting tolerance and social balance.*

Keywords: *Religious education, character, tolerance, PKBM, educational policy*

Introduction

Education is a cultural process that occurs within society and in schools, aimed at enhancing human dignity. Improving the quality of education is certainly not easy. This depends on how learning is implemented within the education system itself. Likewise, improving teacher quality and teaching practices significantly impact the quality of learning. Teacher performance is crucial to monitor and evaluate because teachers carry out professional duties, meaning these tasks can only be carried out with the unique competencies acquired through educational programs (Eko Sigit Purwanto & Nik Haryanti, 2025).

The learning process is a process of transforming information, both scientific knowledge and learning materials, which is conveyed by teachers through certain tools or media. By observing this development, every educator can prepare their students to be active and dynamic. A person's entire being consists of faith values manifested in their outward and inner behavior. In Islam, the term "lifelong education" is used (*longlife education*). This means that throughout life, a person will be inseparable from education, as every human step is essentially learning. Education not only focuses on intellectual intelligence but also on building a child's character (Yuyun Yunita & Abdul Mujib, 2021).

Education is a vital part of human life because it guides and develops human potential to become the best they can be. Throughout the history of education in Indonesia (religious education), many policies and changes have been implemented, both simple and complex. Appropriate educational policies are needed to support the goals of education itself, including religious education policies. This process is enhanced by the application of values such as honesty, responsibility, and noble character (Erlyana Febrianti et al, 2025)

Based on the above, one of the determining factors for the success or failure of the learning process is the direction of innovative policy transformation which includes aspects. method and adaptive approaches. Character development in schools is considered successful if school leaders are proactive in promoting character education through clear policies and reinforcement (Umi Salamah, 2025). Many efforts have been made to shape character and promote values of tolerance. However, they often encounter obstacles, such as existing policies not being specifically designed to address the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities of diversity. Success in reconstructing education will significantly contribute to achieving overall national development goals (Sabit Irfani et al., 2021).

Religious education strategically shapes students' character and instills tolerance in a multicultural society. Policies are needed to govern its management. According to the National Education System Law (Law No. 20/2003, Article 30), this policy aims to develop individuals who believe in and fear God Almighty, possess noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic citizens.

The current societal perspective demonstrates the fact that there is great hope that religious education can act as a bulwark against radicalism and become a means of unification. Changing intolerant attitudes to tolerant ones involves recognizing differences as gifts from God the Creator. (Wenly Ronald Jefferson Lolong & Adensi Timomor, 2025). This is one of the backgrounds for researchers to analyze how the role of religious education policy influences the formation of student character and the application of tolerance values in schools.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of religious education policies on the development of a more harmonious and tolerant character in students, both in theory and in practice. This study also aims to provide a deeper understanding of how religious education contributes to creating a disciplined, socially aware, and tolerant generation. The expected benefit of this research is to contribute to the development of an education system capable of developing superior student personalities, both spiritually and socially. Thus, students are taught to appreciate differences, regardless of their culture or religion (Judrah et al., 2024).

Furthermore, religious education strengthens students mentally and emotionally through spiritual teachings such as prayer and reflection, which provide inner peace. Religious education not only builds students' external character but also builds their inner foundations in various life situations. This enables students to be more optimistic when facing life's challenges (Yusri et al., 2023).

This research focuses on the role of religious education policy in shaping character and promoting values of tolerance among students at the Ristek Nusantara Jaya Community Learning Center (PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya). By addressing the complex challenges involved, this research is expected to provide practical solutions for developing a more effective religious education policy direction that is relevant to the needs of today's students.

Research Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach focused on the Ristek Nusantara Jaya Community Learning Center (PKBM) in Jakarta. Its scope is limited to the role of religious education policies in character formation and how to promote values of tolerance among students. Data were collected from teachers, students, and parents through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations to capture multiple perspectives.

According to Fitrah & Luthfiah (2017), qualitative methods are the interpretation of meaning, beliefs, thoughts, values, and symptoms of general characteristics of individuals or groups to be identified, understanding, and identifying activities and documented research methods about life events. This research uses a qualitative research method with a case study type. Case studies are identified as a method of collecting and analyzing data regarding a case such as gaps, problems, difficulties, etc.

The collected data was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. Qualitative data analysis activities were carried out interactively, continuously until complete, so that the data was saturated. The steps for data analysis according to Miles & Huberman are data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Results and Discussion

Community Learning Centers (PKBM) are non-formal educational institutions established out of an awareness of the importance of community development. The presence of PKBMs demonstrates a proactive approach by community groups as a platform for change, opening access and addressing various learning needs.

According to Maria & Dadang Sundawa (2025), a community plays a crucial role in creating a collective learning environment that encourages character development such as empathy, responsibility, and cooperation. PKBM, as an institution that grows from, by, and for the

community, is required to be able to mobilize and facilitate various joint activities in community development.

PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya Raya is a private educational institution located at Jalan Percetakan Negara 7 No. 1, Rawasari Cempaka Putih, Central Jakarta, and has several branches across Indonesia. This PKBM provides formal education packages A, B, and C.

As an educational institution, PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya is one of the non-formal educational institutions that strives to integrate religious values into its curriculum with an inclusive approach to strengthen students' character and instill values of tolerance. Based on the research results, two main points were found, namely (1) the role of religious education policies in the formation of students' character and morals (2) the contribution of PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya in promoting values of tolerance in order to create a socially aware and tolerant generation. The following is an explanation of the findings.

The role of religious education policy in shaping the character and morals of students

For religious education, the formation of students' character and morals, both in theory and in the practice of daily life, is very important. Education instills noble values derived from religious teachings, such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy. These values serve as guidelines for social life. Similarly, the values contained in Pancasila are derived from the principles of social life, religious values, cultural values, and customary values. These values, once agreed upon, become the foundation of the nation, marking its identity (Sarah Azariah & Camellia Camellia, 2024).

The Ristek Nusantara Jaya Community Learning Center (PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya) understands this moral concept not only as knowledge but also as a principle that must be applied in schools. This aims to ensure students have good moral and intellectual personalities (Mukarom et al., 2024). These values are deeply integrated into the curriculum and various school activities. Thus, a holistic approach helps students understand classroom concepts and apply them in planned activities, such as performing daily worship and establishing congregational prayer. Students not only draw closer to the Almighty through these activities but also develop discipline and a sense of responsibility towards time. Furthermore, deep spiritual values are instilled in students through reading and memorizing the Quran (Khairani Al Fatha et al., 2023).

More than just a formality, the Ristek Nusantara Jaya Community Learning Center (PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya) implements these values in its students' daily lives. They are taught empathy and responsibility, learned through the practice of helping friends, respecting teachers, and maintaining a clean school environment. Therefore, the policy on religious education focuses not only on cognitive development but also on changing a person's overall character, developing individuals with strong morals and noble character to face the challenges of the times (Komalasari & Yakubu, 2023).

To instill moral values in students, religious education policies are implemented in various ways. The most common method is through role models provided by teachers. Teachers not only teach material but also serve as role models. *role model* or role models in their behavior and actions. This shows that transformational leadership and organizational culture influence innovative work behavior of teachers (Muzhir, 2020).

Exemplary story-based learning (*role model*) in religion (such as the story of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in Islam or the story of Jesus in Christianity) increases students' social sensitivity and empathy. This phenomenon is in line with the theory *social learning* where religious role models act as models for the formation of moral behavior. Religious education that is developed in a participatory and responsive manner to students' social context can increase awareness of pluralism and strengthen cohesion in the school environment (Iskandar et al, 2025).

Teachers can provide concrete examples of how religious teachings are applied in everyday life by demonstrating qualities such as honesty, patience, and caring toward their students. Furthermore, one effective way to strengthen students' understanding of religious values is to provide them with educational advice. This method allows religious education to become not just an idea taught in the classroom, but also a practice that occurs in schools (Alkayed, 2019). In general, the environment is defined as a space consisting of all objects, forces, conditions, and living creatures, including humans and their behavior, which have an impact on the survival and well-being of humans and other living creatures. (Nurul Hidayah, 2025). Parents also play a crucial role in supporting religious education at home. Parents have a responsibility to maintain and strengthen the school curriculum. For example, by teaching children to pray together before starting learning activities or discussing religious principles related to the challenges they face.

This research not only enhances our understanding of religious education but also helps children understand religious teachings in relation to everyday life. Religious education policies can be successful if parents, schools, and teachers work together to develop a generation with morals and a deep understanding of religious values (Hanif, 2023).

Contribution of PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya's Policy in promoting the values of tolerance

The Ristek Nusantara Jaya Community Learning Center (PKBM) has a distinct strategic role due to its status as a non-formal educational institution. PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya has the ability to design hands-on programs tailored to the needs of its community, particularly within Indonesia's diverse society. This differs from formal schools, which typically have a very strict curriculum. Here's an explanation.

1. Contribution through Integrated Policies and Curriculum

The Ristek Nusantara Jaya Community Learning Center (PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya) does not consider tolerance as an additional program, but rather integrates it into its policies and curriculum framework. For example, at the beginning of new student admissions, PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya has clear written regulations that are distributed to teachers and all students. These policies expressly prohibit discrimination, bullying, and hate speech based on ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (SARA).

Furthermore, the materials and lesson models for Civics and Religious Education are designed to emphasize national values, respect for human rights, and interpretations of religious teachings that support harmony. For example, Indonesian history is discussed from a multicultural perspective. Using these models, engaging, values-based learning experiences can foster character development and academic achievement (Anisah, 2025).

2. Contribution through Learning Practices and Teaching Methods

PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya applies cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning approaches, allowing for direct application of tolerance values. Through Project-Based Learning activities (*Project Based Learning*), students from diverse backgrounds come together to undertake social projects, such as volunteering in their neighborhood or creating presentations about different cultural and religious holidays. This method requires teamwork and direct interaction.

In addition, the practice of self-reflection (*self-reflection*) that occurs after studying religion encourages students to critically consider what they do. This process in moral psychology is known as self-regulation *moral*. According to Prihatmojo & Badawi (2020), character education can help reduce moral degradation as a solution to current problems.

The policy of PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya in increasing tolerance is very complex and systematic, starting from including it in the curriculum and implementing it in learning methods.

Conclusion

This research shows that religious education policies at the Ristek Nusantara Jaya Community Learning Center (PKBM Ristek Nusantara Jaya) play a significant role in shaping character and instilling moral values in students, such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and discipline. These values are not only taught theoretically but also practiced in daily life through teacher role models, religious activities, and parental support.

Furthermore, the inclusive religious education policy at the Community Learning Center (PKBM) fosters a tolerant and harmonious environment. Integrating tolerance into the curriculum, implementing anti-discrimination regulations, and practicing collaborative learning make students more open to differences and more caring toward others.

Thus, it can be concluded that religious education policy is not only an instrument to improve students' spirituality, but also a strategic means in building a generation with strong character, noble morals, and able to live in harmony in a multicultural society.

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