Implementation of Tolerance Character Education: A Comparative Study of Indonesian and Japanese Elementary Schools

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines and compares the integration of tolerance-based character education among elementary school students in Indonesia and Japan.

Methodology: A qualitative approach is employed in this research, utilising a methodological literature review framework. Specifically, a comparative literature review design is adopted. The data for this study are sourced from online journal articles and website publications. Three techniques are employed to ensure data validity: researcher persistence, cross-validation with other researchers, and source triangulation. Data analysis involves processes of data reduction, presentation, and conclusion.

Results: The findings illustrate similarities and distinctions in implementing tolerance-based character education within Indonesian and Japanese elementary schools. Shared elements include (1) the encouragement of individual belief systems, (2) the promotion of respect for diversity and the fostering of open-mindedness, (3) the rejection of discriminatory behaviour, and (4) the cultivation of empathy and the establishment of communal bonds. Conversely, differences emerge in practices such as (1) Japanese students consistently bowing in respect or gratitude, a custom not prevalent in Indonesian elementary schools, and (2) Japanese elementary students commuting to school independently, in contrast to Indonesian counterparts whose parents often accompany.

Applications/Originality/Value: This study compares tolerance-based character education implementation in Indonesian and Japanese elementary school settings. It represents a pioneering exploration specifically addressing the comparative aspects of tolerance character development in these educational contexts.

Introduction Section

Tolerance encompasses an individual's disposition towards respecting, embracing, and valuing cultural distinctions and diversity. It involves refraining from discriminating against particular groups or individuals. The term "tolerance" originates from the Latin word "tolerate," In English, it denotes restraint, patience, and forbearance. Tolerance is construed as conduct that acknowledges disparities in language, religion, ethnicity, race, opinion, and gender (Sari et al., 2020). Tolerance is pivotal and must be instilled early to cultivate a thriving, harmonious, and tranquil society. Its presence aids in fostering an environment where embracing diversity is commonplace, thereby fostering harmony. Consequently, tolerance mitigates the likelihood of conflicts, divisions, or disputes that could adversely impact multiple parties.

Tolerance is a fundamental attribute that everyone should possess. Demonstrating tolerance enables individuals to acquaint themselves with diversity, embrace others' values, and evolve. Conversely, instances of intolerance may result in unjust treatment, physical and psychological harm, threats of violence, and disruptions to harmony, potentially leading to societal discord. In Indonesia, not all educators are equipped to teach and embody the principles of tolerance, particularly to elementary school pupils. This underscores prevalent issues on ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group (SARA) tensions, which have manifested in various forms across the nation. Ethnic, religious, racial, and inter-group (SARA) tensions fuel societal intolerance and undermine individuals or groups, often exploited by parties seeking to exploit these divisions for personal gain.

Indonesia has witnessed escalating levels of violence, including tribal, group, and ethnic-based bullying. Additionally, bullying within Indonesian educational institutions remains a pressing concern and has garnered considerable attention. Findings from a survey conducted by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) highlighted ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group (SARA) tensions as significant threats during the 2019 election. Research conducted by Syarif Hidayat (LIPI) suggests that the complexities surrounding ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group (SARA) tensions are exacerbated by political elites' manipulation. Furthermore, data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) indicates a decline in Indonesia's democracy index, as measured by factors such as societal threats and violence based on ethnicity, group, and gender, decreasing from 91.18 in 2015 to 87.75 in 2016 (Egeham, 2018).

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Based on the world map illustrating the index scores of tolerant countries from the 2015 Legatum Institute's Prosperity Index, Indonesia is ranked 123rd with a score of -1.69. Given the numerous incidents of intolerance within Indonesia, this ranking comes as little surprise. Furthermore, according to Katumiri (2019), Indonesia was positioned 63rd out of 167 countries in the 2019 Legatum Institute survey and ranked 10th in the Asia-Pacific region. In contrast, compared to Indonesia in 2021, Japan holds the 19th spot among 167 countries. This suggests a consistent trend of Japan exhibiting higher tolerance levels than Indonesia over the years.

Several studies have delved into the implementation of tolerance and character education. Bayu et al. (2022) uncovered various supportive factors in instilling tolerance values through citizenship education (PKn) lessons, such as the increasingly open-minded nature of society and teachers' adeptness in classroom instruction. Similarly, Wulandari et al. (2022) emphasised the profound role of education in fostering tolerance among individuals, ensuring students' harmonious coexistence, and eradicating religious discrimination. Other research highlights the implementation of tolerance character within Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Plaosan Darussalam, East Java, Indonesia. This includes refraining from derogatory remarks toward peers of different ethnicities or races, consistently respecting differing opinions, and adhering to school regulations (Zaenuri & Fatonah, 2022).

Further research conducted in Class V of State Elementary School 112/1 Perumnas Muara Bulian, Batang Hari Regency, Jambi, unveiled the integration of tolerance values within thematic learning through habitual practices. Among the six identified indicators, two proved challenging to implement: students interrupting discussions during learning sessions and imposing their opinions on others (Anderson & Putri, 2017). Risdianto et al. (2020) investigated the cultivation of tolerance values within thematic learning in elementary schools, revealing specific strategies in their findings.

Additionally, Widiyanto (2017) highlighted the efficacy of storybook media depicting diversity and tolerance in supporting the inculcation of tolerance and diversity values, aligning with basic competencies outlined in Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn) subjects at the elementary school level. Febriani (2020) explored teachers' role in fostering religious tolerance attitudes among students at My Little Island Elementary School, Malang, East Java, Indonesia. Finally, Purwati et al. (2022) underscored the necessity of instilling tolerance values early in Indonesia. These emphasising efforts prioritise communal values integrated into school curricula through subjects such as Pancasila, Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn), Character, and Religious Education.

This collective body of research underscores the ongoing significance of investigating tolerance character within elementary schools in Indonesia and Japan. The present study aims to unveil and compare the implementation of tolerance values among elementary school students in these two nations. As the author, the primary objective is to identify disparities in implementing various tolerance values, particularly among elementary school students. Furthermore, the findings of this research can serve as a valuable resource for teachers and educational institutions, aiding in the evaluation, enhancement, and reinforcement of tolerance character implementation in elementary schools. This study was conducted to explore a spectrum of teacher strategies for integrating tolerance values within comprehensive character education frameworks in elementary schools.

Figures and tables

The nature of tolerance

Tolerance, as defined by Zaenuri and Fatonah (2022), is the disposition of an individual to grant others freedom and acknowledge differences as an affirmation of human rights. Additionally, Hoge (2002) asserts that tolerance fosters harmony. Agustiningsih et al. (2017) similarly posit that tolerance entails openly embracing individuals based on their diverse backgrounds. From these perspectives, tolerance emerges as an attitude that accepts, respects, and appreciates divergent identities, ultimately fostering a harmonious and tranquil existence.

Elements of Tolerance

According to Sari (2023), several fundamental elements of tolerance are essential for demonstrating acceptance towards others. These elements include:

1. Provision of freedom or autonomy: Every individual is entitled to act, move, or choose beliefs according to their own volition, including selecting a religion or belief system.
2. Recognition of individual rights entails acknowledging each person's right to determine their conduct and destiny.
3. Respect for diverse beliefs: Foundational to this principle is the understanding that no individual or group should impose their will on others based on their beliefs.
4. Mutual understanding: Encourages mutual respect among individuals, even when complete comprehension may not be achieved.

Types of Tolerance

According to Gischa (2023), various types of tolerance are delineated, encompassing:
1. Religious tolerance: Reflects mutual respect and acceptance towards religious diversity, facilitating harmonious coexistence.
2. Cultural tolerance: Acknowledges the multitude of cultures within Indonesia, emphasising tolerance as pivotal for fostering societal harmony.
3. Political tolerance: Directs individuals towards appreciating and respecting differing political perspectives, promoting civil discourse and understanding.
4. Social tolerance: Encourages tolerance in social interactions, advocating for acceptance of diverse opinions even if they diverge from one's own.
5. Family environment tolerance: Emphasises mutual respect and consideration for differing opinions within the family unit, refraining from imposing one's will on others.
6. Social media tolerance: Recognises the necessity for tolerance in online interactions, fostering respectful and constructive discourse in the digital realm.

On the other hand, Pitaloka et al. (2021) delineate tolerance into two categories:
1. Active tolerance: Rooted in knowledge, understanding, and perspective, this form of tolerance entails an engaged and informed attitude toward differences.
2. Passive tolerance: Characterised by a more limited approach, passive tolerance entails refraining from overly critical judgments of existing disparities.

Furthermore, Abdi (2022) categorises tolerance into three main types:
1. Religious tolerance: Exemplified by respecting individuals' rights to choose their religion and allowing them the space to practice their faith freely.
2. Cultural tolerance: Signifies an attitude of equality and respect towards all cultures, devoid of superiority complexes or discrimination.
3. Political tolerance: Encourages individuals to appreciate and respect diverse political opinions, fostering an environment conducive to democratic discourse.

Factors Affecting Tolerance

Based on Kelly (2018), tolerance is influenced by a multitude of factors categorised as internal and external:
1. Internal factors: These include personality type, self-control, and ethnocentrism.
2. External factors: These encompass the educational environment, social identity, and religious fundamentalism.

Religion and social norms emerge as primary influences on tolerance. Positive development of these norms can significantly contribute to fostering ethnic tolerance (Idris et al., 2016). Furthermore, parental and teacher care is pivotal in instilling tolerance values during early childhood (Manoppo et al., 2019). Education also stands out as a key factor in shaping tolerance.

Jauhari et al. (2022) outline several factors that contribute to tolerance:
1. Mutual respect and appreciation among religious communities.
2. Avoidance of disparaging attitudes towards other religions.
3. Promotion of unity and cohesion within religious communities.
4. Respect for religious diversity.
5. Assistance to those in need.
6. Strengthening relationships and embracing differences.
7. Cultivation of empathy and compassion towards others.

In summary, tolerance is primarily influenced by educational and social environmental factors, alongside internal attributes and external contexts.

Cultivation of Tolerance Values

Borba (2008) delineates three crucial steps for instilling a culture of tolerance among students:
1. Modelling and cultivating tolerance: Teachers play a pivotal role in fostering tolerance by setting an example through their conduct. This involves avoiding prejudices, discouraging discriminatory language from students, promoting positive perceptions of all ethnic groups, encouraging engagement with diversity, and demonstrating tolerance in daily interactions.
2. Fostering an appreciation for differences: Educators should facilitate an environment where students learn to appreciate and value diversity, recognising the richness it brings to society.
3. Opposing stereotypes and prejudice: Teachers must actively challenge stereotypes and prejudices, fostering critical thinking and empathy among students.

Pujiono et al. (2019) advocate for cultivating tolerance through education, employing interactive and educational models to disseminate information about religious freedom and tolerance. Similarly, Muawanah (2018) underscores the importance of education in fostering a tolerant society, with goals including understanding different perspectives, nurturing empathy, encouraging inquiry, respecting differences, and promoting cross-cultural learning. In conclusion, cultivating tolerance entails respecting differences and developing an understanding of others, facilitated through education and active efforts to challenge stereotypes and prejudices.

Tolerance Theory

In Olsen (1987), Lee Bollinger presents a contemporary interpretation of Mill's perspectives in 'The Tolerant Society: Freedom of Speech and Extremist Speech in America'. Tolerance is viewed as a means to mitigate racial and ethnic tensions, dispel perceptions of others as threats, and foster respect for individuals' rights. Consequently, tolerance contributes to establishing a stable and inclusive society—an admirable objective. Moreover, it cultivates receptivity to novel ideas and instils a sense of regard for the rights of others.

Method

Type and Design

This research adopts a qualitative approach employing a literature review methodology, specifically focusing on collecting and analysing library data. It utilises a comparative literature review to explore the implementation of tolerance characters in elementary schools in Indonesia and Japan.

Data and Data Sources

The research gathers data from written sources, including online journal articles and website articles, concerning implementing tolerance character education in elementary schools in Indonesia and Japan. To access relevant articles, the researcher utilises platforms such as ResearchGate, Scholar, various websites, and YouTube. ResearchGate, Scholar, and websites offer convenient access to academic literature pertinent to the topic, facilitating the retrieval of articles aligned with the research focus. Additionally, YouTube is a supplementary source for valid data references, enriching the research findings.

Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique involves several stages:
1. Literature search: The researcher conducts a thorough exploration of literature using various platforms such as Scholar, ResearchGate, websites, and YouTube. Keywords utilised for searching include "Attitudes of Tolerance", "Multicultural Learning", "Student Tolerance" and "Citizenship Education", "Tolerance" and "Multicultural", "Tolerance Education", "Religious Diversity", "Education Religion", "School", "education", "children's character", "Japan", "multicultural", "JaMulticultural", "Culture in Japan", and "Tolerance in Japan".
2. Description of literature data: The researcher systematically reviews the obtained literature, extracting key points manually and highlighting essential aspects relevant to the research topic.
3. Data organisation: The collected data is recorded and grouped based on its relevance and thematic coherence, facilitating the organisation and synthesis of information for analysis.

Data Validity

To ensure the validity of the data, several measures are employed:
1. Researcher's perseverance: The researcher meticulously reads and critically reviews the findings derived from the collected data. This entails a thorough examination to identify any inconsistencies or discrepancies.
2. Checking and rechecking with other researchers: Collaboration with fellow researchers is essential for cross-validation. Engaging in discussions and sharing findings allows for exchanging information and perspectives, aiding in validating the data.
3. Triangulating sources: The researcher compares the results with relevant and appropriate articles from multiple sources. This comparative analysis helps corroborate findings and enhances the credibility and reliability of the data.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process follows the framework proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), comprising data reduction, data presentation, and concluding. Data reduction involves sorting and summarising the obtained PDF files according to the listed key elements. This step streamlines the data for further analysis. Data presentation entails grouping the data by

comparing the obtained results and transferring them to an Excel table. This organised presentation facilitates systematic comparison and analysis. Concluding involves synthesising the findings into a coherent narrative. The author summarises the results of the comparative analysis, highlighting similarities and differences between the datasets. The analysis results are presented in a table format, accompanied by a concise description of the observed outcomes below the table.

Figures and tables

Table 1. Literature data results

Element	Indonesia	Japan
Providing freedom or independence	1. Give other people the freedom to choose their beliefs 2. Do good to everyone, be fair if someone violates you, defend someone who is being bullied 3. Provide peace and obey the rules	1. Free to choose a belief. 2. Do not commit acts of violence, oppress others, steal, injure or deceive others 3. Provide peace and obey the rules 4. Freedom of people to fast 5. Students get the same bag and shoes 6. Every student goes to and from school without being accompanied but independently
Recognise everyone's rights	1. Do not act in discrimination 2. The right to receive religious education 3. Maintain friends of different religions in worship 4. Be open-minded and respect differences	1. The right to receive religious education 2. Change each other's religion 3. Do not discriminate

Element	Indonesia	Jepang
Respect other people's beliefs.	1. Do not force other people's beliefs 2. Do not disturb other people in worship 3. Do not insult or put friends down	1. Shake hands with people of different religions 2. Muslim students can pray at the mosque according to their time and non-Muslim students remain in class and continue their studies 3. Be punctual in worship
Understand each other	1. Keep socialising and be nice 2. Appreciate and respect 3. Always build friendship and friendship 4. do not disturb others	1. Avoid arguments 2. Wait for each other and be united 3. Parents do not protest when children who break the rules are punished 4. Bow your head (ojigi) 5. Give seats to those who need them most 6. Be calm during an earthquake in class

Implementation of Tolerance Character Education in Indonesian Primary Schools

In Indonesia, the implementation of tolerance can be achieved through various approaches:
1. Providing freedom of belief: Dewi and Mardiana (2023) emphasise the importance of allowing individuals to choose their beliefs, particularly in matters of religion. This involves fostering an open-minded attitude among students, refraining from imposing beliefs and encouraging mutual respect.
2. Cultivating fairness and obedience: Nadhifah et al. (2023) advocate for instilling a sense of fairness from an early age, where students are encouraged to address mistakes impartially, regardless of social status. Additionally, students should be accustomed to obeying rules and regulations and encouraged to voice their opinions and ask questions freely.

3. Inclusive participation: Sri Wulandari (2022) suggests promoting inclusivity by inviting everyone to participate in group discussions or activities without any exclusions. This fosters a sense of belonging and acceptance among students.
4. Ensuring a positive environment: Dewi et al. (2021) highlight the role of teachers in maintaining a positive atmosphere by ensuring students adhere to rules and regulations. Teachers should also promote peace and harmony by fostering a positive outlook on differences.

In Indonesia, fostering tolerance encompasses several key aspects of recognising everyone's rights. Firstly, it involves promoting non-discrimination and fostering respect among peers, as highlighted by Dewi & Mardian (2023) and Nadhifah et al. (2023). Students are encouraged to refrain from discriminatory behaviour and derogatory remarks, fostering an environment of mutual respect. Secondly, Sri Wulandari (2022) underscores the importance of respecting religious diversity within the school community. Students are encouraged to support friends of different religions in their religious practices and refrain from mocking or insulting them. This cultivates a culture of respect and understanding for religious diversity. Thirdly, Remiswal and Khoiro (2019) emphasise the role of school culture in promoting tolerance. At Anwar Karim Private Elementary School, habituation activities such as the Healthy Child Nutrition Program and the School Health Unit (UKS) create an environment conducive to tolerance and inclusivity. Lastly, Larasati Dewi (2021) suggests supporting religious activities in elementary schools without discrimination or violation of rules.

Respecting other people's beliefs in implementing tolerance in Indonesia encompasses multifaceted approaches. Firstly, as advocated by Dewi and Mardiana (2023), tolerance is fostered by refraining from imposing beliefs on others, respecting individuals with diverse religious beliefs in their worship practices, and acknowledging the significance of others' religious holidays. Secondly, according to Nadhifah et al. (2023), the cultivation of tolerance occurs through Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn), where students learn to refrain from disparaging peers of different races or customs and are exposed to positive examples of prayer etiquette. Thirdly, Sri Wulandari (2022) underscores the importance of mutual respect as a fundamental aspect of tolerance, advocating for equitable treatment of all students and providing services without discrimination. Additionally, Remiswal and Khoiro (2019) illustrate the importance of promoting tolerance at Anwar Karim Private Elementary School by fostering faith and piety (IMTAQ) and incorporating prayers into routine learning activities. Lastly, Larasati Dewi (2021) highlights the necessity of respecting each other's beliefs, refraining from belittling others, and actively participating in events hosted by members of different religions to maintain a peaceful and inclusive environment in elementary schools.

Mutual understanding, a fundamental aspect of tolerance in Indonesia, encompasses diverse dimensions. Firstly, as stressed by Dewi and Mardiana (2023), cultivating habits of kindness and goodwill is imperative. This involves refraining from animosity and ensuring that the feelings of friends with differing beliefs are not hurt. Secondly, according to Nadhifah et al. (2023), cultivating tolerance among students yields significant outcomes. They learn to respect varying viewpoints in discussions, refrain from interrupting conversations, engage in acts of kindness such as giving to others and leading prayers, and adopt a positive attitude towards their peers. Thirdly, Sri Wulandari (2022) underscores the importance of fostering collaboration among students from diverse backgrounds and promoting friendships regardless of differences. Additionally, Remiswal & Khoiro (2019) observed at Anwar Karim Private Elementary School in West Pasaman Regency that tolerance is ingrained through school culture, where activities like the flag ceremony, group gymnastics under the Healthy Environment Movement (GELIS), and participation in the Environmental Police (POLIS) contribute to fostering tolerance among students. Lastly, Larasati Dewi (2021) emphasises the significance of simple gestures such as smiling, greetings, and expressions of empathy in nurturing tolerance. Students are encouraged to extend support to peers affected by disasters, irrespective of their religious affiliation, and to pray for their well-being. Furthermore, they are urged to assist one another, show respect, and foster a sense of brotherhood among friends.

Implementation of Tolerance Character Education in Japanese Elementary Schools

Promoting freedom and independence in Japan by implementing tolerance encompasses several key aspects. Firstly, religious freedom is upheld, allowing students to engage in religious practices at school and visit religious facilities while also mandating the study of basic religious materials (Ishak, 2021). Secondly, tolerance is demonstrated through avoiding violence, bullying, theft, injury, dishonesty, or deception toward peers, as outlined in the book "Watashi tachi no Doutoku" (Unsriana & Ningrum, 2018). Thirdly, Japanese students are encouraged to uphold public decorum by exhibiting politeness and adhering to established etiquette, ensuring the comfort of others in public spaces (Mulyadi, 2014). Moreover, Japanese elementary schools accommodate students who observe religious fasts, facilitating their religious practices without hindrance while ensuring access to food for those who do not fast (Indonesia, 2019).

At Kyoto Elementary School, tolerance is fostered by providing identical bags and shoes for all students, promoting equality (Sanshana, 2021). Lastly, students in Japan commute to and from school independently, with parental supervision facilitated through applications and periodic parental visits for specific purposes (Giovani, 2022). These various initiatives collectively foster tolerance and inclusivity within Japanese elementary schools.

Recognising everyone's rights in implementing tolerance in Japan entails several key aspects. Firstly, it emphasises that every student has the right to receive religious education based on their beliefs, with no restrictions or prohibitions on learning religion according to the curriculum (Ishak, 2021). Secondly, individuals are entitled to quality education in Japan,

regardless of their socio-economic status, ensuring accessibility to education for all students (Rahman et al., 2022). Thirdly, tolerance is cultivated through students not discriminating in choosing friends based on religious, occupational, or dietary differences (Wijaya, 2020).

Respecting other people's beliefs in the context of tolerance implementation in Japan also encompasses various facets. Firstly, students in Kyoto are accustomed to shaking hands as a gesture of friendship with individuals of different beliefs, demonstrating mutual respect (Indonesia, 2019). Secondly, there is a custom in Japanese elementary schools where Muslim students can conduct mosque services according to schedule. In contrast, non-Muslim students attend special classes based on their beliefs, showcasing accommodation and respect for diverse religious practices (Sanshana, 2021).

Mutual understanding in the implementation of tolerance within Japanese elementary schools is multifaceted. Firstly, the cultivation of tolerance is facilitated through habitual practices outlined in the book "Watashi tachi no Doutoku," encouraging students to embrace differences, demonstrate empathy, and address instances of bullying (ijime) (Unsriana and Ningrum, 2018). Secondly, schools promote tolerance by fostering an environment where students are treated equally, regardless of their background or economic status, instilling the principle that "everyone is equal" (Rahman et al., 2022). Thirdly, collaborative activities such as walking to school together, coordinating meal breaks, and participating in collective cleaning routines foster a sense of unity and cooperation among students (Mulyadi, 2014). Fourthly, disciplinary measures for rule violations are enforced consistently, with parental support, reinforcing accountability and respect for authority (Sanshana, 2021). Fifthly, daily routines like cleaning, meal preparation, and self-management cultivate responsibility and self-sufficiency among students (Giovani, 2022). Additionally, students are taught traditional customs such as bowing as a gesture of respect and maintaining composure during emergencies (Peanut, 2019). Lastly, teachers play a pivotal role in fostering empathy and cooperation among students, encouraging acts of kindness and assistance (Sirimanna, 2022).

Comparison of the Implementation of Tolerance Character Education in Indonesian and Japanese Elementary Schools

The implementation of tolerance in Indonesian and Japanese elementary schools exhibits similarities and differences. Regarding providing freedom and independence (element 1), countries emphasise freedom of religion and the autonomy to choose and practice one's beliefs, promoting peace and adherence to rules while condemning violence and bullying and advocating for the defence and support of bullying victims. Regarding recognising everyone's rights (element 2), countries prioritise non-discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, or race, ensuring students' rights to religious education aligned with their beliefs and promoting tolerance, respect, and open-mindedness. Respecting other people's beliefs (element 3) is emphasised in countries by respecting individuals' diverse beliefs without interference or discrimination, refraining from imposing one's beliefs on others, and maintaining a conducive environment for worship. Lastly, in understanding each other (element 4), nations stress the importance of tolerance, empathy, and understanding differences, fostering positive interactions with individuals of varying beliefs, and promoting mutual support, cooperation, and solidarity among students.

The differences between Indonesia and Japan regarding implementing tolerance in elementary schools are evident across several aspects. Firstly, regarding freedom and independence (element 1), Japan allows individuals who fast during Ramadan to practice their religious obligations freely, with facilities available for fasting and non-fasting students to access food. Conversely, Indonesia presents challenges for non-fasting individuals as most eating establishments are closed during fasting hours. In Japan, uniformity in attire aims to eliminate socio-economic disparities among students, whereas Indonesian schools offer flexibility in uniform policies. Additionally, Japanese students commute to school independently, fostering a sense of autonomy, while Indonesian students often have parental accompaniment.

Moreover, religious education policies differ, with Indonesia supporting religious education in schools while Japan maintains neutrality. In recognising everyone's rights (element 2), Indonesia's religious diversity contrasts with Japan's predominant Shintoism and Buddhism. In respecting other people's beliefs (element 3), Japanese cultural practices such as handshake greetings and religious accommodation for Muslim students differ from Indonesian customs. Lastly, in mutual understanding (element 4), Japanese students demonstrate cooperation during daily routines and crises like earthquakes, whereas Indonesian schools lack similar practices, often exhibiting panic during emergencies.

Conclusion

This research sheds light on the comparative implementation of tolerance character education in Indonesian and Japanese elementary schools, offering valuable insights into cross-cultural educational practices. However, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the scarcity of data sources from Japan limits the depth and representativeness of the findings, necessitating a broader search for diverse language sources, particularly in Japanese. Future research should aim for more comprehensive data collection to capture a more nuanced understanding of tolerance elements in Japanese elementary schools. Additionally, there is a need for reconsideration and expansion of the tolerance elements compared with Japan to facilitate emulation and application in Indonesian schools. Furthermore, Indonesian schools can foster greater respect and appreciation for differences by encouraging cultural practices such as bowing, demonstrating gratitude, and respecting elders. Lastly, emphasising the pivotal role of teachers in imparting tolerance and character education to students from an early age is crucial for promoting inclusive and harmonious school environments.

Acknowledgement

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