Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan
https://jurnal.stiq-amuntai.ac.id/index.php/al-qalam
P-ISSN: 1907-4174; E-ISSN: 2621-0681
DOI : 10.35931/aq.v20i6.7173

DIFFERENCES IN ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' TOLERANCE AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION BY PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN WONOGIRI

Kisti Handayani[1], Winarno[2], Fadhil Purnama Adi[3], Gunarhadi[4]
[1, 2, 3, 4] Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD), Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia
[1] kistihandayani49@student.uns.ac.id, [2] winarnonarmoatmojo@staff.uns.ac.id, [3] fadhil@staff.uns.ac.id, [4] gunarhadi@staff.uns.ac.id

Abstract

This study examines differences in tolerance and social participation according to parents' employment status among elementary school students in the Sinar Harapan Cluster, Wonogiri Regency. It used a comparative quantitative approach involving 150 elementary school students selected through purposive sampling. The instrument was a four-point Likert-scale questionnaire measuring tolerance and social participation. Validity testing with Pearson product–moment correlation yielded 15 valid items, and reliability testing produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.703, indicating that the instrument was reliable. Prerequisite tests showed that the data were normally distributed ($p = 0.459 > 0.05$) and homogeneous ($p > 0.05$). Hypothesis testing with the independent-samples t-test revealed significant differences in tolerance ($t = -6.124$, $p < 0.001$) and social participation ($t = -8.948$, $p < 0.001$) according to parents' employment status. Students whose parents were employed tended to show higher levels of tolerance and social participation than those whose parents were not employed. These findings underline the importance of strengthening Pancasila-based character education in elementary schools so that schools can offset differences in family background.

Keywords: *Tolerance, Social Participation, Parental Employment Status, Elementary School.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji perbedaan toleransi dan partisipasi sosial berdasarkan status pekerjaan orang tua pada siswa sekolah dasar di Gugus Sinar Harapan, Kabupaten Wonogiri. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif komparatif yang melibatkan 150 siswa sekolah dasar yang dipilih melalui purposive sampling. *Instrumen penelitian berupa angket skala Likert empat poin yang mengukur toleransi dan partisipasi sosial. Uji validitas dengan korelasi* product moment *Pearson menghasilkan 15 butir valid, dan uji reliabilitas menghasilkan nilai* Cronbach's alpha *sebesar 0,703 sehingga instrumen dinyatakan reliabel. Uji prasyarat menunjukkan bahwa data berdistribusi normal ($p = 0,459 > 0,05$) dan homogen ($p > 0,05$). Uji hipotesis dengan* independent-samples t-test *menunjukkan perbedaan yang signifikan pada toleransi ($t = -6,124$, $p < 0,001$) dan partisipasi sosial ($t = -8,948$, $p < 0,001$) berdasarkan status pekerjaan orang tua. Siswa yang orang tuanya bekerja cenderung menunjukkan tingkat toleransi dan partisipasi sosial yang lebih tinggi daripada siswa yang orang tuanya tidak bekerja. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya penguatan pendidikan karakter berbasis Pancasila di sekolah dasar agar sekolah dapat mengimbangi perbedaan latar belakang keluarga.*

Kata Kunci: *Toleransi, Partisipasi Sosial, Status Pekerjaan Orang Tua, Sekolah Dasar.*

© Author(s) 2026
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

INTRODUCTION

Character education in elementary schools plays a strategic role in shaping children's behavior, attitudes, and moral values from an early age. In Indonesia, the values of Pancasila are the main foundation of character education, encompassing belief in God, humanity, unity, democracy, and social justice. Implementing these values in learning aims not only to improve students' academic ability but also to form a social character that is tolerant and able to participate actively at school and in society.

Social diversity in elementary schools, including differences in religion, ethnicity, culture, and economic conditions, requires learning approaches that foster respect for difference. Studies in Indonesian elementary schools show that tolerance can be cultivated through civic education, teacher modeling, habituation, and culturally diverse learning,[1] and that pupils of different faiths can build mutually respectful relationships when the school culture supports them.[2] According to Bandura's social learning theory, children learn through observation, so teachers who respect all kinds of parental occupations can serve as effective social models for cultivating tolerance early.[3] Lickona describes tolerance as the ability to respect differences of opinion, culture, and belief and to show empathy in social interaction,[4] and he views character as comprising moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, which must be developed together so that students not only understand moral concepts but also have the motivation and habits to apply them.[5] At the elementary level, tolerance can be seen in students' acceptance of peers from different backgrounds, peaceful conflict resolution, inclusive attitudes in group activities, and the avoidance of discrimination and bullying.

Social participation, in Putnam's theory of civic engagement, refers to individuals' involvement in community activities that foster cooperation, collective responsibility, and social capital.[6] Civic engagement in young people develops through opportunities for involvement

[1] Yudi Firmansyah et al., "Nilai Toleransi Persatuan dan Keberagaman dalam Pendidikan," *Journal of Education Research* 5, no. 2 (2024), https://doi.org/10.37985/jer.v5i2.1077; Arvad Assiraj, Dedek Helida Pitra, and Muhammad Subhan, "Peran Guru Kelas dalam Menanamkan Sikap Toleransi pada Siswa Kelas IV SD Negeri 156/II Suka Jaya," *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary on Social and Technology* 4, no. 3 (2026), https://doi.org/10.69693/ijmst.v4i3.14068; Septi Amalia Risty and Husna Farhana, "Strategi Guru dalam Pengembangan Sikap Toleransi Siswa Sekolah Dasar melalui Pembelajaran Keberagaman Budaya," *Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar* 11, no. 1 (2026).

[2] Amira Henny Mahmudah et al., "Toleransi Keragaman Keyakinan pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Educatio* 9, no. 3 (2023), https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v9i3.5067.

[3] Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1977).

[4] Thomas Lickona, *Character Matters: How to Help Our Children Develop Good Judgment, Integrity, and Other Essential Virtues* (New York: Touchstone, 2004).

[5] Lickona, *Character Matters*.

[6] Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

provided by families, schools, and communities.[7] In elementary schools, social participation takes the form of involvement in class activities and school organizations, community work (*kerja bakti*), mutual assistance (*gotong royong*), empathy toward classmates, group work, and social activities that foster care for the environment. The more students take part in such activities, the more they develop communication, cooperation, and social concern.

Besides school, the family plays a central role in children's social development. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory places the family in the child's immediate microsystem, where daily interactions shape social experience and personality.[8] One family factor that may influence children's social development is parents' employment status, an indicator of the family's socioeconomic condition.[9] Durkheim explained that social structure shapes patterns of individual interaction,[10] and Weber emphasized that occupation and status determine an individual's position in social stratification and access to resources.[11] Parental employment can affect parenting, the time available for interaction with children, and access to educational resources; employed parents often have broader social experience to share with their children, yet high work stress or long working hours can reduce the quality of parent–child interaction and affect children's emotional development.[12] Meta-analytic evidence shows that the associations between maternal employment and children's achievement and behavior are generally small and depend strongly on family context, such as income and family structure.[13]

Indonesian studies of this relationship have produced mixed findings. Mutiara et al. found that children of working mothers showed stronger problem-solving skills and independence, while children of non-working mothers showed stronger emotional bonds and self-confidence, with no significant difference in overall behavior.[14] Apsari and Abduh found that family economic

[7] Constance Flanagan and Peter Levine, "Civic Engagement and the Transition to Adulthood," *The Future of Children* 20, no. 1 (2010), https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.0.0043.

[8] Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

[9] Robert H. Bradley and Robert F. Corwyn, "Socioeconomic Status and Child Development," *Annual Review of Psychology* 53 (2002), https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.53.100901.135233.

[10] Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. W. D. Halls (New York: Free Press, 1984).

[11] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

[12] Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Rena L. Repetti, and Ann C. Crouter, "Work and Family in the 1990s," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 62, no. 4 (2000), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00981.x.

[13] Wendy A. Goldberg et al., "Maternal Employment and Children's Achievement in Context: A Meta-Analysis of Four Decades of Research," *Psychological Bulletin* 134, no. 1 (2008), https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.134.1.77; Rachel G. Lucas-Thompson, Wendy A. Goldberg, and JoAnn Prause, "Maternal Work Early in the Lives of Children and Its Distal Associations with Achievement and Behavior Problems: A Meta-Analysis," *Psychological Bulletin* 136, no. 6 (2010), https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020875.

[14] Yolanda Mutiara et al., "Pengalaman Ibu Bekerja dan Ibu Tidak Bekerja dalam Membentuk Perkembangan Anak," *Jurnal Tematik* 14, no. 2 (2025), https://doi.org/10.24114/jt.v14i2.72128.

background had no significant effect on the behavior of fifth-grade students.[15] Few studies, however, have directly compared elementary students' tolerance and social participation according to parental employment status. This study therefore aims to analyze differences in tolerance and social participation according to parents' employment status among elementary school students in the Sinar Harapan Cluster, Wonogiri Regency, addressing the question: is there a difference in students' tolerance and social participation according to their parents' employment status?

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a comparative quantitative approach to compare students' tolerance and social participation according to their parents' employment status. It was conducted in elementary schools in the Sinar Harapan Cluster, Wonogiri Regency. The population comprised 150 students, and the sample was selected through purposive sampling based on the characteristics of tolerance and social participation. The independent variable was parental employment status, categorized as employed or not employed, and the dependent variables were students' tolerance and social participation.

The instrument was a four-point Likert-scale questionnaire measuring students' tolerance and social participation. Before use, its validity was tested with the Pearson product–moment correlation and its reliability with Cronbach's alpha. The validity test involved 83 students and 20 items, of which 15 were valid and 5 invalid. Reliability testing yielded a value of 0.703, greater than the critical value of 0.213, so the instrument was declared reliable. Data were analyzed with SPSS in three stages: descriptive analysis, prerequisite tests (normality and homogeneity), and hypothesis testing with the independent-samples t-test at a significance level of 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Distribution of Parental Employment Status

Most students' parents were not employed (90 students, or 60 percent of the 150 students), while 60 students (40 percent) had employed parents. This distribution illustrates the socioeconomic conditions of students' families in the Sinar Harapan Cluster, since parental employment status can influence patterns of family interaction and the social experiences available to children.

[15] Lukita Apsari and Muhammad Abduh, "Pengaruh Latar Belakang Ekonomi Keluarga terhadap Perilaku Siswa Kelas V SDN Semanggi Lor," *Educatio: Jurnal Ilmu Kependidikan* 20, no. 1 (2025), https://doi.org/10.29408/edc.v20i1.30006.

Prerequisite Tests

The Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test yielded Z = 0.854 with a significance (Asymp. Sig., two-tailed) of 0.459. Because this value is greater than 0.05, the tolerance and social participation data were normally distributed, satisfying one of the assumptions for parametric analysis such as the t-test. Levene's test for tolerance yielded F = 1.198 with a significance of 0.275, and for social participation F = 1.198 with a significance of 0.215. Because both values are greater than 0.05, the variances of the groups with employed and non-employed parents were homogeneous. The results of the prerequisite and hypothesis tests are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1**.** Summary of the Prerequisite and Hypothesis Tests

Test	Statistic	df	Sig.
Kolmogorov–Smirnov (normality)	Z = 0.854	–	0.459
Levene's test, tolerance	F = 1.198	–	0.275
Levene's test, social participation	F = 1.198	–	0.215
t-test, tolerance (equal variances assumed)	t = −6.124	148	<0.001
t-test, tolerance (equal variances not assumed)	t = −5.959	114.520	<0.001
t-test, social participation (equal variances assumed)	t = −8.948	148	<0.001
t-test, social participation (equal variances not assumed)	t = −8.883	123.388	<0.001

Source: Research data.

Hypothesis Tests

For tolerance, the independent-samples t-test yielded t = −6.124 (equal variances assumed, df = 148) and t = −5.959 (equal variances not assumed, df = 114.520), with a two-tailed significance of 0.000. Because the significance is below 0.05, there was a significant difference in tolerance between students with employed and non-employed parents, with students whose parents were employed showing higher tolerance. For social participation, the test yielded t = −8.948 (df = 148) and t = −8.883 (df = 123.388), with a two-tailed significance of 0.000, indicating a significant difference in social participation between the two groups, with students whose parents were employed more actively involved in school activities such as community work, class organizations, and collaborative projects.

Discussion

The descriptive analysis shows that most students' parents were not employed, suggesting that most students came from families in which parents spent more time at home. In the study of children's social development, the family is the first environment that strongly influences attitudes and social behavior; in Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, interactions within the family play an important role in shaping social experience and personality.[16] Parental employment can thus

[16] Bronfenbrenner, *Ecology of Human Development*.

influence the intensity and quality of parent–child interaction, which in turn affects children's social development at school.

The hypothesis tests showed that students whose parents were employed had higher tolerance than those whose parents were not employed. A possible explanation is that employed parents provide broader access to cultural capital, such as books and learning support, and more diverse social exposure, so that their children encounter differences of culture, religion, and social background more often, whereas children of non-employed parents may grow up in a more homogeneous family environment.[17] Students whose parents were employed were also more active in school activities, possibly because employed parents are more aware of the importance of social involvement and better able to provide information and facilities for such activities, while students whose parents were not employed may face limits of time and resources. These explanations, however, were not tested directly in this study.

The finding on social participation is consistent with Putnam's theory of civic engagement, which holds that participation in social activities is an important part of building social capital in a community; children with broader social experience, whether through family interaction or the wider environment, tend to participate more fully in school life.[18] It is also consistent with sociological views that the socioeconomic condition of the family shapes patterns of social interaction: in Durkheim's terms, social structure influences how individuals interact, and families with wider social networks have more opportunities to engage in social activities, while for Weber, occupation and status influence access to resources, including the diverse social experiences available to children.[19]

These results should nevertheless be interpreted with caution. Meta-analyses show that the effects of parental, especially maternal, employment on children's outcomes are generally small and vary with family context,[20] and some Indonesian studies have found no significant differences in children's overall behavior by maternal employment or family economic background.[21] The differences observed in this study may therefore reflect other aspects of family socioeconomic status that accompany parental employment, rather than employment itself.

The school nonetheless plays a key role in shaping students' character. It brings together students from different backgrounds and gives them opportunities to learn to respect differences and work with others. Teachers can instill tolerance and social participation through character

[17] Bradley and Corwyn, "Socioeconomic Status and Child Development."
[18] Putnam, *Bowling Alone*; Flanagan and Levine, "Civic Engagement."
[19] Durkheim, *Division of Labor*; Weber, *Economy and Society*.
[20] Goldberg et al., "Maternal Employment and Children's Achievement"; Lucas-Thompson, Goldberg, and Prause, "Maternal Work Early in the Lives of Children."
[21] Mutiara et al., "Pengalaman Ibu Bekerja"; Apsari and Abduh, "Pengaruh Latar Belakang Ekonomi Keluarga."

education based on Pancasila, collaborative learning methods such as group discussion, teamwork, and projects, and extracurricular activities such as scouting, sports, the arts, and social activities, which allow students to interact across classes and develop a sense of togetherness.[22] Peer relationships are also important: as children expand their interactions from the family to the school and community, they learn cooperation, sharing, communication, and empathy. Schools that create an inclusive social climate give every student an equal opportunity to take part in social activities regardless of family background. For parents, the findings highlight the importance of supporting children's social activities at school and creating a family environment that fosters positive social attitudes, so that character development is carried out jointly by families, schools, and communities.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to determine whether elementary students' tolerance and social participation differ according to their parents' employment status in the Sinar Harapan Cluster, Wonogiri Regency, and the answer is affirmative. Of the 150 students involved, those whose parents were employed (40 percent) showed significantly higher tolerance ($t = -6.124$, $p < 0.001$) and significantly greater social participation ($t = -8.948$, $p < 0.001$) than those whose parents were not employed (60 percent). The difference appeared somewhat larger for social participation, indicating that the gap between the two groups lies not only in students' attitudes toward peers from different religious, cultural, and social backgrounds but even more in their active involvement in school activities such as community work, class organizations, and collaborative projects.

These results indicate that the family, as the child's immediate microsystem, remains an important source of variation in social attitudes and behavior at the elementary level. The broader social exposure, cultural capital, and access to information and facilities associated with parental employment appear to give children more opportunities to encounter diversity and to take part in school life. Because the study used a comparative design, however, the findings describe differences between groups rather than a causal effect of parental employment, and these differences may partly reflect other aspects of family socioeconomic status that accompany employment.

The findings carry several practical implications. For schools, Pancasila-based character education needs to be implemented consistently and systematically so that the school can offset differences in family background, for example through collaborative learning, class and school organizations, scouting and other extracurricular activities, and the habituation of mutual

[22] Risty and Farhana, "Strategi Guru dalam Pengembangan Sikap Toleransi"; Assiraj, Pitra, and Subhan, "Peran Guru Kelas."

assistance (gotong royong), with particular attention to giving students whose parents are not employed equal opportunities and encouragement to take part. For teachers, the findings underline the importance of modeling respect for all kinds of parental occupations, avoiding any discrimination based on family background, and building an inclusive classroom climate in which every student can contribute. For parents, whatever their employment status, the findings highlight the value of supporting children's involvement in school activities and modeling tolerance at home. Character development should therefore be a shared responsibility of schools, families, and the wider community, including the school committee.

This study also has limitations. It was conducted in a single cluster with a purposively selected sample, so its findings cannot be generalized to all elementary schools in Wonogiri Regency or elsewhere; it relied on students' self-reports through a single questionnaire covering both constructs; and it treated parental employment as a simple dichotomy. Future research should report group means and effect sizes, use separately validated scales for tolerance and social participation, distinguish the employment of fathers and mothers as well as the type of occupation and working hours, control for other indicators of family socioeconomic status such as income and parental education, and combine questionnaires with observation or interviews to explain how family conditions shape students' tolerance and social participation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Apsari, Lukita, and Muhammad Abduh. "Pengaruh Latar Belakang Ekonomi Keluarga terhadap Perilaku Siswa Kelas V SDN Semanggi Lor." *Educatio: Jurnal Ilmu Kependidikan* 20, no. 1 (2025): 227–35. https://doi.org/10.29408/edc.v20i1.30006.

Assiraj, Arvad, Dedek Helida Pitra, and Muhammad Subhan. "Peran Guru Kelas dalam Menanamkan Sikap Toleransi pada Siswa Kelas IV SD Negeri 156/II Suka Jaya." *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary on Social and Technology* 4, no. 3 (2026): 11674–83. https://doi.org/10.69693/ijmst.v4i3.14068.

Bandura, Albert. *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1977.

Bradley, Robert H., and Robert F. Corwyn. "Socioeconomic Status and Child Development." *Annual Review of Psychology* 53 (2002): 371–99. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.53.100901.135233.

Bronfenbrenner, Urie. *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.

Durkheim, Émile. *The Division of Labor in Society*. Translated by W. D. Halls. New York: Free Press, 1984.

Firmansyah, Yudi, Agus Suherman, Suherman Suherman, and Sholih Sholih. "Nilai Toleransi Persatuan dan Keberagaman dalam Pendidikan." *Journal of Education Research* 5, no. 2 (2024): 2057–65. https://doi.org/10.37985/jer.v5i2.1077.

Flanagan, Constance, and Peter Levine. "Civic Engagement and the Transition to Adulthood." *The Future of Children* 20, no. 1 (2010): 159–79. https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.0.0043.

Goldberg, Wendy A., JoAnn Prause, Rachel Lucas-Thompson, and Amy Himsel. "Maternal Employment and Children's Achievement in Context: A Meta-Analysis of Four Decades of Research." *Psychological Bulletin* 134, no. 1 (2008): 77–108. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.134.1.77.

Lickona, Thomas. *Character Matters: How to Help Our Children Develop Good Judgment, Integrity, and Other Essential Virtues*. New York: Touchstone, 2004.

Lucas-Thompson, Rachel G., Wendy A. Goldberg, and JoAnn Prause. "Maternal Work Early in the Lives of Children and Its Distal Associations with Achievement and Behavior Problems: A Meta-Analysis." *Psychological Bulletin* 136, no. 6 (2010): 915–42. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020875.

Mahmudah, Amira Henny, Khusnul Fajriyah, Ikha Listyarini, and Tutik Wahyuni. "Toleransi Keragaman Keyakinan pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar." *Jurnal Educatio* 9, no. 3 (2023): 1481–86. https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v9i3.5067.

Mutiara, Yolanda, Nurul Maftukhah, Tasa Agustina, and Dhea Putri Sakilla. "Pengalaman Ibu Bekerja dan Ibu Tidak Bekerja dalam Membentuk Perkembangan Anak." *Jurnal Tematik* 14, no. 2 (2025): 194–97. https://doi.org/10.24114/jt.v14i2.72128.

Perry-Jenkins, Maureen, Rena L. Repetti, and Ann C. Crouter. "Work and Family in the 1990s." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 62, no. 4 (2000): 981–98. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00981.x.

Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

Risty, Septi Amalia, and Husna Farhana. "Strategi Guru dalam Pengembangan Sikap Toleransi Siswa Sekolah Dasar melalui Pembelajaran Keberagaman Budaya." *Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar* 11, no. 1 (2026): 670–77.

Weber, Max. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.