

## Development of the “Masgapur” Thematic Storybook Based on the Pancasila Village Model to Enhance Religious Tolerance and Moderation in Early Childhood

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### Article info

### Abstract

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*This study develops and evaluates the Masgapur thematic picture storybook as a learning medium to strengthen religious tolerance and moderation among early childhood learners. Rooted in the socio-cultural context of a “Pancasila Village,” the storybook presents harmonious interactions among children from different religious backgrounds Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism symbolized through Masgapur (Masjid, Gereja, Pura). Employing the ADDIE model, the research followed five stages: needs analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. Data were obtained through observations, interviews with teachers and parents, expert validation in early childhood education, media design and linguistics, and pre-test and post-test assessments. Needs analysis revealed limited access to culturally relevant storybooks that integrate local values and multilingual elements. The developed storybook features simple narratives, contextual illustrations, and local cultural values aligned with Pancasila principles of unity and mutual respect. Expert validation indicated high feasibility with scores above 85% across all categories. Small- and large-group trials demonstrated strong child engagement and understanding of multicultural content. Post-test results showed a 38.9% improvement in children’s tolerance and religious moderation skills. Overall, the Masgapur storybook is pedagogically feasible and effective, underscoring the value of integrating local wisdom, narrative-based learning, and character education to promote peaceful coexistence in early childhood settings.*

**Keywords:** *Masgapur Storybook, Religious, Tolerance, Moderation, Early Childhood Education.*

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengembangkan dan mengevaluasi efektivitas buku cerita bergambar tematik Masgapur sebagai media pembelajaran untuk memperkuat toleransi dan moderasi beragama pada anak usia dini. Berbasis pada konteks sosio-kultural “Kampung Pancasila,” buku cerita ini menghadirkan interaksi harmonis antar anak dengan latar belakang agama berbeda Islam, Kristen, dan Hindu yang direpresentasikan melalui akronim Masgapur (Masjid, Gereja, Pura). Penelitian menggunakan model pengembangan ADDIE yang meliputi analisis kebutuhan, perancangan, pengembangan, implementasi, dan evaluasi. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara dengan guru dan orang tua, validasi ahli bidang PAUD, desain media, linguistik, serta pre-test dan post-test. Analisis kebutuhan menunjukkan keterbatasan akses anak terhadap buku cerita yang relevan secara budaya dan memuat nilai lokal serta unsur multibahasa. Produk buku yang dikembangkan menampilkan narasi sederhana, ilustrasi kontekstual,

dan nilai budaya lokal yang selaras dengan prinsip persatuan dan saling menghormati dalam Pancasila. Validasi ahli menunjukkan kelayakan tinggi dengan skor di atas 85% pada seluruh aspek. Uji coba kelompok kecil dan besar memperlihatkan keterlibatan anak yang kuat dalam memahami konten multikultural. Hasil post-test menunjukkan peningkatan 38,9% dalam kompetensi toleransi dan moderasi beragama. Secara keseluruhan, buku Masgapur terbukti layak dan efektif, serta menegaskan pentingnya integrasi kearifan lokal, pembelajaran berbasis naratif, dan pendidikan karakter sejak usia dini.

**Kata Kunci:** Buku Masgapur, Toleransi, Moderasi Beragama, PAUD

## INTRODUCTION

Issues of religious tolerance and moderation have increasingly become critical concerns, especially among younger generations (Amala. et al., 2022; Fajriyah & Riswandi, 2022). Although theories on tolerance and religious moderation are widely discussed in educational and social literature, many young children still lack adequate understanding of the importance of respecting religious and cultural diversity (Samsul, 2020). Various social reports reveal that cases of religious intolerance and exclusive attitudes continue to rise, even though Indonesia is known for its cultural and religious plurality (Rohman, 2020). This indicates a significant gap between theoretical ideals that emphasize tolerance and the social reality experienced in the field. Consequently, more effective approaches are needed to teach tolerance and religious moderation to children from an early age (Hidayati et al., 2022; Nisak et al., 2022). One strategic effort is the development of thematic storybooks grounded in Pancasila values and Indonesia’s rich religious diversity.

Diversity in early childhood education settings (PAUD) is essential for instilling values of multicultural understanding from a young age, enabling children to recognize, appreciate, and coexist with differences in their surroundings (Akhmadi, 2019). Diversity encompasses variations in religion, culture, ethnicity, language, gender, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Through enjoyable learning activities, children are guided to understand that each individual has unique traits that deserve acknowledgment (Shofia Rohmah et al., 2023). Teachers play a crucial role as role models by demonstrating tolerant attitudes, showing fairness in interactions without discrimination, and designing activities that introduce cultural, linguistic, and customary differences (Azizah et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2025; Saleha et al., 2022). Schools can implement diversity through storytelling sessions, regional songs, traditional attire, and inclusive celebrations of national and cultural events (Suyadi, 2019; Warmansyah & Nirwana, 2023). Learning environments must also include media, books, and materials representing diverse skin tones, languages, and cultural identities to normalize differences as part of everyday life (Palomba, 2022). Consistent implementation of these practices helps cultivate empathy, tolerance, and unity, fostering children who are open-minded, respectful, and capable of living harmoniously in diverse communities.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of character education, including tolerance and religious moderation in early childhood (Lickona, 1992; Warmansyah et al., 2023; Wiyani & Nurkamelia, 2022). Jumiatmoko et al., (2024) found that teaching tolerance values through storytelling activities improved children’s understanding of diversity.

Similarly, Nurdin & Syahrotin, (2019) demonstrated that integrating Pancasila values into early childhood education promoted respect for differences. However, most studies have focused on general teaching strategies, with limited attention to the development of story-based learning media rooted in strong local cultural values, such as the concept of Kampung Pancasila.

In Gaprang Village, there is an area known as Kampung Pancasila, which serves as a living example of the implementation of Pancasila principles, particularly in fostering strong interfaith tolerance and religious moderation among its residents. This area is located on a small street called Jalan Masgapur. The name “Masgapur” is an acronym for Masjid (mosque), Gereja (church), and Pura (Hindu temple), symbolizing the presence of three places of worship standing side-by-side along the same lane. The coexistence of these religious institutions reflects the community’s deep respect for religious differences. Residents of Kampung Pancasila live harmoniously and uphold tolerance and religious moderation in their daily activities. They regularly organize interfaith gatherings, offer mutual assistance, and participate in communal celebrations regardless of religious identity. For instance, during major religious events such as Eid al-Fitr, Christmas, and Nyepi, residents of all faiths collaborate in preparation and celebration. This spirit of solidarity creates a safe, comfortable, and harmonious living environment.

The presence of Kampung Pancasila in Gaprang Village demonstrates that differences in belief do not hinder unity; instead, diversity enriches social and cultural life. These values align with the spirit of Pancasila as the nation’s foundation, which promotes unity in diversity. Therefore, Kampung Pancasila on Jalan Masgapur stands as a model and inspiration for nurturing harmonious, tolerant, and moderate community life. An interview with the Head of Gaprang Village revealed that Kampung Pancasila emerged naturally from the diverse religious communities living within the area, originally consisting of several neighborhood units with various faith backgrounds. Three religious leaders representing Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism—played important roles in strengthening interfaith tolerance. The village government strongly supports the initiative by encouraging tri-religious prayers (Islam, Christian, Hindu) during national commemorations and consistently organizing interfaith flag ceremonies and joint prayers every August 17th, reinforcing community cohesion and religious harmony.

Further interviews with teachers at TK Kartika IV-34 indicated that the school still faces challenges in implementing learning on tolerance and religious moderation due to limited learning media. Illustrated storybooks, cultural artifacts, and audiovisual materials depicting religious and cultural diversity are scarce. The classroom library contains mainly religious books and children’s news material, not resources on tolerance and moderation. Only murals on classroom walls depict interfaith harmony. This study responds to the identified gap by introducing a thematic storybook designed to enhance children’s understanding of tolerance and religious moderation using a contextual and local cultural approach.

Based on preliminary studies and existing theories, a thematic storybook grounded in the values of Kampung Pancasila has the potential to be an effective learning tool for

promoting tolerance and religious moderation in early childhood. Such a book not only presents narratives relevant to children's lives but also delivers moral messages aligned with Pancasila principles, such as mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. As a learning aid, the storybook helps children positively recognize and understand religious and cultural differences (Fauziyyah & Nurul Afrianti, 2024; Harpiyani et al., 2022; Latifa et al., 2023). Through interactive learning activities, children can internalize these values in meaningful ways. Effective learning requires appropriate media, and dynamic, conducive, and dialogic learning environments significantly influence children's potential development (Anisa & Murniyetti, 2022; Lubis et al., 2022; Sagita et al., 2025). As stated by , "media" originates from the Latin word medium, meaning a channel or intermediary between sender and receiver. Nurmadiyah (2016) emphasizes that educational media enhances learning effectiveness. Seels and Glasgow (in Munadhi, 2013) categorize media into audio, visual, multimedia, and print formats.

Media issues at TK Kartika IV-34 indicate that available picture storybooks are insufficient to enhance tolerance and religious moderation, as they do not cover interfaith themes. Observations and interviews on August 7th, 2025, showed low student reading interest due to inconsistent literacy application and a lack of storybook variety. Moral and affective learning also receives limited attention, as teachers tend to prioritize cognitive skills despite early childhood education being responsible for character, behavior, knowledge, and creativity development (Rahiem, 2021). Picture storybooks are highly appealing to early learners. Hurlock (2008) states that picture storybooks help children identify personal and social issues, stimulate curiosity, and offer strong visual appeal. Mitchell (2023) adds that illustrations in picturebooks support comprehension. In this study, the researcher develops a picture storybook incorporating folklore elements, echoing Nurlaila et al., (2023) view that folklore reflects traditions passed down through generations.

The novelty of this research lies in the development of a thematic storybook based on Pancasila values and the socio-cultural environment of Kampung Pancasila, providing a contextual medium for teaching tolerance and religious moderation in early childhood. The innovation integrates character education with local cultural values, presenting stories that highlight harmonious life within a multicultural community. This approach deepens children's understanding of coexistence and encourages the practical application of Pancasila values in daily life.

This study aims to answer key questions regarding the development of a Kampung Pancasila-based thematic storybook in early childhood education. The central research question is: How does the development of a Kampung Pancasila-themed storybook influence the enhancement of tolerance and religious moderation among early childhood learners? Sub-questions include: How does the storybook help children understand religious and cultural diversity? and To what extent can the storybook serve as an effective tool for teachers in teaching tolerance at TK Kartika IV-34 Kanigoro? Through these questions, the study seeks to explore how culturally grounded story-based learning media can contribute to the development of religious moderation attitudes in early childhood.

## **METHODS**

### **Type and research model**

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation). The ADDIE model was selected because of its systematic, evaluation-based approach, its iterative flexibility, and its user-centered orientation, which allow continuous revisions based on trial results. This approach ensures that the development of the Masgapur Thematic Storybook is carried out step by step and data-driven so that the final product matches the needs of early childhood learners, teachers, and parents and meets learning objectives related to tolerance, religious moderation, and preservation of local culture (Witanto, 2025; Simanungkalit & Friska, 2025).

### **Research procedure**

The analysis stage focused on identifying literacy and tolerance-related learning needs through classroom observation, interviews with educators and parents, and a review of available reading materials in school libraries and bookstores. The analysis results formed the basis for initial product specifications. The design stage comprised story sequencing, script drafting, illustration formats, color palette selection, font choices, and page layout design to match the characteristics of children aged four to six years. The development stage realized the first prototype (Draft 1) in the form of A6 picture cards containing uppercase and lowercase letters, illustrations, and simple words; the prototype was then validated by experts and revised into Draft 2, which included additional game-based activities. The implementation stage involved small-group and larger-group trials at TK Kartika IV-34 to assess feasibility and practicality. The evaluation stage comprised formative and summative analyses of expert validation results, teacher responses, and pretest–posttest comparisons of learners to finalize product improvements.

### **Research site, time, and subjects**

The study was conducted at TK Kartika IV-34 (site selection rationale aligns with the need for contextual development). The research timeline covered preparation, design, expert validation, trials, and final revisions. Research subjects included children aged four to six years as primary users, expert validators (content experts, media experts, language experts, and user representatives), and teachers who acted as implementers during practicality testing and evaluators of practicability.

### **Types of data and data collection techniques**

This study collected both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data originated from observation notes, in-depth interviews with teachers and parents, and expert feedback used for product refinement. Quantitative data were obtained from expert validation questionnaires, teacher practicality questionnaires, and pretest and posttest instruments administered to the participating children. Data collection techniques included structured

observation, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires/surveys, and documentation of the product and the development process.

### Research instruments

The instruments comprised expert validation questionnaires for content and media, observation sheets for field trials, and pretest and posttest instruments for children. The main instrument checklists to be retained in the article or appendix are presented below.

**Table 1. Checklist for Content Expert Validation Instrument**

No	Assessment Aspect	Indicators
1	Content Appropriateness	Story content is easy for early childhood to understand and matches developmental level; content provides basic information about tolerance and moderation
2	Consistency of Content	Material is arranged systematically from beginning to end; terminology is consistent and not confusing
3	Curriculum Relevance	Story material is relevant to applicable curriculum standards
4	Meaningfulness of the Story	Story has educational value; content stimulates children's imagination
5	Child Engagement	The book creates an enjoyable reading experience for children
6	Language	Use of simple words; sentences are easy to understand; language is clear and unambiguous
7	Visuals and Aesthetics	Illustrations are attractive and support understanding; the book attracts children's attention
8	Relevance to Children's Lives	The story can be related to children's everyday experiences
9	Ease of Interaction	Encourages children to speak, ask questions, or discuss the story
10	Improvement of Understanding	Helps deepen conceptual understanding with visual support

**Table 2. Checklist for Media Design Expert Validation Instrument**

Assessed Aspect	Evaluation Indicators
Visual Design	Balanced text–image composition; illustrations support comprehension; illustrations effectively attract early childhood interest; page layout is tidy and readable; colors are bright and child-friendly; illustration style is consistent across pages
Readability	Language is easy for young children; story structure and sentences effectively convey meaning; the book contains elements that motivate reading; font type and size are easy for children to read; contrast between text and background supports readability
Technical &	Image quality is good; the book is free from typographical errors

Safety	
Content Consistency	Illustrations and text remain consistent across the available language versions
Media Appeal	Design attracts children from first use; media provides an enjoyable learning experience; visual presentation supports comprehension without distracting the child

**Table 3. Observation Sheet Checklist (Guttman)**

No	Statement	Rating
1	Child shows a happy facial expression when viewing the thematic storybook	Yes / No
2	Child actively turns pages of the picture-rich, colorful book	Yes / No
3	Child observes pages or images for longer than usual	Yes / No
4	Child can retell the story plot in simple Indonesian	Yes / No
5	Child can answer simple questions about the story content	Yes / No
6	Child interacts with the book (e.g., points at images, shows expressions)	Yes / No
7	Child shows interest in continuing to the next pages	Yes / No
8	Child shows emotional responses (e.g., smiles, laughs, surprise, sadness)	Yes / No
9	Child enjoys the characters and story in the book	Yes / No
10	Child asks questions or gives comments about the story content	Yes / No

**Table 4. Pretest and Posttest Checklist (Guttman)**

No	Statement	Rating
1	Child has previously heard stories that introduce tolerance and religious moderation	Yes / No
2	Child knows what Masgapur is	Yes / No
3	Child can name places of worship	Yes / No
4	Child tries to repeat words or sentences from the book	Yes / No
5	Child knows what ‘Kampung Pancasila’ is	Yes / No
6	Child likes listening to stories from teachers or parents	Yes / No
7	Child has ever read or seen picture storybooks	Yes / No
8	Child recognizes basic words or terms in Indonesian	Yes / No
9	Child interacts with the book (e.g., points at pictures, follows with expressions)	Yes / No
10	Child shows interest in continuing to read	Yes /

		No	
11	Child observes pages or images longer than usual	Yes	/
		No	
12	Child can retell the story plot in simple Indonesian	Yes	/
		No	

### Validation and trial procedures

Initial validation was conducted by a panel of experts comprising content specialists, media specialists, language specialists, and user representatives to assess content, design, language, and pedagogical appropriateness. After expert validation, a small-group trial was implemented to detect technical and content issues, followed by a larger-group trial to collect data on effectiveness and practicality. Product feasibility was measured using validation questionnaires with Likert scales and converted into percentages according to the expert validation formula:  $Vah = (Tse / Tsh) \times 100\%$ , where Vah is expert validation percentage, Tse is the total score obtained, and Tsh is the maximum total score. The final validation average was calculated by averaging the percentages from the four validators ( $Sv = (Vah1 + Vah2 + Vah3 + Vah4) / 4$ ) and compared with the product feasibility criteria.

### Data analysis techniques

Qualitative data were analyzed descriptively and thematically from observation notes, interviews, and expert comments to identify product strengths, implementation constraints, and improvement recommendations. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as means, validation percentages, and pretest–posttest comparisons to determine product effectiveness. Quantitative findings were triangulated with qualitative insights to provide a comprehensive assessment of the Masgapur Thematic Storybook's feasibility, practicality, and effectiveness.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Analysis (Needs Analysis)

The needs analysis used classroom observation, interviews, and surveys to identify challenges and needs for improving tolerance and religious moderation among early childhood learners. Observations at TK Kartika IV-34 showed children's marked preference for illustrated picture books; teachers and parents reported a severe lack of storybooks that explicitly address tolerance and moderation. Interview excerpts from teachers and parents confirmed that attractive illustrated stories help children focus and understand moral messages more quickly (W2/DF/23.09.2025; W3/RN/24.09.2025; W3/DT/29.09.2025). Classroom inventory revealed an abundance of general educational picture books but almost no books specifically designed to teach interreligious tolerance or moderation. Parents expressed interest in multilingual digital books that could support home storytelling and parent–child interaction.

On the basis of these findings, the Masgapur Thematic Storybook was designed to foreground local cultural context (Kampung Pancasila), model interfaith friendship, and

provide interactive elements to stimulate active participation. The book’s main learning goals were aligned with the Profile Pelajar Pancasila, particularly the dimensions of religious faith and social diversity.

## Design

Storyline design emphasized simple narrative structure, culturally familiar characters, and settings located around a mosque, church, and pura to model coexistence. Dialogue used child-friendly language and reflected respectful interpersonal exchanges. Religious leaders and community informants confirmed that interfaith collaboration is embedded in local practice and recommended portraying joint social activities (W4/KTD/16/08/2025; W5/MJN/16/08/2025; W6/RG/16/08/2025). The initial narrative draft was generated and refined using creative-assist tools (ChatGPT) as a supportive ideation partner; human revision ensured cultural accuracy and language appropriateness. Illustrations were created in Procreate on iPad following the storyboard and layout specifications.

**Table 5. Storyboard summary (selected frames and description)**

Frame	Short description
Village setting and introduction of Kampung Pancasila	Presents the village as a model of interfaith harmony and introduces four child characters from different religious backgrounds.
Daily activities showing mutual help	Scenes of joint community work, illustrating cooperation across religious lines.
Dialogues among children	Short, natural dialogues that model curiosity and respectful questioning about religious practices.
Community project (Taman Damai)	Joint construction of a public space to cement the theme of friendship and cooperation.
Conclusion and reflection	Group planting of a “friendship tree” as symbolic closure and invitation for discussion.

## Development (Prototype and Expert Validation)

The prototype underwent three expert validation streams: content experts (early childhood education), media/design experts, and language/cultural experts. Validators assessed the product using structured Likert instruments and provided qualitative comments for refinement. A summary of expert validation percentages is presented in Table 4.2. The table aggregates the principal validation scores from the content expert, media expert (average of the two rounds), language expert, and user representative (local community/teacher validator).

**Table 6. Summary of expert validation (selected validators)**

Validator role	Key evaluator	Validation score (%)	Category
Content expert	Prof. Dr. Imron Arifin, M.Pd	90	Very Feasible
Media expert (rounds)	Dr. Ajeng Putri Pratiwi, S.Pd., M.Pd	85–86	Very Feasible

combined)			
Language culture expert	& Abdur Rasyid	86.11	Very Feasible
User representative	Rosyi Damayani M.Pd (local)	87.5–88.88	Very Feasible

Qualitative feedback from content validation praised the storyline's meaningfulness and cultural fit while recommending minor localization adjustments. Media validation suggested enhancements to interactive audio features, font sizing, and cover art. Language validation recommended tightening of regional-language expressions to match Pandhalungan Jember dialectal norms. All suggested revisions were incorporated prior to field trials.

### **Implementation (Field Trials: Small and Large Groups)**

Field trials followed a two-stage design: a small-group pilot to detect usability issues and a larger classroom trial to measure practicality and classroom integration. The small-group pilot involved five five-year-old children at a partner kindergarten. Observational instruments (Guttman checklist) recorded children's affective reactions, interaction levels, language recognition, and use of multilingual audio features. The aggregate small-group result yielded an actual score of 78 out of a possible 90, corresponding to 86.66% (Very Feasible). Observers reported high enjoyment, active page navigation, competent retelling in simple Indonesian, and robust interest in multilingual audio features.

Large-group trials ran in two classes (B1 and B2), each with 15 children, with trained class teachers acting as observers. Observers recorded the same checklist indicators during regular learning sessions. Class B1 scored 225 of 270 (83.33%) while class B2 scored 233 of 270 (86.29%). Both outcomes fall in the Very Feasible category, indicating that the book functions practically in routine classroom conditions and that children engaged well with interactive elements such as four-language audio and contextual illustrations.

**Table 7. Field trial summary (selected indicators, aggregated percentages)**

Trial stage	Sample	Aggregate score	Percentage	Category
Small group pilot	5 children	78 / 90	86.66%	Very Feasible
Large group (B1)	15 children	225 / 270	83.33%	Very Feasible
Large group (B2)	15 children	233 / 270	86.29%	Very Feasible

Observers emphasized children's positive emotional responses, repeated interaction with language switches, and spontaneous verbalizations about cultural elements. Teachers noted the book's ease of use and potential for integration into thematic and moral-education activities.

### **Evaluation (Effectiveness: Pre-test and Post-test)**

Effectiveness was examined through pre-test and post-test instruments administered to the two large trial classes. Pre-test results indicated that the average baseline literacy and conceptual awareness for tolerance/moderation across the two classes was 51.18% (categorized as “Beginning to Develop”). Post-test results showed a markedly higher average

of 90.08% (categorized as “Very Well Developing”), demonstrating substantial learning gains following regular use of the Masgapur storybook during the intervention period.

**Table 8. Pre-test and Post-test aggregate results**

Class	Pre-test average (%)	Post-test average (%)
B1	50.44	90.38
B2	51.92	89.79
Combined average	51.18	90.08

The pre-post comparison indicates that children improved in literacy-related skills (recognition of basic terms, retelling ability, and interaction with multilingual audio) and in initial markers of tolerance and moderation (ability to name places of worship, describe cooperative behaviors, and express respect for different practices). Individual gains included several children moving from “Starting/Developing” to “Very Well Developing” categories.

### Users’ and Teachers’ Responses

Teacher feedback from the implementation reflected strong support for the product’s practicality. Teachers rated time alignment with class schedules as adequate, and they appreciated the modular activities (story reading, matching exercises, role-play) that accompany the book. Minor teacher suggestions included optional shorter session scripts for children with shorter attention spans and additional activity variations for more advanced learners. Parents reported positive impressions; several noted that the book facilitated home-based storytelling and parent-child dialogue about diversity. Observers recorded frequent spontaneous remarks from children demonstrating curiosity about other religious practices and pride in local cultural elements.

### Final Revision and Product Refinement

All expert and field recommendations were consolidated into a final revision. Content edits refined certain lexical choices to better match regional speech patterns and simplified some dialogues. Media revisions improved font sizes, color harmonization, and placement of interactive audio controls. Language edits standardized cross-language translations to preserve meaning across Indonesian, Javanese, Madurese, and English tracks. The final product package includes the digital storybook with four-language audio, teacher guidance notes, and simple activity protocols for classroom and home use.



*Figure 1: physical/digital layouts and teacher guide*

### **Summary of Key Findings**

The Masgapur Thematic Storybook emerged from a clear pedagogical need for culturally rooted, interactive media that explicitly teach tolerance and religious moderation.

Expert validation rated the product in the “Very Feasible” category across content, media design, language, and user representativeness. Field trials demonstrated strong practicality and high child engagement. Pre-test to post-test comparisons provided robust evidence of effectiveness: the intervention raised group mean scores from approximately 51% to 90%, indicating meaningful gains in literacy and initial attitudinal indicators related to tolerance. Teacher and parent responses corroborated observational metrics, underscoring the product’s potential for classroom adoption and home reinforcement.

### **Limitations of the Results**

The findings arise from trials in a limited number of schools and a moderate sample size, which constrains generalizability. Sociolinguistic specificity (Pandhalungan Jember dialects) requires careful adaptation when applying the product in other regions. Future trials with larger, more diverse samples and longitudinal follow-up are recommended to confirm sustained impact and transferability.

### **Discussion**

The development of the MasGaPur Thematic Storybook demonstrates the pedagogical importance of culturally grounded learning media in strengthening tolerance and religious moderation among early childhood learners. The narrative, which depicts harmonious interactions among children and community members living around a mosque, church, and pura, provides a contextualized representation of multicultural coexistence. This aligns with Metafisika et al., (2022) perspective that thematic storybooks for early childhood should integrate moral values through simple narratives supported by visually engaging illustrations. The MasGaPur story successfully operationalizes these principles by embedding Pancasila-based values directly into the storyline.

From a theoretical standpoint, the MasGaPur storybook reinforces the principles of Emergent Literacy theory by Whitehurst & Lonigan (1998), which emphasizes that children’s early exposure to narrative, visual stimuli, and oral language significantly shapes their foundational literacy skills. The strong visual and contextual elements of MasGaPur such as familiar places of worship, daily interactions, and community traditions provide meaningful cues that help children construct understanding about diversity and peaceful coexistence. When story content is embedded within the sociocultural realities of the learners, children demonstrate higher engagement and stronger integrative comprehension.

The development process also aligns with Mayer’s (2002) Multimedia Learning Theory, particularly the principle that learning is strengthened when verbal and visual information are presented in an integrated manner. Although MasGaPur is a print-based

storybook, its design follows multimedia principles through the synchronization of narrative and imagery. Illustrations are not merely decorative but intentionally crafted to guide children's understanding of tolerance-related concepts such as cooperation, shared celebrations, and mutual respect across religious traditions. This supports findings by Oktaviana et al., (2021), who argue that story-based visual media significantly enhance children's meaning-making processes.

Beyond pedagogical alignment, the MasGaPur storybook carries anthropological relevance. Its setting in a culturally symbolic area representing the co-presence of a mosque, church, and pura mirrors the sociocultural harmony described (Yuliana et al., (2022) in communities with diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. When children are introduced to representations that reflect their own cultural environment, they develop a sense of belonging and appreciation for pluralism. This contextual grounding strengthens the internalization of moderate attitudes, making the storybook not only a literacy tool but also a medium for early character formation.

Moreover, the narrative approach used in MasGaPur resonates with findings from Purnama et al., (2022), who emphasized the effectiveness of interactive story-based media in developing early childhood cognitive and emotional competencies. Through relatable characters and events, children are able to project themselves into the story and explore perspectives different from their own, which is a fundamental process in cultivating empathy and tolerance. The MasGaPur storybook, by presenting diversity as a normal, everyday experience, contributes to the shaping of inclusive mindsets from an early age.

The broader implications of this development suggest that culturally embedded storybooks can serve as a strategic medium for instilling national values, particularly Pancasila's principles of unity and respect for religious diversity. Integrating local cultural narratives with moral education allows teachers to deliver abstract concepts in a more concrete and developmentally appropriate manner. This is consistent with the pedagogical emphasis that early childhood education should prioritize character development alongside cognitive growth (Gusmita et al., 2025; Khodarasih et al., 2025; Rusady et al., 2025; Syarfina & Warmansyah, 2025).

In addition, the discussion highlights the role of teachers in facilitating learning through such media. Storybooks like MasGaPur provide opportunities for dialogic reading, teacher-child interaction, and moral reflection. When teachers incorporate guided questioning and open-ended discussion, children are encouraged to verbalize their understanding and relate the story's values to real-life situations. This aligns with Miftahurrahmi & Nari, (2022) argument that media must function as an intermediary that stimulates active interaction between teacher and learner.

Overall, the MasGaPur Thematic Storybook contributes to the discourse on culturally responsive early childhood education. Its combination of narrative, illustration, cultural symbolism, and value-based content provides a holistic medium capable of supporting both literacy development and moral education. As such, it presents a promising model for integrating local wisdom into early childhood curriculum, particularly in contexts where the cultivation of tolerance and religious moderation is essential to maintaining social harmony.



## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the development of multilingual and locally grounded literacy media is urgently needed for early childhood learners, as children require learning tools that are not only engaging but also capable of introducing them to linguistic diversity and regional cultural identity from an early age. To address this need, the Four-Language Digital Storybook BCD-4B was developed with a design that integrates multilingual elements and local wisdom, then validated by experts in language, media, and user experience, all of whom rated the product as highly feasible. Field trials with small and large groups further confirmed that the media is practical, accessible, and positively received by teachers and parents in terms of content, design, and educational usefulness. The media's effectiveness is also supported by the increase detected between pre-test and post-test scores, indicating that BCD-4B contributes meaningfully to the enhancement of children's multilingual literacy skills. Beyond literacy improvement, the product plays an important role in supporting local language preservation and strengthening cultural identity. Through its integration of language, culture, and digital technology, BCD-4B emerges as an innovative and impactful educational medium for early childhood learning in the digital era.

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