

Problem Based Learning (PBL) Based on Multiculturalism at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the implementation of multicultural-based Problem Based Learning (PBL) in the 11th grade at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep, its impact on students, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were obtained thru observations, interviews with teachers and school principals, as well as learning documentation. The research results show that the implementation of multicultural-based PBL proceeds gradually and contextually by utilizing problems that are close to students' social experiences. This model encourages students to be more active, enhances critical thinking skills, learning participation, tolerance, empathy, communication, and appreciation of differences. Conceptually, multicultural-based PBL contributes to the formation of active, inclusive, and humanistic learning, while theologically it is grounded in the values of the Qur'an, specifically Qs. Al-Mumtahanah verse 8 and Qs. Al-Hujurat verse 13. Supporting factors for the implementation of this model include teacher commitment, the formation of heterogeneous groups, contextual problem design, and learning device support. The inhibiting factors include time constraints, curriculum load, limited facilities, and differences in students' communication skills. This study concludes that multicultural-based PBL has the potential to enhance students' academic competence as well as their social attitudes if supported by teacher facilitation, an inclusive school environment, and parental involvement.

I. INTRODUCTION

Multicultural Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a learning approach that places authentic problems as learning triggers, while also linking the problem-solving process with the cultural background, social experiences, and diverse identities of the learners (Safirah et al, 2024; Muthalib et al, 2025; Kariadi et al, 2025). In PBL, students learn actively, collaboratively, and independently thru real-world problems, with the teacher acting as a facilitator who guides the inquiry, reflection, and group work processes. Problem Based Learning is a student-centered learning approach that relies on the process of independent learning thru problem-solving as the starting point of education). Husna et al, 2025, Rahman et al, 2024; Amri et al, 2025). Conceptually, multicultural-based Problem Based Learning (PBL) can be understood as a learning model that places real-world problems as learning triggers while making cultural diversity the context for the development of students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills (Irmayana et al, 2025; Fitriani et al, 2025). In this framework, PBL not only serves to train critical thinking and problem-solving skills but also becomes a medium for building social awareness, empathy, and appreciation for differences. These values have a strong foundation in Islamic teachings, as reflected in the Qur'an, one of which is in Al-Baqarah verse 256. This verse states that there is no compulsion in religion. In the context of multicultural education, this verse

supports a learning environment free from coercion, providing space for students to express their opinions and understand differences without pressure (Gayatri *et al*, 2026; Hasanah *et al*, 2026; Asfa *et al*, 2025). In the perspective of education, this approach aligns with the goals of 21st-century education that emphasize critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and character. Multicultural-based PBL is also in line with humanistic education, as it views students as learning subjects who bring different social, cultural, and experiential backgrounds (Tumober *et al*, 2026; Sugiharto *et al*, 2025). Even pedagogically, teachers no longer serve as the sole source of knowledge, but rather as facilitators who guide discussions, maintain the engagement of all students, and ensure that multicultural values are present in the learning process (Saleh *et al*, 2026; Widagdo *et al*, 2025). Therefore, learning not only produces academic achievements but also creates an inclusive, democratic classroom climate that values differences.

Although various studies have shown that Problem Based Learning (PBL) effectively enhances critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, and that multicultural education is important in fostering tolerance and appreciation for differences, there is still little research that specifically integrates both approaches in the context of high schools in Indonesia. Previous studies generally discuss PBL in general, multicultural education separately, or the integration of both in different contexts. Furthermore, no studies have specifically examined the implementation of multicultural-based PBL at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep. Therefore, it is not yet clearly understood how the integration of PBL and multicultural education at that school is designed, implemented, and what the supporting and inhibiting factors are within the local school social context. SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep, as one of the educational institutions, is located in a quite strategic environment because it is situated in the Tonasa employee housing area and is easily accessible to the community. This school is also known as an institution with a vision for developing an excellent, character-driven, cultured, environmentally conscious, and distinguished generation. In the context of educational research, this school is relevant to study because it has a diverse social character and supports the implementation of value-based learning, including multicultural-based PBL. Based on the description, this research aims to analyze Multicultural-Based Problem Based Learning (PBL) at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to Multicultural-Based Problem Based Learning (PBL). Therefore, the implementation of multicultural-based PBL at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep needs to be built thru contextual problems, integration of local culture, heterogeneous learning groups, inclusive media, and continuous strengthening of teachers' capacities. If designed consciously and consistently, this approach has the potential to make learning at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep more critical, more meaningful, and more capable of fostering a tolerant attitude in a diverse school environment.

II. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand the implementation of multicultural-based Problem Based Learning at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep. The research was conducted at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep for approximately 2 months, in the 11th-grade classes and supporting areas such as classrooms, teacher's rooms, and the school environment used for discussions and learning activities. The research informants were purposively selected, consisting of teachers, students, and the principal/deputy principal. Teachers were chosen because they were directly involved in the planning and implementation of the learning process, while students were selected based on their activity, involvement in discussions, and diverse representation of abilities. For more clarity, please refer to the table below:

Table 1. Informant Information

No.	Data Collection Techniques	Data/Informant	Number of Informants/Objects
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1.	Observation	11th Grade Students of SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep	All student activities that were observed
2.	Entrevista	Class Teacher	1 Person
3.	Entrevista	Principal/ Vise Principal	1 Person
4.	Documentation	School Photo	RPP, teaching materials, activity photos, and student work results

Data analysis in this study uses the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which is conducted continuously from data collection to conclusion drawing (Rijali, 2018; Mayestika *et al*, 2021). The analysis stage includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. Data from interviews, observations, and documentation are reduced by selecting relevant information, presented in the form of themes and tables, and then verified to ensure consistency between findings and field facts. Data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained thru in-depth interviews, non-participatory observations of the learning process, and social interactions within the school environment. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained from supporting documents such as the curriculum, syllabus, lesson plans, school vision and mission, and relevant activity archives. Data collection techniques were carried out thru observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation to obtain comprehensive and in-depth data. Thus, this design is important because the implementation of multicultural PBL does not always go smoothly. Several studies show obstacles such as limited teacher training, non-inclusive teaching materials, weak program sustainability, mainstream learning perspectives, and gaps between students' cognitive understanding and their actual attitudes toward diversity.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Multicultural-Based Problem Based Learning (PBL)

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of multicultural-based Problem Based Learning (PBL) in the 11th grade at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep is progressing gradually and contextually. From the results of field observations, it shows that students are more active when the issues discussed are close to their social experiences. This can be explained because a familiar context makes it easier for students to connect the material with everyday reality. Similarly, in a direct interview with the teacher, it was mentioned that students are grouped heterogeneously to analyze problems, seek information, and collaboratively develop solutions, while the teacher acts as a facilitator providing guidance, feedback, and scaffolding when necessary. Similarly, another study conducted by Agung Kurniawan and colleagues on Efforts to Improve Students' Understanding of Tolerance Thru the Application of a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model Based on Multicultural Issues in Pancasila Education Learning in Class XI at SMAN 1 Sidemen shows that the application of the PBL model based on local multicultural issues is proven to be effective in eradicating learning misconceptions, reducing cultural bias, and shifting students' learning orientation from mere textual memorization to the ability to think analytically and solve problems based on Pancasila values (Kurniawan *et al*, 2026). Even pedagogically, teachers no longer serve as the sole source of knowledge, but rather as facilitators who guide discussions, maintain the involvement of all students, and ensure that multicultural values are present in the learning process (Widiantie, 2025; Adnyana *et al*, 2025). Therefore, learning not only produces academic achievements but also creates a classroom climate that is inclusive, democratic, and appreciates differences. The application of multicultural-based Problem Based Learning (PBL) has a theological basis in the Qur'an, including Qs. Al-Mumtahanah verse 8: (Sabrianti *et al*, 2025; Muid *et al*, 2023).

لَا يَنْهَىكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ۝۸

Allah does not forbid you from being good and just to those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who are just. This verse emphasizes that Allah does not forbid being good and just to those who do not fight Muslims. In learning, this verse is relevant for instilling attitudes of fairness, peace, and openness toward differing views when students discuss in groups. Therefore, multicultural-based PBL is highly relevant as an educational approach that not only develops students' critical thinking skills but also shapes a tolerant, humanistic character grounded in the values of the Qur'an. The findings of this research are supported by the thoughts of Howard Barrows, who stated that PBL places real-world problems as the starting point of learning, while Banks emphasized that multicultural education should develop an attitude of mutual respect in diversity (Reba *et al*, 2025; Sawitri, 2024). Meanwhile, PBL not only enhances cognitive abilities but also social and communication skills. Thus, the implementation of multicultural-based PBL becomes relevant as it integrates active learning with inclusive values in education. Thus, various previous research findings can be concluded that overall, multicultural-based PBL in Class XI SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep shows great potential to enhance students' academic competence and intercultural attitudes, provided it is supported by time, teacher training, facilities, and parental involvement to ensure sustainable change. These findings support previous research on the importance of the local context in learning, but also show that without strong teacher facilitation, discussions are likely to be dominated by certain students.

The Impact of Implementing Multicultural-Based Problem Based Learning (PBL)

The impact of implementing multicultural-based PBL in Class XI at SMA TONASA 1 Pangkep shows a positive effect visible in the cognitive aspects of the students. From the results of observations of the students, there was an increase in participation from previously passive members when given structured roles and scaffolding support by the teacher. This indicates that PBL can enhance the engagement of students with diverse abilities if facilitated well. Similarly, in a direct interview, the teacher stated that the effective impact is also very significant, especially regarding attitudes of tolerance, empathy, and appreciation for differences. Likewise, the principal mentioned that after several cycles of PBL, students are more open to accepting ideas from peers of different backgrounds, showing increased empathy when listening to their friends' cultural experiences, and a decrease in the tendency to judge. Group reflection sessions and final presentations facilitate the expression of feelings and understanding of multicultural values, making the classroom atmosphere more inclusive and respectful. These findings are in line with the research conducted by Priyono Tri Febrianto *et al*. on the Effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning Model on the Social Studies Learning Outcomes of Fourth Grade Elementary School Students on the Material of Indonesia's Cultural Wealth, which clearly shows that the implementation of PBL has a significant positive impact on students' learning outcomes, including cognitive achievement, learning motivation, and critical thinking skills. In addition, PBL actively encourages student participation thru contextual problem-solving activities that are directly related to real-life situations. However, its practical implementation still faces several real challenges, such as limited learning time and the varying levels of teacher readiness in designing and managing a problem-based curriculum. In conclusion, the Problem Based Learning model has proven to be very effective for social studies learning in elementary schools, especially when supported by thorough lesson planning and adequate teacher readiness (Febrianto *et al*, 2026). Even from an educational perspective, multicultural-based PBL makes learning more active, inclusive, and contextual. Teachers not only deliver the material but also design learning situations that allow students to engage in dialog, collaborate, and solve problems

together (Suartini *et al*, 2025, Sari *et al*, 2025). This is important because modern education not only targets academic mastery but also character building, social attitudes, and life skills. Conceptually, multicultural-based PBL impacts two main domains, namely the cognitive domain and the socio-emotional domain. In the cognitive domain, this model encourages students to think critically, analyze problems in depth, and seek solutions relevant to social realities. In the socio-emotional domain, multicultural-based PBL develops students' abilities to appreciate differences, empathize, and collaborate with people from diverse backgrounds (Prawira *et al*, 2025; Maryati *et al*, 2025; Seftinengseh *et al*, 2026). The findings of the research align with the thoughts of James A. Banks. He asserts that multicultural education influences equality, appreciation of diversity, and the transformation of students' attitudes (Maulidia *et al*, 2026; Hidayat, 2022). This is in line with the findings regarding the understanding of the impact of multicultural values, making the classroom atmosphere more inclusive and respectful. Thus, various previous studies can be concluded that the impact of implementing multicultural-based PBL in the 11th Grade at SMA TONASA 1 Pangkep has a positive effect on students' cognitive, affective, and even social skills aspects, but the sustainability and equity of the impact depend on planning, teacher training, institutional support, and the involvement of external stakeholders. With improvements in implementation directed at identified issues, multicultural PBL has the potential to become an effective strategy for shaping academically competent and culturally sensitive students.

Supporting and Hindering Factors in the Implementation of Multicultural-Based Problem Based Learning (PBL)

Based on the results of interviews with teachers, this research shows that the supporting factors for the implementation of PBL in the 11th grade at SMA Tonasa Pangkep include several main supporting factors that facilitate the implementation of multicultural-based PBL. First, the commitment of teachers who recognize the importance of multicultural values and are willing to act as active facilitators is a significant driving force. Teachers who engage in thorough planning and use scaffolding techniques report more productive discussion processes. Second, the intentional formation of heterogeneous groups based on cultural backgrounds, religion, and academic abilities can support the exchange of perspectives and enhance empathy among students. Third, documentation support in the form of lesson plans that include effective indicators and the use of local issues as problem-solving tasks increases the relevance and engagement of students in mutual learning. This is in line with the theories of Bandura and Banks, which state that teachers act as models of tolerant attitudes, heterogeneous groups facilitate social learning, contextual issues make students more active, and even an inclusive school culture strengthens the internalization of multicultural values (Hidayatullah *et al*, 2025; Arifin *et al*, 2025). Even in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13 emphasizes that humans are created into nations and tribes so that they may know one another. This becomes the main foundation of multicultural education (Siregar *et al*, 2024; Firdaus *et al*, 2025; Muttaqin *et al*, 2018). Qur'anically, this supporting factor aligns with the principles of mutual recognition, justice, and mercy. In PBL, this verse emphasizes that differences among students are not obstacles, but opportunities to learn from each other and build cooperation. Similarly, the principal's opinion also adds that significant obstacles such as limited learning time and curriculum load often compress the PBL cycle, resulting in less in-depth discussions and reflections, limited facilities like adequate discussion rooms and multicultural learning resources that restrict the variety of teaching methods, and differences in communication skills among students causing uneven participation in groups. This is in line with the research conducted by Nur Aji Ningrum and colleagues on the Instillation of Multicultural Values Thru Social Studies Learning in Class VII at SMP Negeri 15 Semarang, which shows that the inhibiting factors include teachers not being ready to become multicultural facilitators, students not being accustomed to discussing

diversity, limited media and learning resources, curriculum load making discussions less in-depth, and the presence of stereotypes or resistance from the school and family environment (Ningrum *et al*, 2024). Thus, the various research findings reinforce that the supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of PBL in Class XI at SMA Tonasa Pangkep are concluded with the strengthening of supporting factors and the ability to prepare mitigations against obstacles, making the implementation of multicultural-based PBL more effective and sustainable, thereby producing students who are not only academically competent but also sensitive and responsive to cultural diversity.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the implementation of multicultural-based Problem Based Learning (PBL) in the 11th grade at SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep shows that the learning process is gradual, contextual, and able to encourage student involvement in problem-solving processes that are close to their social experiences. The research findings show that multicultural-based Problem Based Learning (PBL) has a positive impact on the cognitive, affective, and social aspects of students, particularly in enhancing learning participation, critical thinking, tolerance, empathy, communication, and appreciation of differences. In addition, the implementation of this model is also influenced by supporting factors such as teacher commitment, heterogeneous groups, contextual problem design, and learning documentation support that incorporates multicultural values. Theoretically, this research reinforces the understanding that PBL not only functions as a problem-based learning model but can also serve as an effective multicultural education approach to build inclusive and humanistic character. These findings affirm that the integration of PBL, multicultural values, and the fundamentals of the Qur'an provides a conceptual foundation that diversity can be a source of learning to develop both academic competence and social awareness among students. Practically, the results of this research imply that teachers need to design contextual, inclusive learning and provide space for dialog so that all students can actively participate. Schools also need to support the implementation of multicultural-based PBL thru adequate learning time policies, provision of discussion facilities, teacher capacity development, and involvement of parents and the surrounding community to ensure a more sustainable process of multicultural value internalization. However, this study has limitations as it was conducted in only one class at one school, specifically in the XI grade of SMA Tonasa 1 Pangkep, so the results cannot be widely generalized. Based on these limitations, it is recommended that future research be conducted in several schools with different characteristics to make the results more comparative. Subsequent research could also examine multicultural-based PBL by involving more informants, extending the observation duration, and comparing its effectiveness with other learning models in shaping students' academic competence and multicultural attitudes.

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