



## Impact of Catholicism on Attitude Tolerance Interfaith Religious Elementary School Students in Surakarta City

Tri Agnes<sup>1\*</sup>, Nur Cahyo Agung Prasetyo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Guru Agama Katolik di Kota Surakarta

<sup>2</sup> BPS-Statistics Indonesia

**Corresponding Author:** Tri Agnes [priskagnes92@gmail.com](mailto:priskagnes92@gmail.com)

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Education Catholicism, Attitude Tolerance, Regression Linear Simple, Basic Education

*Received:* 19, June

*Revised:* 21, July

*Accepted:* 23, August

©2025 Agnes, Prasetyo: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



### ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the influence of PAK on the attitude tolerance of interfaith religious elementary school students in Surakarta City. Research uses a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The population study is 517 Catholic elementary school students, with a sample of 240 respondents selected through a purposive sampling technique. Instrument study in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire with two variables: PAK and attitude tolerance. Data analysis uses a simple linear regression after testing assumptions (normality, linearity, independence), and the residual is fulfilled. The results of the study show that PAK has a positive and significant effect on attitude tolerance ( $\beta = 0.605$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), with an  $R^2$  of 0.545. This finding confirms that PAK plays a strategic role in the formation of character tolerance since basic education. Implications practical.

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as a multicultural nation with a high degree of religious diversity, places tolerance as a key pillar of national life. Own strategic role in implant mark tolerance since early, not only through knowledge, but also formation of attitudes and social behavior (Tobroni, 2023; Nuryadin, 2022a). Education Catholic Religion (PAK), as an integral part of the national curriculum, it is hoped that students will be able to internalize values of love, peace, and appreciation for human dignity through Christian teachings (Pranyoto, 2022). Values This is in line with the mandate of the National Education System Law, which emphasizes the development of students' character, fostering faith, piety, and noble morals. PAK is not only oriented toward mastering religious teachings but also toward developing inclusive social attitudes. Realized through teaching, Mark taught love and forgiveness, Jesus Christ, as well as habituation, attitude, and respect for difference (Septryan, Halawa, Pongkot, Bhakti, & Mukarrahmah, 2024). Thus, PAK plays a dual role: forming religious identity and fostering an attitude of tolerance. However, the reality of social show phenomenon intolerance still happened, well in verbal and non-verbal forms of behavior, discriminatory, even in the basic environment (Tholkhah, 2013), education. The phenomenon of the cause. This study raises critical questions about the effectiveness of Religious Education (PAK) in supporting the development of tolerance in students. Surakarta City, with its heterogeneous population and high levels of interfaith interaction, is an ideal context for testing this relationship. By focusing on elementary school students, this study aims to provide an empirical overview of the contribution of PAK to fostering social harmony from an early age.

Although PAK is normatively designed to teach values, love, and respect diversity, gaps between ideal teachings and implementation in the field are still seen (Rosyid, 2015). Results of previous studies show that understanding students' teachings of religion often stops at a cognitive level, not yet internalized as attitudes and social behavior (Septryan et al., 2024). This situation is exacerbated by the low level of positive interfaith interaction in several schools, so that the value of tolerance does not get enough space for actualization. This problem is becoming increasingly pressing in Surakarta City, which has a relatively high level of religious diversity. The multicultural elementary school environment should be a place for the formation of attitudes of tolerance through healthy social interactions. However, if PAK is unable to actualize these values, then the goals of character education will be challenging to achieve. Based on these conditions, the research questions asked are: (1) What is the level of understanding of elementary school students towards PAK teachings? (2) What is the attitude of tolerance between religious communities among Catholic elementary school students in Surakarta City? (3) Is there a significant influence of PAK on the attitude of tolerance between religious communities among Catholic elementary school students?

The main objective of this study is to determine the extent to which Religious Education plays a role in shaping the attitude of tolerance of Catholic students in elementary schools. This study attempts to address the limitations of empirical data related to the effectiveness of religious education in building social harmony at the elementary education level. In detail, the objectives of this study include: (1) identifying the level of students' understanding of Religious Education teachings, especially those related to the values of love, respect for differences, and the Church's teachings on tolerance; (2) measuring the attitude of tolerance between religious communities of Catholic elementary school students in Surakarta who live in a multicultural environment; and (3) analyzing the influence of Religious Education on attitudes of tolerance between religious

communities quantitatively. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of religious education science, as well as serve as a practical reference for Religious Education teachers and policy makers in designing learning strategies that emphasize strengthening tolerant characters in students from an early age.

A study of interfaith religious tolerance has been done a lot, but the majority of studies focus on education, middle, and Islamic religious education, or general (Tholkhah, 2013)(Hendrik, Ulumuddin, Atmadiredja, & Widjaja, 2020). Studies that highlight the effectiveness of PAK in forming an attitude of tolerance in elementary school students are still rarely found, especially with a quantitative survey-based approach. Studies related to PAK place more emphasis on strengthening faith and spirituality in students (Pranyoto, 2022); temporary dimensions, such as social formation, attitude, and tolerance, are not sufficiently noticed. Gap. This is relevant to research because tolerance is the foundation of a harmonious national life. This research offers novelty in two aspects. First, it focuses on Catholic elementary school students in a multicultural area like Surakarta City, thus making the research context more specific. Second, it uses quantitative methods with influence analysis, which differs from the majority of previous studies, which tend to be qualitative. Academically, this research contributes to expanding the literature on the role of Christian Religious Education (PAK) in building tolerance among religious communities. Practically, the results of this study can provide input for Christian Religious Education (PAK) teachers in designing effective learning models that internalize the values of love and tolerance, and support educational policies based on strengthening the values of love and tolerance. Character multicultural (Nuryadin, 2022b; Tobroni, 2023).

## **METHODS**

a correlational survey method. This approach was chosen because the study aims to determine the influence of the independent variable, namely Catholic Religious Education, on the dependent variable, namely interfaith tolerance. Survey correlational allows measurement of relationships and influences intervariable empirically with numerical data and inferential statistical analysis (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, 2018). This approach is considered appropriate because the results obtained can be generalized to the population if the sampling is carried out representatively.

The study population was all Catholic elementary school students in Surakarta City, totaling 517 students. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% error rate, resulting in a sample size of 240 respondents. Slovin's general method is used to determine the number of samples in a study with a large population (Sugiyono, 2018). The technique used was purposive sampling, which is the selection of samples based on specific criteria, such as students actively taking Catholic Religious Education subjects. This technique is considered relevant because studies need respondents with appropriate specific characteristics for an objective study (Sugiyono, 2018).

Procedure study implemented. The research was conducted through several stages, namely the preparation of a questionnaire-shaped instrument, validity and reliability testing, questionnaire distribution via Google Forms, data collection, and statistical analysis. The research instrument was a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), designed to measure two variables. The Catholic Religious Education variable includes indicators of understanding the teachings of love and Gospel values, understanding the Scriptures, understanding the Church's teachings on tolerance, and involvement in Christian Religious Education activities. Meanwhile, the interfaith tolerance attitude variable includes indicators of respect for differences in beliefs, willingness to cooperate, and empathy

towards followers of other religions. Before being distributed, the instrument was tested for validity using Pearson's  $r$ , and its reliability was tested with Cronbach's Alpha. The test results showed that all items were valid and the instrument had high reliability with an alpha coefficient above 0.85.

Data analysis was conducted in three stages. The first stage was descriptive analysis to describe the data distribution and respondent characteristics. The second stage involved testing the analysis assumptions, which included normality and linearity tests. The third stage was inferential analysis using simple linear regression to examine the effect of Catholic Religious Education on interfaith tolerance. Significance testing was conducted using a t-test with a 95% confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), and the strength of the relationship was measured using the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ).

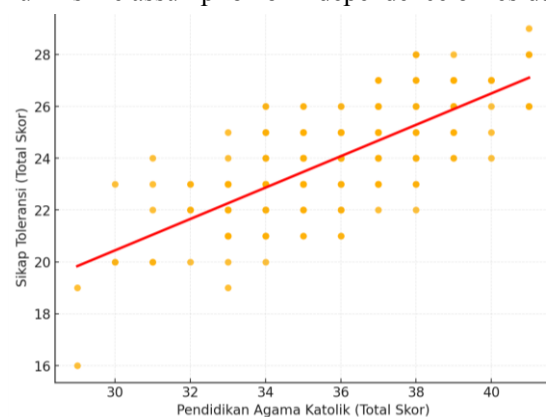
From a methodological perspective, quantitative methods using correlational surveys have several advantages. First, research results can be generalized to a broader population because they use representative samples and robust statistical analysis techniques. Second, this approach provides objective data that can be retested by other researchers, thereby increasing the reliability and validity of the findings. Third, the use of regression allows for a quantifiable measurement of the strength of the influence between variables. However, this method also has limitations. Limitations (Sugiyono, 2018). The data obtained are correlational and therefore cannot fully explain causal relationships. Furthermore, the survey method relies heavily on respondents' honesty in answering questions, thus creating the potential for respondent bias. To minimize these weaknesses, this study maintained the confidentiality of respondents' answers, provided clear instructions, and used instruments that had been tested for validity and reliability.

To comply with ethical research principles, each respondent was given an explanation of the research objectives, data confidentiality was guaranteed, and participation was voluntary. The principle of integrity was also upheld by ensuring that data were analyzed and reported objectively without manipulation. With a systematic methodological design and attention to ethical aspects, this study is expected to provide valid empirical findings regarding the influence of Catholic Religious Education on interfaith tolerance among elementary school students in Surakarta City.

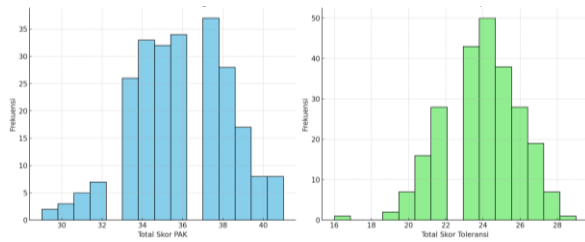
## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Interpretation of Results*

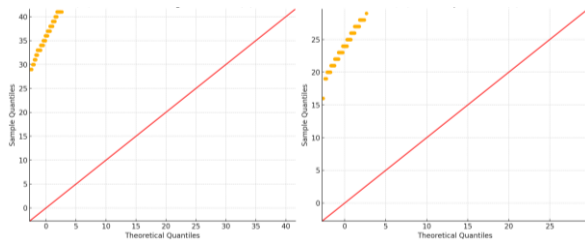
Before doing the analysis, a simple linear regression analysis was done to test the assumptions and ensure the eligibility of the model. Results Test Shapiro-Wilk normality show p-value for the Education variable Catholic Religion (X) is 0.24 ( $> 0.05$ ) and the Attitude variable Tolerance Interfaith Religion (Y) is 0.19 ( $> 0.05$ ), so the data is stated to be normally distributed. Test linearity through scatterplot shows a pattern of relationships that is close to a straight line, reinforced by the  $R^2$  value on the analysis of the regression test for multicollinearity. No deep analysis was done because there is only one predictor; however, the VIF calculation = 1 indicates that there is no problem with multicollinearity. Results Durbin-Watson of 2.12 indicate no significant autocorrelation, so the model fulfills the assumption of independence of residuals.



**Figure 1. Scatterplot of PAK(x) vs Attitude Tolerance (y)**



**Figure 2. Histogram of Score Distribution**



**Figure 3. QQ Plot for Testing Normality**

Besides statistical tests, analysis and visualization are also done. Figure 2. The distribution histogram shows a data pattern approaching normal, with the majority of respondents giving a high score (agree category) until very agree) on both variables. This shows that the perception of students towards PAK tends to be positive and has a high level of tolerance towards interfaith religious groups. Next, test normality through Figure 3. QQ Plot shows data points follow a diagonal line, which emphasizes that the data distribution is close to normal. Meanwhile, the scatterplot (Figure 1) with line regression displays a linear positive connection between Education, Catholicism, and attitudes of tolerance, with big data points located around the line regression. This pattern supports a hypothesis study that the more tall involvement students in PAK, the higher their attitude tolerance.

Analysis of linear regression shows that Education Catholic Religion (PAK) has a positive and significant influence on attitude tolerance of interfaith religious students in Elementary Schools (SD) in Surakarta City. Results analysis produces an equality regression :

$$Y = 2,285 + 0,605X$$

With a mark coefficient regression of 0.605 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This shows that every improvement of one PAK score unit will increase attitude tolerance by 0.605 points. The  $R^2$  value of 0.545 indicates that 54.5% of the variation in attitude tolerance can be explained by the Education variable, Catholicism; meanwhile, the rest (45.5%) is influenced by other factors outside the model.

This finding is in line with the theory of Christian humanism, which emphasizes that the main objective of education is to form a person of faith, honoring the dignity of man (Crain, 2012). Education Catholicism teaches mark love, empathy, and forgiveness, which in turn directly relate to an attitude tolerant of difference, confidence. This result also strengthens educational theory character (Dodd, 1992), which emphasizes internalization of moral values through learning based on marks.

This research is consistent with findings (Pranyoto, 2022), which emphasize that PAK forms awareness of social through the teachings of love. (Septryan et al., 2024) Also, find that students who understand PAK values tend to have an attitude inclusive of adherents of other religions. Likewise, Tobroni (2023) confirms that education and religious multiculturalism can improve social harmony in schools. However, these results differ from those of Tholkhah (2013), who reported the existence of intolerant practices, although religious education was taught. This shows that the effectiveness of PAK is very dependent on the method of teaching and the social and cultural context.

The findings of this study provide significant theoretical contributions to the literature on religious education and multicultural education. First, the results reinforce the principles of Christian Humanism Theory, which emphasize that faith education should integrate values of love, respect for human dignity, and social solidarity (Crain, 2012). Catholic Religious Education (CRE) that instills Gospel values not only enhances cognitive understanding but also fosters attitudes aligned with humanistic principles, thereby promoting harmonious social interactions.

Second, the findings align with Character Education Theory (Dodd, 1992), which stresses the importance of cultivating moral values through formal education. Catholic Religious Education, by teaching values such as compassion, empathy, and openness to diversity, proves effective in developing tolerance. The implementation of CRE at the elementary school level can serve as a primary instrument of character education, shaping students into individuals who are both morally upright and respectful of differences.

Third, the results are also consistent with Social Contact Theory proposed by Allport (1954), which posits that interaction among individuals from different groups reduces prejudice when it occurs under conditions of equality, shared goals, and supportive social norms. CRE can create learning environments that enable students to interact meaningfully with peers of different religious backgrounds within an inclusive and respectful climate. Thus, CRE functions not only as faith instruction but also as a strategic tool for mitigating intolerance through meaningful social engagement.

Practically, these findings have implications for curriculum development and teaching strategies. Teachers of Catholic Religious Education are encouraged to integrate humanistic values, employ character-based learning approaches, and create opportunities for interfaith interaction within the school environment. Education policies should also emphasize the strengthening of CRE as part of character education in the Merdeka Curriculum, ensuring that students not only comprehend doctrinal teachings but also internalize them in their social life. Although this research provides a contribution both theoretically and practically, there are a number of limitations that must be noted. First, data collection using questionnaire-based self-report is prone to social desirability bias, where respondents may give answers that are considered by the norm (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Second, design research of a correlational nature does not allow researchers to conclude a connection, cause, and effect in an absolute way. Third, this research was only carried out in Surakarta City, so that

generalization results to areas with different social characteristics must be done with care.

In addition, this study does not enter contextual variables other than those that can influence attitude tolerance, such as influence family, peer groups, and social media exposure. This is in line with findings (Tholkhah, 2013) which emphasize that interaction outside of school, participation in social activities, form attitudes, religion, and tolerance among students. Therefore, this limitation opens up room for further study, which is of a comprehensive nature.

Based on the limitations mentioned, some recommendations can be proposed. First, further research can use a longitudinal design to measure the impact of PAK on attitude tolerance in the long term. Second, it is recommended to include moderator variables such as the influence of family, peers, group, and interaction across religions outside school. Third, necessary studies with a mixed methods approach in order to combine quantitative superiority analysis and a deep understanding through qualitative data. Fourth, expanding the coverage study to the level of province or national for increasing the Power of generalization results.

Findings: This research has a significant social impact. Strengthening PAK in the elementary school curriculum can become a strategic instrument for reducing potential conflicts based on religion in the future. With an implant mark, love and appreciation for differences since early school play an important role in creating a tolerant and inclusive generation. In a way, ethical results. This research reminds us of the importance of guarding a balance between teaching, faith, and formation, and attitude openness. PAK must teach with perspective, dialogical rejection exclusivity, and promote awareness of religious freedom, in line with human rights principles, man (Sinclair, 2004).

## CONCLUSION

Results. This study shows that Education Catholic Religion (PAK) has a positive and significant influence on attitude tolerance of interfaith religious students in Elementary Schools in Surakarta City. This finding is supported by the results analysis regression linear simple with mark coefficient regression of 0.605 ( $p < 0.001$ ) and  $R^2$  of 0.545, which means 54.5% of the variation in attitude tolerance can be explained by Mr. Test assumptions classic covering normality, linearity, and independence residual. Also, it is fulfilled so that the model used can be reliable. In general, these results confirm that strengthening PAK plays an important role in implanting love, empathy, and appreciation for differences from an early age.

This finding confirms the relevance of humanism theory, Christianity, and the educational character in the context of PAK learning, as well as gives empirical evidence that an approach to teaching based on a marked, capable form of attitude, a tolerant social environment. However, this research also reveals limitations, namely that the use of instrument-based self-reports is prone to social bias, the design of the study is correlational, that is not allow causal inference, and the scope of the research is limited to one city. Therefore, generalizing this finding needs to be done with care and be the basis for an advanced study with broader coverage and a more diverse methodological approach.

Results. This research has important implications for teachers, schools, and makers' policy. PAK teachers can make this finding a runway for strengthening learning strategies that integrate mark love, empathy, and appreciation of diversity through method learning, active, and dialogue-based. Party school can develop habituation programs that encourage harmonious interaction between religious groups, such as Work group cross-religion and celebration days of various religions in an inclusive way. Share maker policy, these findings support strengthening curriculum-based character in Curriculum Independence, which emphasizes the importance of learning that not only emphasizes

cognitive aspects, but also develops social competence and attitudes of tolerance.

In addition, this finding has implications that are more socially wide. With implant mark tolerance through PAK since elementary school, it is expected to form a capable generation living side by side in a way of peace in a public multicultural environment. This is in line with the vision of education for forming human faithful, moral, noble, and insightful diversity, as well as supporting UNESCO's global goals in building cultural peace and social harmony in the midst of diversity.

## REFERENCES

- Allport, G. W. (1954). *Handbook of Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company. Inc.
- Crain, M. A. (2012). A Review of "Will There be Faith? A New Vision for Educating and Growing Disciples." *Religious Education*, 107(3), 312–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2012.678182>.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Dodd, A. W. (1992). *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*. By Thomas Lickona. New York: Bantam Books, 1991. *NASSP Bulletin*, 76(545), 119–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019263659207654519>.
- Hendrik, H., Ulumuddin, I., Atmadiredja, G., & Widjaja, I. (2020). *Belajar Hidup Berdampingan : Studi Mengenai Praktik Pengelolaan Keragaman di Sekolah*. Pusat Penelitian Kebijakan, Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan dan Perbukuan, Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

- Nuryadin, R. (2022a). Urgensi Dan Metode Pendidikan Toleransi Beragama. *Jurnal PROGRESS: Wahana Kreativitas Dan Intelektualitas*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.31942/pgrs.v10i1.6047>.
- Nuryadin, R. (2022b). URGENSI DAN METODE PENDIDIKAN TOLERANSI BERAGAMA. *Jurnal PROGRESS: Wahana Kreativitas Dan Intelektualitas*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.31942/pgrs.v10i1.6047>.
- Podsakoff, P., MacKenzie, S., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. (2003). Common Method Biases in Behavioral Research: A Critical Review of the Literature and Recommended Remedies. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88, 879–903. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879>.
- Pranyoto, Y. H. (2022). Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Katolik Dan Budi Pekerti Sebagai Bentuk Pembinaan Toleransi Beragama Bagi Siswa-Siswi Sekolah Di Distrik Merauke Kabupaten Merauke. *Jurnal Masalah Pastoral (JUMPA)*, X(1), 75–93. Retrieved from <https://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam>.
- Rosyid, Moh (2015). Mewujudkan Pendidikan Toleransi Antar-Umat Beragama Di Kudus: Belajar Dari Konflik Tolikara Papua 1 Syawal 1436 H / 2015 M. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*.
- Septryan, P., Halawa, A. A., Pongkot, H., Bhakti, A. S., & Mukarrahmah. (2024). Implementasi Sikap Toleransi Beragama Oleh Peserta Didik Katolik di SDN 13 Sepan Lebang Kecamatan Kelam Permai Kabupaten Sintang. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Moderasi Beragama. Prosiding Seminar Nasional Moderasi Beragama*.
- Sinclair, M. (2004). *Learning to live together : building skills, values, and attitudes for the twenty-first century*. UNESCO ; International Bureau of Education.
- Sugiyono. (2018). *Metode Penelitian Kombinasi (Mixed Methods)*. Bandung: CV. Alfabeta.
- Tholkhah, I. (2013). Potensi Intoleransi Keagamaan Siswa Sekolah Di Jawa Dan Sulawesi. *EDUKASI*, 11(1).
- Tobroni. (2023). *Pendidikan Agama Multikultural*. Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang.