



Problem-Based Learning as a Transformative Framework for Multicultural Education in Secondary Schools

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Abstract: This study examines how Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is designed, implemented, and its effectiveness in strengthening multicultural education through the Bhinneka Tunggal Ika topic at SMP Negeri 1 Samarinda. Using a descriptive qualitative case study, the participants comprised one Civic Education teacher and 32 ninth-grade students from class IX F, purposively selected for their religious and ethnic diversity. Data were gathered through participatory observation across five PBL sessions and in-depth interviews, then analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing with source triangulation. The findings show that PBL enhanced students' multicultural competence, indicated by multicultural knowledge (91%), tolerance for differences (88%), cross-cultural collaboration (84%), and inclusive communication (81%). These gains emerged through five PBL stages: problem orientation, heterogeneous group organization, collaborative investigation, presentation of results, and reflection. The study demonstrates that PBL is an effective transformative approach for cultivating multicultural competence in secondary school civic education, and it offers practical guidance for inclusive, diversity-based teaching in heterogeneous classrooms in a widely diverse context.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini menganalisis desain pembelajaran, strategi implementasi, dan efektivitas Pembelajaran Berbasis Masalah (PBL) dalam memperkuat pendidikan multikultural pada topik Bhinneka Tunggal Ika di SMP Negeri 1 Samarinda. Dengan desain studi kasus kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian melibatkan satu guru PPKn dan 32 siswa kelas IX F yang dipilih secara purposif berdasarkan keragaman agama dan etnis. Data diperoleh melalui observasi partisipatif selama lima sesi pembelajaran dan wawancara mendalam, lalu dianalisis melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan dengan triangulasi sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa PBL efektif mengembangkan kompetensi multikultural siswa, ditunjukkan oleh pengetahuan multikultural 91%, toleransi 88%, kolaborasi lintas budaya 84%, dan komunikasi inklusif 81%. Kompetensi tersebut terbentuk melalui lima tahap PBL: orientasi masalah, pembentukan kelompok heterogen, penyelidikan kolaboratif, presentasi hasil, dan refleksi. Temuan ini menegaskan PBL sebagai pendekatan transformasional dalam pembelajaran PPKn. Secara teoritis, penelitian ini memperkaya kajian pendidikan multikultural, sedangkan secara praktis memberi rujukan bagi guru dalam merancang pembelajaran inklusif di kelas heterogen secara berkelanjutan.

A. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with extraordinary diversity, with around 1,340 tribes and 300 ethnic groups spread across 17,508 islands from Sabang to Merauke (Wardani et al., 2024). This diversity encompasses ethnicity, religion, race, culture, and language, making Indonesia one of the largest multicultural countries in the world (Setyawan et al., 2024). The national slogan, “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika,” reflects the nation's commitment to maintaining unity amid diversity, where the principle of “unity in diversity” serves as the philosophical foundation of national and state life (Nurhayati et al., 2021). However, this diversity is like two sides of a coin on the one hand, it can be a source of national wealth, but on the other hand, it can trigger friction that has the potential to cause conflict and even division if not managed properly.

Reality shows that the potential for conflict due to diversity in Indonesia remains high. Data from the Ministry of Social Affairs shows that nearly 3,150 villages, or 3.75% of the 84,000 villages in Indonesia, are prone to social conflict and have been the site of mass brawls. The national integrated social conflict management team noted that 71 incidents of social conflict occurred in various provinces in 2018-2019, with indications that these conflicts were triggered by political, economic, social, and cultural issues (Ridho & Tumin, 2022). In schools, the phenomenon of anti-tolerance is a serious problem that can cause divisions among students. When each student comes from a different background without an adequate understanding of tolerance, tensions can arise that threaten educational harmony. This situation is exacerbated by the development of digital technology, which facilitates the spread of hate speech and hoaxes that endanger national unity (Almubarrok et al., 2025).

Multicultural education is a fundamental strategy for managing diversity and preventing conflict. Multicultural education is a process of developing human potential that respects cultural, ethnic, tribal, and religious diversity by guiding students to appreciate differences, strengthen cultural unity, foster critical awareness and inclusive attitudes, and understand that differences in values can be a source of conflict that needs to be handled wisely (Mutmainnah & Sugara, 2023; Simatupang et al., 2024). Furthermore, Abacioglu et al (2022) emphasize that building a healthy multicultural society in Indonesia cannot be achieved automatically or through trial and error. Therefore, the younger generation, as the main pillar of national change, needs to be strengthened with multicultural education so that they are able to navigate the dynamics of diversity wisely. In the Indonesian context, multicultural education based on local wisdom aims to shape the character of the younger generation so that they can accept, understand, and appreciate differences in race, social class, ethnicity, customs, and religion (Sutisnawati et al., 2023).

Pancasila and Civic Education (PPKn) play a strategic role as a means of multicultural education in schools, because they develop citizens who understand and exercise their rights and obligations in accordance with the mandate of Pancasila, while instilling values, morals, and character through the practical application of multicultural values in everyday life (Kamlasi & Kusdarini, 2022; Maswati & Das, 2024). The topic of

Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) in PPKn learning serves as a gateway to introduce diversity while instilling attitudes of tolerance, democracy, justice, and equality.

However, the implementation of multicultural education in Civic Education learning still faces challenges. Traditional teacher-centered learning is less capable of developing students' deep understanding and critical thinking skills regarding diversity issues (Utami et al., 2025). Schools in Indonesia continue to experience erosion of identity, a weak sense of togetherness, and low levels of cooperation, which makes schools tend to function as transactional learning spaces (Wardani et al., 2024).

This situation highlights the need for a more active and meaningful learning approach to instill multicultural values. Problem-Based Learning (PBL) has been recognized as an effective strategy that encourages active learning, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving skills (Arviani et al., 2023). Unlike traditional teacher-centered approaches, PBL places students as the main subjects, collaboratively exploring problems, engaging in discussions, searching for and analyzing information, formulating solutions, and reflecting on the results to independently build understanding and knowledge (Xu et al., 2025). In the context of multicultural education, integrating PBL with culturally relevant content can bridge gaps by allowing students to connect their experiences with the material being studied.

Although research on multicultural education and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) has expanded, few studies have explicitly examined how PBL can be integrated into Civic Education (PPKn), particularly within the context of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. Existing studies, such as Nurgiansah et al (2022) and Widiatmaka et al (2022), generally discuss tolerance and student character in broad terms, but they do not specifically investigate how PBL can be designed, implemented, and evaluated to strengthen junior high school students' multicultural competencies through authentic inquiry into local diversity issues. This leaves a clear gap in understanding the pedagogical potential of PBL as a multicultural learning framework in Indonesian secondary schools.

This study offers an original contribution by conceptualizing PBL not merely as a linear instructional model, but as a recursive and transformative pedagogical framework. Unlike previous studies that treat PBL as a general learning approach, this research positions its five stages—problem orientation, heterogeneous group organization, collaborative investigation, presentation of results, and reflection—as a recursive spiral that integrates cognitive, affective, and social domains simultaneously. In this way, PBL becomes a vehicle for building critical knowledge, empathy, and cross-cultural communication within a multicultural learning environment grounded in local wisdom and the values of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika.

Based on the identified gap and novelty, this study addresses three research questions: how is PBL designed to strengthen multicultural education in the Bhinneka Tunggal Ika material; how are PBL implementation strategies applied in classrooms with religious and ethnic diversity; and to what extent is PBL effective in improving students' multicultural competencies? These questions are designed to examine not only the

instructional design of PBL, but also its practical application and educational outcomes in a heterogeneous junior high school context.

Theoretically, this study enriches multicultural education literature by showing that multicultural competence can be developed through structured, problem-centered learning experiences rather than through knowledge transmission alone. Practically, the findings provide a reference for teachers, schools, and policymakers in developing diversity-based learning strategies, especially in Civic Education classes. The study also offers a basis for designing more inclusive and contextually relevant learning policies that support tolerance, collaboration, and mutual respect in secondary schools.

B. Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study design to explore how Problem-Based Learning (PBL) strengthens multicultural education through the Bhinneka Tunggal Ika topic at SMP Negeri 1 Samarinda during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The study involved one Civic Education (PPKn) teacher and 32 ninth-grade students from class IX F, selected purposively because the class represented a high degree of religious and ethnic diversity. Data were collected through participant observation conducted across five PBL sessions, in-depth interviews with the teacher, and supporting documentation related to lesson plans and learning activities. The main research instruments were an observation rubric designed to capture students' multicultural interactions and a semi-structured interview guide focusing on PBL design, classroom implementation, and learning challenges. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consisted of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied source triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail of field notes. Ethical considerations were strictly observed through prior permission, informed consent from all participants, and guaranteed confidentiality throughout the research process.

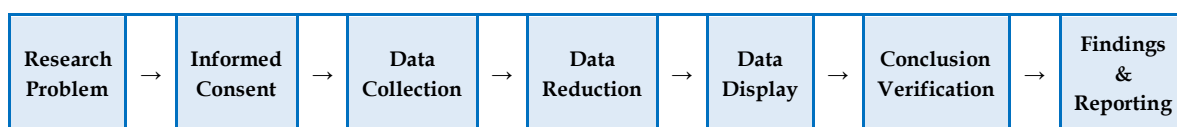


Figure 1. Research Flow Diagram

Figure 1 illustrates the research flow employed in this study, which consists of several systematic stages. The process begins with the identification of the research problem related to the strengthening of multicultural education through PBL, followed by obtaining informed consent from all participants. The data collection phase was conducted through participant observation during five PBL learning sessions and in-depth interviews with the teacher. Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This analytical process was carried out iteratively to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the findings.

The final stage involves verification and reporting of the research findings, which reflect the overall process of examining the effectiveness of PBL in enhancing students' multicultural competence.

C. Result

This section presents the findings on students' diversity profile and their initial multicultural competence before the implementation of PBL. Class IX F consisted of students with diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds, making it a highly heterogeneous classroom. Although this diversity provided an important context for multicultural learning, initial observations and interviews showed that students' multicultural competence was still limited, particularly in understanding the complexity of social conflicts and appreciating differences. Table 1 presents the composition of student diversity in Class IX F, including religious and ethnic backgrounds as well as the initial condition of students' multicultural competence.

Table 1. Composition of Student Diversity in Class IX F

Diversity Category	Indicator	Details	Classification
Religious Diversity	Diversity Islam, Protestant, Catholic, Hindu	4 religions	Highly Heterogeneous
Ethnic Diversity	Jawa, Banjar, Bugis, Kutai, Dayak, Batak	6 different ethnicities	Highly Heterogeneous
Initial Understanding of Multiculturalism	Ability to analyze multicultural conflicts	Low Cognitive Level	Needs Strengthening
Attitude Towards Differences	Tolerance and appreciation of diversity	Low Cognitive Level	Needs Strengthening

Table 1 confirms that class IX F consisted of four religious groups – Islam, Protestant, Catholic, and Hindu and six ethnic groups, namely Javanese, Banjar, Bugis, Kutai, Dayak, and Batak, making it a highly heterogeneous classroom. However, despite this rich diversity, students' initial multicultural competence was still at a low cognitive level and required systematic reinforcement before the PBL intervention. Initial observations and interviews indicated that many students tended to oversimplify social conflict, especially by associating it only with religious differences. This limitation is reflected in the following student response:

“Before this lesson, I thought conflicts only occurred because of religious differences. I didn't know there were other factors such as economics or politics (S1)”.

After five PBL sessions, observation rubric scores and interview data showed improvement in all four dimensions of multicultural competence. Students demonstrated a stronger understanding of multicultural issues and more positive attitudes toward diversity. The results show that multicultural knowledge reached 91%, tolerance for

differences 88%, cross-cultural collaboration 84%, and inclusive communication 81%. Overall, the average achievement of these four dimensions was 86%, with a range of 10 percentage points between the highest and lowest scores and a standard deviation (SD) of $\pm 3.9\%$. Table 2 presents the summary of students' multicultural competence levels after the implementation of PBL.

Table 2. Students' Multicultural Competence Summary

Aspects of Multicultural Competence	Behavioral Indicators	Achievement (%)	Classification
Tolerance for differences	Respecting religious and ethnic differences in group discussions	88%	Good
Cross-Cultural Cooperation	Working effectively in heterogeneous groups	84%	Good
Inclusive Communication	Expressing opinions while respecting differences	81%	Good
Multicultural Knowledge	Understanding the concepts of diversity and multicultural conflict	91%	Very Good
Mean	Overall aspects of multicultural competence (n = 4 indicators, Min = 81%, Max = 91%, Range = 10%)	86%	Good (SD = 3,9%)

The improvement shown in Table 2 was not only reflected in students' scores but also in their responses during and after the five PBL sessions. Through the analysis of the Sampit Conflict case, students began to recognize that social conflict is shaped by multiple factors, not solely by religious differences. Their learning experiences also encouraged more open interaction in heterogeneous groups and reduced feelings of awkwardness when collaborating with peers from different backgrounds. This shift is evident in the following student responses:

"After studying the Sampit Conflict, I better understand that conflicts occur not only because of religious differences, but also economic and political factors. Now, when I work in a group with friends from different religions, I no longer feel awkward (S2)".

"I used to avoid being in groups with people who were different and unfamiliar. Now I know that we can complement each other, and our discussions have improved (S3)".

These responses were recorded after five PBL sessions and indicate changes in students' cognitive understanding as well as affective attitudes toward diversity. Further insights from the teacher interview (T1) confirm that these changes were supported by the learning design, particularly the use of authentic issues, heterogeneous group formation, multi-perspective discussion, and reflection. The teacher explained:

“After teachers implemented problem-based learning using the Sampit Conflict case, positive changes were seen in students. They not only gained a better understanding of multicultural conflicts but also became more open in discussing them with friends from different backgrounds (T1)”.

The following section presents the effectiveness of each PBL stage in strengthening students’ multicultural competence. Table 3 summarizes the interpretation of the results of PBL implementation in relation to the development of multicultural competence.

Table 3. PBL Effectiveness in Multicultural Competence

PBL Stages	Implementation Indicators	Impact on Multicultural Competence	Information
Problem Orientation	Presentation of the Sampit Conflict case as a multicultural dilemma	Increased critical awareness and knowledge of multicultural issues	Highly Effective
Organizing heterogeneous groups	Formation of balanced heterogeneous groups	Increased cross-cultural interaction and reduced prejudice between groups.	Effective
Collaborative Investigation	Multiperspective exploration and harmony-based solution analysis	Increased empathy and tolerance for differences	Effective
Presentation of Results	Communication of group findings through constructive dialogue	Improvement of inclusive communication skills	Effective
Reflection	Evaluation of the learning process and identification of multicultural values	Enhancement of the internalization of tolerance and appreciation of diversity	Highly Effective

Table 3 indicates that all stages of PBL contributed to the development of students’ multicultural competence, with the highest effectiveness observed in the problem orientation, heterogeneous group organization, collaborative investigation, and reflection stages. These findings suggest that each stage plays a complementary role in fostering students’ cognitive, affective, and social competencies. In particular, the reflection stage demonstrated a strong impact on students’ awareness and internalization of multicultural values, as illustrated by the following student response:

“During the reflection session, I realized that I had been prejudiced against friends of different religions. This learning session opened my mind (S4)”.

Overall, observation and interview data collected during the five PBL sessions (S1–S32, T1) consistently showed improvements across four dimensions of multicultural competence, namely multicultural knowledge, tolerance for differences, cross-cultural collaboration, and inclusive communication. Based on these findings, the following section

elaborates the contribution of each PBL stage, problem orientation, group organization, collaborative investigation, presentation, and reflection in strengthening students' multicultural competence.

D. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that PBL operates not only as an instructional model but as a transformative pedagogical framework for strengthening students' multicultural competence within the context of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. The five stages of PBL problem orientation, heterogeneous group organization, collaborative investigation, presentation, and reflection, function as an integrated and recursive system rather than a linear sequence. The use of the Sampit Conflict as an authentic problem serves as an epistemological anchor that connects abstract multicultural values with real-life socio-cultural dynamics, thereby activating both cognitive and emotional engagement. This supports the argument that heterogeneous classroom environments provide optimal conditions for the development of multicultural social competence (Adhelacahya et al., 2023). Furthermore, Iskandar et al (2021) explain that PBL operates as a recursive spiral, in which each stage continuously transforms students' competencies toward higher levels. The strength of this approach lies in its capacity to create productive cognitive dissonance, encouraging students to reconstruct their understanding through inquiry and reflection rather than passive knowledge reception (Gumartifa et al., 2023; Ajid et al., 2025).

In practice, the implementation of PBL in a highly diverse classroom reveals that each stage contributes differently yet complementarily to the development of multicultural competence. The problem orientation stage plays a crucial role in initiating critical awareness, as reflected in the high level of multicultural knowledge (91%), although students initially tend to simplify complex social conflicts. This condition is consistent with Rusli et al (2024), who note that students often struggle with non-routine and complex problems in early learning phases. During the organization stage, the deliberate formation of heterogeneous groups—based on cognitive ability, religion, ethnicity, and gender—enables meaningful interaction and peer scaffolding, with 84% of students demonstrating effective collaboration. This process not only enhances cooperative skills but also fosters democratic values and tolerance, aligning with Nurgiansah et al (2022), who emphasize the importance of communication in reducing prejudice and building social cohesion. The collaborative investigation stage represents a critical turning point, where students engage in multi-perspective analysis, moving beyond monolithic explanations and developing higher-order thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation (Rusli et al., 2024), as well as affective competencies including cultural awareness and self-efficacy (Sumargono et al., 2024).

The presentation stage further strengthens inclusive communication by creating a dialogical space in which students are encouraged to articulate ideas respectfully, with 81% demonstrating the ability to engage in constructive discourse. This finding is consistent with Setiawan et al (2024), who argue that focusing on ideas rather than individuals is essential

in fostering mutual respect. Meanwhile, the reflection stage emerges as the most transformative phase, where 88% of students report a shift in perspective – from perceiving differences as sources of conflict to viewing them as opportunities for learning. This stage highlights the central role of teachers as facilitators who design meaningful learning environments, mediate cross-cultural dialogue, and guide reflective inquiry (Hakim et al., 2022). At the same time, the balance between collaborative and independent learning emphasized by Iskandar et al (2021) and Troyanskaya et al (2024) becomes essential in ensuring deeper internalization of values.

Despite these positive outcomes, the study also identifies several structural and pedagogical challenges. Group heterogeneity, while beneficial, can initially generate friction due to differences in communication styles and work ethics, requiring skilled facilitation to prevent the reinforcement of stereotypes (Pardosi & Suryaningsi, 2025). In addition, classroom discussions are not always fully democratic, as dominant students may overshadow others, reflecting broader social hierarchies and necessitating explicit norms and active moderation (Falhadi & Bahari, 2024; Widiatmaka et al., 2022). Furthermore, the depth of students' reflection varies significantly, with some achieving transformative insights while others remain at a surface level, indicating that reflective competence requires structured scaffolding and continuous practice (Troyanskaya et al., 2024; Rusli et al., 2024; Iskandar et al., 2021). Another critical limitation is that the internalization of multicultural values has not yet fully shifted from externally facilitated learning to intrinsic awareness, suggesting the need for sustained reinforcement beyond classroom settings.

These findings are consistent with prior research demonstrating the effectiveness of PBL in enhancing active learning and problem-solving skills (Gumartifa et al., 2023), as well as improving critical thinking through structured interventions (Wahyuni & Rosana, 2025). Moreover, they support evidence that multicultural education contributes to the development of tolerance among students from diverse backgrounds (Hakim et al., 2022). However, this study extends previous research by integrating PBL and multicultural education into a unified pedagogical framework, enabling the simultaneous development of cognitive, affective, and social competencies. This integrative approach highlights the importance of continuous and structured implementation to achieve optimal and sustainable outcomes, as also emphasized by Wahyuni & Rosana (2025).

Conceptual Model of PBL-Multicultural Education: Five Stages of Recursive Spiral

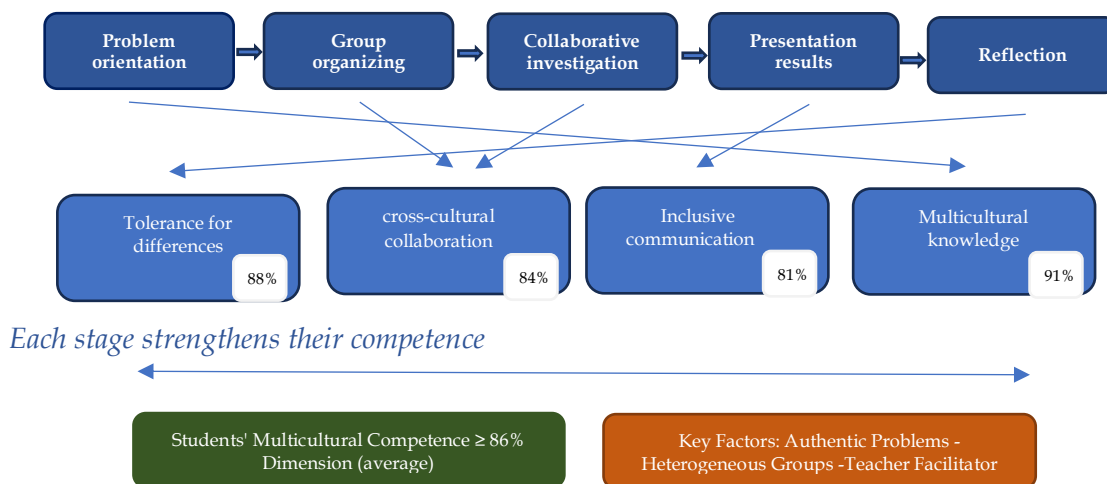


Figure 2. Conceptual Model of PBL-Multicultural Education: Five Stages of Recursive Spiral

As a theoretical synthesis, these findings support the conceptualization of PBL as a transformative multicultural learning framework. As illustrated in Figure 2, the five stages of PBL form a recursive spiral in which each stage reinforces specific dimensions of competence: problem orientation and investigation support knowledge construction; organization and presentation facilitate prejudice reduction and equitable interaction; and reflection strengthens the internalization of multicultural values. This dialectical integration across cognitive, affective, and social domains is effective because it is supported by three key factors: the use of authentic problems as epistemological anchors, the formation of heterogeneous groups that enable direct cross-cultural interaction, and the role of teachers as facilitators of meaningful dialogue. Exposure to diverse perspectives enables students to deconstruct single narratives and develop intercultural understanding, as highlighted by [Habibah et al \(2023\)](#). Similarly, [Adhelacahya et al \(2023\)](#) emphasize that heterogeneous classroom environments provide ideal conditions for developing multicultural social competence. However, the sustainability of this model depends on continuous practice and collaboration between schools and families to ensure that multicultural competence evolves into intrinsic awareness rather than remaining context-dependent.

E. Implication

This study has important theoretical, pedagogical, and policy implications. Theoretically, it reinforces the understanding that multicultural competence is not merely developed through knowledge transmission, but through the integration of authentic, problem-based learning experiences that simultaneously engage cognitive, affective, and social domains. By conceptualizing PBL as a recursive and transformative framework, this study offers a new perspective that multicultural education becomes more effective when diversity values are constructed through collaborative investigation, cross-cultural dialogue, and critical reflection. Pedagogically, these findings provide practical guidance for

teachers to design inclusive learning environments by integrating authentic local issues, organizing heterogeneous groups, and facilitating reflective discussions, particularly within the context of Civic Education under the Merdeka Curriculum. This also highlights the need for systematic teacher training programs that strengthen multicultural competence, dialogical facilitation skills, and classroom management in diverse settings. From a policy perspective, the results support the integration of multicultural PBL into school curricula and institutional programs, while emphasizing collaboration between schools, families, and communities to ensure the sustainability and internalization of multicultural values in students' daily lives.

F. Limitation and Suggestion for Further Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the focus on a single class in one school limits the generalizability of the results to broader educational contexts, as the 32 students involved may not represent the diversity of learners in different regions and school settings. Second, the reliance on observation and interview methods introduces the possibility of subjective bias from both the researcher and participants, while the descriptive qualitative design does not fully capture the long-term sustainability of multicultural competence development. Third, the use of the Sampit Conflict as the primary learning trigger may restrict the applicability of the PBL model to other types of multicultural issues, as different socio-cultural contexts may require different pedagogical adaptations. In addition, the data may be influenced by social desirability bias, where students tend to display more tolerant and cooperative behaviors during observed learning situations than in their everyday interactions.

To address these limitations, future research should involve more diverse participants across various schools, regions, and socio-economic backgrounds to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Methodologically, combining qualitative approaches with quantitative designs, such as pre-tests and post-tests, validated questionnaires, and longitudinal studies—would provide a more comprehensive understanding of both immediate and sustained impacts of PBL on multicultural competence. Further studies are also recommended to replicate this model using different contextual issues, including religious, economic, or regional conflicts, to examine its adaptability across diverse settings. Moreover, the use of long-term naturalistic observations and anonymous reflection journals can help reduce social desirability bias and capture more authentic student behaviors. Such approaches would strengthen the validity of future findings and contribute to the development of more robust and context-sensitive multicultural learning models.

G. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that PBL functions as a transformative pedagogical framework for strengthening students' multicultural competence in Civic Education, particularly within the context of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. The findings reveal that the integration of authentic problems, heterogeneous group structures, and reflective learning

processes enables the simultaneous development of cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of multicultural competence. The recursive implementation of the five PBL stages – problem orientation, group organization, collaborative investigation, presentation, and reflection – proves effective in fostering not only conceptual understanding but also meaningful shifts in students' attitudes and cross-cultural interactions. Empirically, the consistent improvement across all competence dimensions indicates that PBL creates a balanced and inclusive learning environment in highly diverse classrooms.

Beyond its empirical contribution, this study advances the theoretical understanding of PBL by conceptualizing it as a recursive and integrative model of multicultural learning rather than a linear instructional procedure. However, the sustainability of these competencies remains dependent on continuous practice, teacher facilitation, and broader socio-cultural support beyond the classroom. Therefore, this study underscores the importance of embedding multicultural PBL within curriculum design, teacher professional development, and school-community collaboration. Future research should further examine its longitudinal impact and adaptability across diverse contexts to strengthen its applicability as a scalable model for multicultural education.

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