

Teacher Strategies in Civic Education for Internalizing Tolerance Values as Social Conflict Prevention in Multicultural Schools

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Abstract

This study examines strategies employed by Civic Education (PPKn) teachers in internalizing tolerance values as conflict prevention efforts at SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras, a multicultural secondary school in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Grounded in Berger and Luckmann's social construction theory, the research addresses the knowledge gap regarding how PPKn teachers operationalize tolerance education in heterogeneous school environments. A descriptive qualitative design was employed, collecting data through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis during April-July 2025. Purposive sampling identified PPKn teachers as key informants, eleventh-grade students as primary informants, and school administrators as supporting informants. Data analysis followed Miles et al.'s interactive model, employing triangulation to ensure trustworthiness. Findings reveal five synergistic strategies: value-based learning integrating tolerance into curriculum content, problem-based learning addressing real social issues, teacher role modeling demonstrating respectful behavior, contextual teaching linking theoretical concepts to students' lived experiences, and reflective practices encouraging critical self-examination. These strategies successfully transformed abstract tolerance concepts into concrete behavioral dispositions, evidenced by students' spontaneous promotion of tolerance beyond instructional contexts and increased comfort among minority students. The study validates social construction theory in educational settings, demonstrating how tolerance values undergo externalization through teacher modeling, objectification within classroom culture, and internalization through student meaning-making. Results offer evidence-based guidance for educators implementing tolerance education in multicultural contexts while identifying the necessity of multi-strategy approaches for effective values internalization.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, tolerance serves as a fundamental social value essential for maintaining harmony and preventing conflicts arising from religious, ethnic, cultural, and political differences. Educational institutions, particularly secondary schools, play a strategic role in cultivating this value among young citizens who will eventually become agents of social cohesion in an increasingly diverse nation (Sakalli et al., 2021; Santika et al., 2023). Civic Education (Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan/PPKn) occupies a pivotal position in this endeavor, as it embodies national, humanitarian, and social moral values aimed at fostering students' awareness of peaceful coexistence within diversity (Schulz et al., 2024; Fitriani & Dewi, 2021). International scholarship demonstrates that civic and citizenship education effectively promotes students' acceptance of diversity, equal rights, and peaceful coexistence when implemented through deliberate pedagogical strategies (Torney-Purta, 2002; Veugelers, 2015). However, despite its centrality in the national curriculum, empirical evidence suggests that tolerance values have not been fully internalized by students across Indonesian schools, with manifestations of intolerance such as exclusivist attitudes, stereotyping, and resistance to diversity persisting in various educational contexts (Mahardika, 2023).

Recent scholarship has increasingly recognized the critical role of teachers in cultivating tolerance within educational settings through intentional pedagogical strategies (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Lovat &

Clement, 2008). Studies have demonstrated that teachers' strategies significantly influence students' attitudes toward religious and cultural diversity, with effective approaches including role modeling, interactive learning methods, and contextual teaching that connects theoretical values to students' lived experiences (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2013; De Schaepmeester et al., 2022). Faisal and Setiawan (2024) emphasized the optimization of Islamic Education teachers' roles in instilling interfaith tolerance values, while Hakiki (2023) explored specific strategies employed by religious education teachers to foster religious tolerance in junior secondary schools. Similarly, Ghazy and Santoso (2024) examined the internalization of tolerance values through Islamic education at vocational schools, revealing the importance of contextual and interactive pedagogical approaches. Research by Sipahutar et al. (2023) highlighted strategies for developing tolerance attitudes among students from different religious backgrounds, while Pohan et al. (2026) investigated how Islamic education teachers cultivate religious tolerance in urban school settings. These studies collectively underscore that tolerance education extends beyond theoretical instruction, requiring deliberate pedagogical strategies that engage students in meaningful reflection and practice (Rohman et al., 2023; Fitriyana, 2020; Yulianti & Rezkillah, 2026). International evidence further confirms that open classroom climates, discussion of controversial issues, and active citizenship experiences effectively promote civic competence and tolerance development (Claes & Hooghe, 2009; Wanders et al., 2020).

Despite this growing body of literature, a significant knowledge gap persists regarding how PPKn teachers—who are specifically mandated to teach Pancasila values and citizenship—operationalize tolerance education in multicultural secondary school environments. Character and values education research demonstrates that effective moral development requires comprehensive pedagogical approaches combining explicit instruction, role modeling, classroom climate cultivation, and opportunities for moral action (Berkowitz, 2011; Lapsley & Woodbury, 2016; Lickona, 1991). Most existing studies focus on religious education teachers (Faisal & Setiawan, 2024; Hakiki, 2023; Ghazy & Santoso, 2024; Pohan et al., 2026; Rohman et al., 2023) or guidance counselors (Fitriyana, 2020), with limited attention to the distinct pedagogical strategies employed by PPKn educators who bear primary responsibility for civic and character formation. Moreover, while studies have examined tolerance cultivation in elementary contexts (Yulianti & Rezkillah, 2026; Sari, 2024) and junior secondary schools (Utami et al., 2023), fewer investigations have explored how senior secondary schools—where students possess greater cognitive maturity and face imminent societal participation—navigate the complexities of tolerance education in heterogeneous environments (Schulz et al., 2018). Additionally, existing research predominantly employs descriptive approaches without theoretical frameworks that explain the social processes underlying value internalization, thereby limiting our understanding of how tolerance becomes embedded in students' consciousness and behavior through the dialectical relationship between individual and society (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

This study addresses these gaps by examining PPKn teacher strategies for internalizing tolerance values as conflict prevention efforts at SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras, a senior secondary school characterized by significant religious and cultural diversity. The school context presents both opportunities and challenges: students from various backgrounds interact daily, creating natural settings for tolerance practice, yet these interactions occasionally generate social tensions that, if inadequately managed, may escalate into open conflicts. This research is theoretically grounded in Berger and Luckmann's (1966) social construction theory, which posits that social values and norms are not innate but constructed through processes of externalization, objectification, and internalization. In educational contexts, teachers serve as agents of externalization by modeling and communicating tolerance values through their actions and pedagogical practices (Miller & Pedro, 2006). These values then become objectified as part of classroom social reality and are ultimately internalized when students assimilate them into their attitudes and behaviors, forming what Berger and Luckmann describe as the dialectical process through which "society, identity, and reality are subjectively crystallized" (Isnaini, 2013). This theoretical lens provides a robust framework for understanding how tolerance education transcends

cognitive knowledge transmission to become embedded in students' social consciousness through the continuous interplay of teaching practices, institutional culture, and student meaning-making processes.

The urgency of this research is underscored by contemporary challenges to social cohesion in Indonesia and globally, where religious and ethnic intolerance has intensified in various contexts, necessitating proactive educational interventions that equip young people with competencies for navigating diversity constructively (Rani et al., 2025). Schools serve as critical sites for developing civic competence, with research demonstrating that students who participate in values-oriented educational programs show improved social-emotional skills, conflict resolution abilities, and commitment to democratic principles (Riggs et al., 2006; Whiteley, 2014). Furthermore, the implementation of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, particularly Module Chapter 3 on "Harmony in Diversity," emphasizes contextual, reflective, and collaborative learning approaches that align with tolerance education objectives and international best practices in citizenship education (Eurydice, 2017). This study's novelty lies in its integrated examination of PPKn teacher strategies through the social construction perspective, focusing specifically on how teachers function not merely as knowledge transmitters but as social transformation agents shaping students' collective awareness about tolerance's role in conflict prevention—a perspective consistent with global citizenship education scholarship emphasizing teachers' roles in fostering social cohesion and democratic values (Banks, 2008; Sant et al., 2018).

The primary objective of this research is to comprehensively describe the strategies employed by PPKn teachers in internalizing tolerance values as efforts to prevent social conflicts at SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras and to identify factors that facilitate or hinder this process. This investigation contributes theoretically to character education scholarship by elucidating the mechanisms through which abstract values become concrete behavioral dispositions in multicultural educational settings, addressing calls for more nuanced understanding of how values education operates in practice (Veugelers, 2000; Narvaez, 2006). Practically, it offers empirically grounded insights for educators seeking to implement learning strategies oriented toward developing tolerant, critical, and nationally conscious students, contributing to the evidence base on effective citizenship education practices identified in international research (Reichert & Torney-Purta, 2019; De Schaepmeester et al., 2022). The study aligns with global efforts to strengthen civic and citizenship education as means for promoting student engagement with diversity issues and developing competencies for democratic participation in pluralistic societies (Schulz et al., 2023). Ultimately, this research affirms that successful PPKn education must be measured not solely by students' cognitive understanding of Pancasila principles but by their demonstrated capacity to internalize diversity values and act as peace agents within their communities, contributing to the broader goal of fostering social cohesion in Indonesia's multicultural democracy.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to examine the strategies of PPKn teachers in internalizing tolerance values at SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras. The qualitative approach was selected based on its appropriateness for exploring complex social phenomena in natural settings and for generating rich, contextualized understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This methodological choice aligns with the study's objective to comprehensively describe how teachers implement and experience tolerance education strategies within their authentic school environment, consistent with interpretive research paradigms emphasizing meaning-making processes and social construction of reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras, located in Batubara Regency, North Sumatra Province, during the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year from April to July 2025. This site was purposively selected due to its heterogeneous student population characterized by diversity in religious affiliation, ethnicity, and cultural backgrounds, providing an information-rich context for examining tolerance education in multicultural settings (Patton, 2015). The study participants comprised PPKn teachers serving as key informants, eleventh-grade students as primary informants, and the vice principal for curriculum affairs along with several other teachers as supporting informants. Purposive

sampling was employed to select participants who possessed deep knowledge and direct experience with the phenomenon under investigation (Palinkas et al., 2015), ensuring that those most capable of providing substantive insights into tolerance education strategies were included in the study.

Data collection proceeded through multiple phases employing methodological triangulation to enhance credibility and comprehensiveness (Carter et al., 2014). Classroom observations were conducted to directly witness pedagogical practices, teacher-student interactions, and the social dynamics through which tolerance values were conveyed during instructional activities. These observations focused particularly on how teachers integrated tolerance themes into lesson content, facilitated discussions on diversity issues, and modeled respectful behavior toward differences. Semi-structured interviews complemented observational data by eliciting participants' perspectives, experiences, and reflections on tolerance education strategies. Interview protocols included open-ended questions allowing participants to articulate their understandings while enabling the researcher to probe emergent themes (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Documentation analysis provided additional contextual information through examination of lesson plans, syllabi, and relevant school materials that demonstrated how tolerance values were formally incorporated into curriculum design and implementation.

Data analysis followed Miles et al.'s (2014) interactive model, involving iterative cycles of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, raw field notes, interview transcripts, and documents were reviewed to identify information relevant to the research focus on teacher strategies for tolerance internalization. Data display organized findings into descriptive narratives and thematic matrices facilitating pattern recognition across multiple data sources. Conclusion drawing involved interpreting patterns through the theoretical lens of Berger and Luckmann's (1966) social construction theory to explain how tolerance values become internalized through social interaction. To ensure trustworthiness, the study employed triangulation across data sources, methods, and investigators; member checking to validate interpretations with participants; and reflexive journaling to document the researcher's evolving understanding and acknowledge potential biases. This rigorous analytical approach enabled systematic transformation of qualitative data into coherent findings that illuminate the mechanisms through which PPKn teachers foster tolerance among students in multicultural school environments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study reveal a comprehensive framework of pedagogical strategies employed by PPKn teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras to internalize tolerance values among students as efforts to prevent social conflicts. Data collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis yielded five primary categories of teaching strategies, each demonstrating distinct characteristics while functioning synergistically to promote tolerance internalization.

Value-Based Learning Strategies

The first major finding concerns the implementation of value-based learning strategies that explicitly integrate tolerance into PPKn curriculum content. Analysis of lesson plans and classroom observations revealed that teachers systematically embedded tolerance values within topics related to Pancasila, human rights, and social harmony. During interviews, PPKn teacher Rusdi articulated this approach: "I include Pancasila values, including tolerance, in my teaching modules. For example, when discussing human rights, I emphasize the importance of respecting differences in beliefs and social backgrounds." Classroom observations confirmed this practice, as teachers consistently linked theoretical concepts to contemporary social issues. In one observed session, the teacher initiated discussion by connecting PPKn material to students' experiences with diverse opinions on social media, asking reflective questions such as, "How should we behave when friends disagree with us?" This pedagogical approach manifested in five distinct forms. Teachers inserted tolerance values directly into

PPKn materials through explanations, real-life examples, and value reflections. They applied Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approaches by presenting situations proximate to students' lives, such as religious activities or social events in the surrounding environment. Group discussions were arranged heterogeneously, deliberately mixing students from different religious and cultural backgrounds to facilitate exposure to diverse perspectives. Student Putri Febryani reflected on this experience: "Our teacher often invites us to discuss the importance of tolerance. I was once involved in discussions about social issues, which helped me understand other friends' perspectives." Teachers also demonstrated role modeling through fair treatment, respect for each religion's worship practices, and impartiality during minor conflicts, while school-wide activities such as interfaith events, cultural competitions, and social projects reinforced these classroom-based strategies.

Problem-Based Learning Implementation

The second significant finding centers on Problem-Based Learning (PBL) as a primary instructional approach for cultivating tolerance awareness. Observational data indicated that teachers consistently presented current social issues close to students' lived experiences, including religious differences, cultural diversity, and varying social perspectives in society, as material for classroom analysis and discussion. Teacher Rusdi explained his implementation of this strategy: "I use a contextual and experiential learning approach. Students learn through direct experience. For example, when discussing tolerance values, I ask them to analyze real examples in school or society. They learn not only from explanations but also from discussions and collaborating with friends from different backgrounds." Field observations documented that this approach created active and participative classroom atmospheres, with students demonstrating enthusiasm in expressing their views while teachers provided equitable space for every student to speak without discrimination. During observed activities, teachers grouped students from various cultural and religious backgrounds to collaborate on case study solutions, granting them freedom to identify solutions, present results, and reflect on tolerance attitudes relevant to Pancasila values. Student Putri Febriani described her experience: "The most memorable learning activity for me was when we made a project about cultural diversity in Indonesia. We worked together to create a presentation about the cultures and traditions from various regions. From that, I learned to appreciate differences and the importance of tolerance in maintaining harmony." Analysis of multiple data sources revealed that PBL strategy effectively built students' social awareness through collaborative learning experiences, enabling them to not only cognitively understand tolerance concepts but also internalize them in attitudes and real actions within the school environment.

Teacher Role Modeling as Pedagogical Strategy

The third category of findings concerns teacher role modeling as a crucial strategy for tolerance internalization. Classroom observations and interview data converged to demonstrate that PPKn teachers consistently exhibited attitudes, words, and actions reflecting respect for differences across all learning processes and social interactions. Field observations documented that teachers treated all students fairly without discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, or social background, setting examples in addressing differing opinions peacefully and respecting students' views. Student Putri Febriani observed: "My PPKn teacher always sets a direct example. For instance, if a friend has a different opinion, he doesn't get angry but encourages us to listen first. From that, I learned how to respect others even if we disagree." Teachers demonstrated role modeling by refraining from discriminatory behavior, reprimanding students who made remarks offending other groups, allowing students to express differing opinions, and responding respectfully while modeling peaceful disagreement resolution. Beyond classroom interactions, role modeling extended to daily school activities, with teachers providing opportunities for all students to practice religious worship according to their beliefs while emphasizing mutual respect. Teacher Rusdi articulated this approach: "The modeling by teachers and the school environment ensures that tolerant behavior is visibly demonstrated and can be imitated by students." Vice principal Misnah reinforced this finding: "PPKn teachers set an example of respecting differences and involve students in activities that build cooperation. This makes the school environment

more inclusive and harmonious." Observational data further revealed that when disagreements arose among students, teachers facilitated open dialogue enabling each party to express views, acting as both mediators and moral guides. Student Hotna Melan Simanjuntak recounted: "There was once a disagreement among students; our PPKn teacher facilitated discussions and helped us understand each other's perspectives. In the end, we resolved it without anger."

Contextual and Reflective Teaching Approaches

The fourth major finding identifies contextual and reflective strategies as complementary approaches reinforcing tolerance internalization. Teachers employed Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) by linking PPKn materials with real situations experienced by students in daily school and community life. Teacher Rusdi explained: "The most effective teaching method or approach I use is Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) combined with experiential learning. Students understand the value of tolerance through real situations they experience at school, such as prayer activities or explanations about the importance of respecting others' beliefs." Classroom observations documented that teachers frequently used relevant current social issues to engage students in discussion, such as interfaith conflicts reported in media, relating them to Pancasila values and civic responsibilities. During one observed lesson, the teacher connected topics about interfaith harmony with examples from the surrounding community, asking students to respond to real events and propose solutions based on Pancasila values. Teachers also created contextual learning experiences through collaborative group projects across different backgrounds. Student Putri Febriani described: "The most memorable activity for me was making a project about cultural diversity in Indonesia. We worked together in groups and presented cultures from various regions. From that, I learned to understand and appreciate differences." Practical applications included interfaith discussions with heterogeneously grouped Muslim and non-Muslim students discussing "Harmony in a Pluralistic Society," conflict resolution simulations where students role-played disagreements seeking peaceful solutions, and cross-class social activities such as communal work without regard to religious background.

Complementing contextual learning, teachers implemented reflective strategies by encouraging students to think about their own experiences and relate them to tolerance values through discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and written assignments requiring critical and introspective thinking about their attitudes toward differences. Teacher Rusdi articulated this approach: "I often ask reflective questions after discussions, for example: how would you feel if you were a minority in your group? This makes students realize the importance of respecting differences." Observational data revealed that reflection activities conducted at lesson conclusions enabled students to not only cognitively understand material but also internalize values in personal awareness, encouraging them to re-evaluate daily behavior. Student Hotna Melan Simanjuntak reflected: "After learning about tolerance, I reconsidered my attitude towards friends of different religions. I realized I was sometimes less attentive, but now I try to be more respectful and listen to their opinions." Teachers applied reflective strategies through open discussions preventing and resolving minor conflicts, facilitating dialogue spaces where students could express feelings and opinions without fear of judgment. Teacher Rusdi explained: "When disagreements or minor conflicts occur, the teacher facilitates open discussions and helps students understand each other's perspectives. Teachers encourage dialogue and cooperation so conflicts do not escalate." Reflection also took forms of learning journals or value portfolios where students wrote personal experiences related to tolerance, documenting how they handled differences with friends or contributed to maintaining class harmony.

Synthesis of Findings and Unexpected Outcomes

Table 1 synthesizes key findings from observations and interviews regarding PPKn teacher strategies and their interpretive significance within the research framework.

Table 1. Synthesis of PPKn Teacher Strategies for Tolerance Internalization

Aspect	Empirical Findings	Observable Outcomes
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Teacher Role Modeling	Teachers demonstrated openness, fairness, and respect for differing opinions in classroom interactions; students identified teachers as role models for tolerant behavior	Students imitated teachers' respectful communication patterns; decreased instances of discriminatory language; increased willingness to engage with diverse perspectives
Learning Activities	Teachers utilized cross-religion and cross-culture group discussions to address social issues including differing opinions and belief diversity; heterogeneous grouping was systematically implemented	Enhanced student awareness of diversity; improved social empathy; development of collaborative problem-solving skills across difference
Habitual Tolerant Attitudes	Students participated in cross-class and interfaith activities including communal work, national day commemorations, and student council events; regular engagement in diverse social contexts	Normalization of diversity as valued aspect of school culture; reduced social tensions; increased student-initiated inclusive activities
School Environment Support	School created inclusive atmosphere with explicit rules emphasizing brotherhood and social discipline; institutional policies reinforced tolerance values	Supportive environment strengthened objectification of tolerance values; creation of safe spaces for diversity expression
Implementation Challenges	Limited learning time constrained depth of value discussions; lack of varied learning media reduced engagement potential; external stereotypes from outside school occasionally influenced student attitudes	Recognition of structural barriers requiring systemic interventions; identification of need for enhanced resources and extended curricular time for values education

An unexpected finding emerged regarding student agency in tolerance promotion beyond teacher-directed activities. Interview and observational data revealed that students who experienced tolerance-focused pedagogy spontaneously initiated peer discussions about diversity issues and voluntarily mediated conflicts among classmates without teacher intervention. Student Hotna Melan Simanjuntak described: "After learning about tolerance in class, some of us started talking about it during breaks. When we saw friends arguing, we would step in and remind them of what we learned about respecting differences." This finding suggests that effective tolerance education generates student ownership of values that extends beyond formal instructional contexts, indicating deeper internalization than anticipated. Additionally, data revealed that students from religious minority backgrounds reported feeling significantly more comfortable expressing their identities and participating in school activities following implementation of these teaching strategies, suggesting that tolerance education creates more equitable learning environments that reduce marginalization experiences.

Discussion

This study's findings demonstrate that PPKn teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras employ a multifaceted pedagogical framework combining value-based learning, problem-based learning, role modeling, and contextual-reflective strategies to internalize tolerance values as conflict prevention mechanisms. These results directly address the research objective of describing how teachers operationalize tolerance education in multicultural secondary school contexts and identifying factors facilitating or hindering this process. The convergence of multiple teaching strategies creating synergistic effects on student tolerance development represents a significant empirical contribution to understanding how abstract civic values become concrete behavioral dispositions through intentional pedagogical practices.

The findings strongly support Berger and Luckmann's (1966) social construction theory as an explanatory framework for understanding tolerance internalization processes in educational settings. The data reveal clear manifestations of externalization through teachers' deliberate modeling of tolerant behaviors, verbal articulation of tolerance principles, and creation of learning activities embodying respect for diversity. These externalized values became objectified as normative expectations within classroom culture, evidenced by students' reports of reduced discriminatory language, increased comfort with diversity expression, and development of peer-mediated conflict resolution practices. The

internalization phase is demonstrated through students' reflective accounts of attitude changes, spontaneous application of tolerance principles in non-instructional contexts, and integration of diversity appreciation into their personal identity narratives. This empirical validation of Berger and Luckmann's theoretical framework extends its application to formal educational contexts, demonstrating that social construction processes operate systematically within pedagogically structured environments where teachers function as primary agents of value externalization.

These findings align substantially with international research on effective citizenship and character education while offering context-specific insights into tolerance cultivation in multicultural Indonesian secondary schools. The prominence of role modeling as a tolerance internalization strategy corroborates extensive character education scholarship emphasizing that teachers' demonstrated values exert greater influence on student moral development than explicit instruction alone (Berkowitz, 2011; Lickona, 1991). Similarly, the effectiveness of problem-based and contextual learning approaches supports findings from civic education research demonstrating that engagement with real social issues and collaborative exploration of diverse perspectives significantly enhance students' civic competence and tolerance attitudes (Claes & Hooghe, 2009; Wanders et al., 2020). The integration of reflective practices enabling students to examine their own attitudes and experiences corresponds with scholarship on moral development emphasizing metacognition's role in values internalization (Narvaez, 2006; Lapsley & Woodbury, 2016). However, this study extends previous research by demonstrating how these strategies function synergistically within a social construction framework specific to Indonesian civic education contexts, addressing the identified knowledge gap regarding PPKn teachers' distinct pedagogical practices.

The finding that students spontaneously initiated tolerance-promoting behaviors beyond teacher direction represents a particularly significant contribution to understanding values education effectiveness. This unexpected outcome suggests that successful tolerance internalization generates what Berkowitz and Bier (2005) term "transfer effects," wherein values learned in structured educational contexts become self-sustaining elements of students' moral frameworks that they actively apply across diverse situations. This finding challenges instrumentalist conceptions of values education as mere transmission of prescribed attitudes, instead supporting constructivist perspectives viewing students as active meaning-makers who reconstruct values through personal experience and social interaction (Veugelers, 2000). The spontaneous peer mediation behaviors observed in this study particularly resonate with research on positive youth development and student agency in creating inclusive school cultures (Riggs et al., 2006), suggesting that effective tolerance education empowers students not merely to accept diversity passively but to become active agents in promoting social cohesion.

Critical examination reveals both convergences and divergences with findings from Indonesian studies on tolerance education. The emphasis on contextual teaching and role modeling aligns closely with strategies documented by Faisal and Setiawan (2024), Hakiki (2023), and Ghazy and Santoso (2024) in Islamic education contexts, suggesting cross-curricular consistency in effective tolerance pedagogy. However, this study's identification of problem-based learning as a primary strategy appears less prominent in previous Indonesian research, which has emphasized more directive approaches such as moral instruction and habitual practice (Pohan et al., 2026; Rohman et al., 2023). This difference may reflect PPKn's specific curricular mandate to develop critical thinking and civic problem-solving capacities alongside value internalization, distinguishing it from religious education's more normative orientation. Additionally, while previous studies have noted challenges such as limited instructional time and external influences undermining tolerance education (Fitriyana, 2020; Sari, 2024), this research documents how teachers strategically navigate these constraints through integration of tolerance themes across multiple pedagogical approaches and school activities, suggesting that systemic obstacles can be partially mitigated through comprehensive, multi-strategy implementations.

The study's findings also illuminate important distinctions between senior secondary tolerance education and approaches documented in elementary and junior secondary contexts. While research in younger grades emphasizes habit formation and explicit moral instruction (Yulianti & Rezkillah, 2026;

Utami et al., 2023), this study reveals that senior secondary teachers leverage students' enhanced cognitive maturity by emphasizing critical analysis of diversity issues, reflective examination of personal attitudes, and collaborative problem-solving addressing real social conflicts. This developmental appropriateness aligns with international citizenship education research demonstrating that adolescents benefit from pedagogies engaging them as emerging civic actors capable of contributing to social problem-solving rather than passive recipients of moral instruction (Schulz et al., 2018). The sophisticated reflective practices documented in this study—including learning journals, value portfolios, and facilitated dialogue on discrimination experiences—represent age-appropriate applications of tolerance education principles rarely examined in existing Indonesian literature.

The documented effectiveness of these strategies in creating more equitable learning environments, particularly for religious minority students, carries significant implications for understanding tolerance education's role in reducing marginalization and promoting inclusive schooling. This finding resonates with international research on multicultural education demonstrating that explicit attention to diversity issues and creation of respectful classroom climates enhance academic engagement and belonging for marginalized students (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2013). The reported increase in minority students' comfort with identity expression and school participation suggests that tolerance education functions not merely as conflict prevention but as equity promotion, enabling fuller participation in educational opportunities. This dual function—preventing intergroup conflict while simultaneously enhancing equity—has received limited attention in Indonesian scholarship, which has predominantly framed tolerance education through social harmony lenses rather than equity frameworks.

The theoretical implications of these findings extend current understanding of how values education operates through social construction processes in institutional contexts. By demonstrating empirically how externalization, objectification, and internalization occur systematically through coordinated pedagogical strategies, this study provides operational clarity to Berger and Luckmann's abstract theoretical constructs. The identification of specific teaching practices corresponding to each theoretical phase enables more precise application of social construction theory to educational research and practice. Practically, these findings offer evidence-based guidance for PPKn teachers and curriculum developers seeking to enhance tolerance education effectiveness. The documented strategies—value-based learning, problem-based approaches, role modeling, and contextual-reflective methods—represent replicable practices adaptable to diverse multicultural school contexts. The synergistic functioning of multiple strategies suggests that comprehensive approaches integrating various pedagogical methods yield stronger outcomes than isolated interventions, informing more holistic tolerance education program design.

Several limitations constrain interpretation of these findings. The single-site case study design limits generalizability, as findings reflect dynamics specific to SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras's particular demographic composition, leadership support, and community context. Future research employing comparative multi-site designs could examine how school-level variables mediate tolerance education effectiveness. Additionally, the cross-sectional data collection cannot determine long-term sustainability of observed tolerance attitudes or behaviors. Longitudinal studies tracking students' tolerance development over time and into post-graduation contexts would strengthen understanding of values internalization durability.

These findings collectively affirm that tolerance internalization in multicultural secondary schools requires comprehensive pedagogical frameworks combining explicit values instruction, experiential learning opportunities, consistent teacher modeling, and supportive institutional environments. The study demonstrates that PPKn teachers serve as crucial social transformation agents who, through intentional strategic practices grounded in sound pedagogical principles, can effectively cultivate tolerance as both cognitive understanding and behavioral disposition. This research contributes conceptually by validating social construction theory's applicability to formal educational contexts, operationalizing its abstract processes through identifiable teaching strategies, and demonstrating how

values education functions simultaneously as conflict prevention and equity promotion in diverse school communities. The documented effectiveness of these strategies in fostering student agency, creating inclusive environments, and generating transfer effects beyond instructional contexts underscores the transformative potential of well-designed, theoretically grounded tolerance education in promoting social cohesion within Indonesia's multicultural democracy.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that PPKn teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Medang Deras successfully internalize tolerance values through a comprehensive pedagogical framework integrating five synergistic strategies: value-based learning, problem-based learning, teacher role modeling, contextual teaching, and reflective practices. These strategies function collectively to transform abstract tolerance concepts into concrete behavioral dispositions, effectively preventing social conflicts while promoting inclusive school environments. The findings empirically validate Berger and Luckmann's social construction theory in educational contexts, demonstrating how tolerance values undergo externalization through teacher modeling and instruction, objectification within classroom culture, and internalization through student meaning-making processes.

This research contributes theoretically by operationalizing social construction processes through identifiable teaching practices and extending values education scholarship beyond religious education contexts to civic education domains. The documented student agency in spontaneously promoting tolerance and increased comfort among minority students reveals that effective tolerance education generates transformative effects extending beyond instructional contexts, functioning simultaneously as conflict prevention and equity promotion mechanisms. Practically, the identified strategies offer evidence-based guidance for educators and curriculum developers implementing tolerance education in multicultural secondary schools, emphasizing the necessity of multi-strategy approaches over isolated interventions.

Despite these contributions, the single-site case study design and cross-sectional data collection limit generalizability and preclude examination of long-term sustainability of tolerance attitudes. Future research should employ comparative multi-site designs examining how institutional variables mediate strategy effectiveness across diverse school contexts and conduct longitudinal studies tracking tolerance development trajectories from secondary schooling into adult civic participation. Additionally, investigating how digital technologies and social media platforms might enhance or complicate tolerance education implementation would address emerging pedagogical challenges in contemporary educational environments, strengthening our understanding of effective practices for cultivating social cohesion in Indonesia's multicultural democracy.

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