

LITERATURE REVIEW: IMPLEMENTATION OF PJBL IN INSTILLING THE CHARACTER OF TOLERANCE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SOCIAL STUDIES LEARNING

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Abstract:

Instilling the character of tolerance in elementary school students has become an urgent necessity in addressing social, cultural, and student background diversity. One learning model considered effective in developing tolerance character is Project Based Learning (PjBL). This article aims to conceptually and empirically analyze the implementation of PjBL in fostering tolerance character among elementary school students through a literature study approach. The method used is a systematic literature review of various scientific sources derived from research findings, books, and relevant academic journals published within the last ten years. The results of the review indicate that PjBL promotes social interaction, cooperation, empathy, and respect for differences through collaborative project activities. The processes of discussion, joint problem-solving, and role distribution within projects provide opportunities for students to learn to value others' opinions. Based on the literature findings, the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model contributes not only to cognitive development but also to the formation of tolerance character in elementary school students.

Keyword: Project Based Learning; Social Science; Tolerance

1. Introduction

Character education is important because it involves many parties, both from the family environment, society and the educational environment. In accordance with Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017 concerning the Strengthening of Character Education article 3 which states that PPK is carried out by applying Pancasila values in character education, especially including religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love of the homeland, respect for achievements, communicative, love of peace, love of reading, caring for the environment, social care, and responsible (Presidential Decree No. 87, 2017). Good character is an important foundation in building the next generation of the nation who have integrity, competitiveness, and are ready to face global challenges. One of the characters instilled in students is tolerance.

Tolerance can be interpreted as the ability to accept and appreciate differences, both in beliefs, culture, and views. The application of character values includes the value of tolerance in educational units which is carried out based on the implementation strategy listed in the guidelines for the implementation of character education in schools (Ministry of National Education, 2010). The importance of instilling the character of tolerance from several studies that say that a person who practices tolerance will feel comfortable with the existence of others who have differences (Latifah et al., 2022). A tolerant person will always make careful personal thoughts and judgments in every decision-making (Mahpudiz et al., 2020). Tolerance is also positively correlated with the quality of interaction, such as increased mutual respect, decreased conflict, and the creation of a harmonious social climate (Hidayat et al., 2020; Sari & Wahyuni, 2021). These findings are in line with the results of Nuraini and Setiawan's (2019) research which states that tolerance contributes to the development of reflective and critical thinking skills, especially in responding to differences of opinion.

Social conflicts often occur in the diversity of the Indonesian nation so that the sense of tolerance in students is disappearing. The attitude of mutual respect for others has also decreased. This is evidenced by the increase in social friction based on differences in ethnicity, religion, and views in the community also affects students' attitudes at school, such as the emergence of exclusive behavior and low mutual respect (Setyowati & Rohman, 2021). In addition, the results of research from Suryani and Kurniawan

(2022) revealed that the lack of optimal tolerance character education in elementary school causes students to be easily influenced by intolerant attitudes that develop in society and social media. This is strengthened by research from Wahyudi et al., (2019) which states that without systematically strengthening the value of tolerance from an early age, students have the potential to internalize prejudices and negative stereotypes towards differences.

The character of student tolerance can develop through the educational process that is carried out from an early age. In schools, the formation of tolerance character can be integrated in social studies learning by using varied and interactive learning approaches or models. One of them is by using an effective Project Based Learning (PjBL) learning model to form the character of student tolerance in social studies learning in elementary school, because in the PjBL learning process, students are active subjects who learn through real projects so that students are trained to work together, respect opinions, solve problems acidically and take collective responsibility for the results of work. Tolerance can grow naturally because interaction and collaboration are at the heart of learning.

Through the application of the PjBL learning model, there is an improvement in several aspects of character, namely devotion to God Almighty, respect for others, global diversity, deliberation, and being fair to all humans. Students who are involved in collaboration-based projects are more likely to show a cooperative attitude and help each other to achieve common goals (Febi Wulandari & Dwi Rochmania, 2025). The application of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model can be one of the relevant alternative learning models in tolerance character education and anti-discrimination cultivation (Mukarramah et al., 2025). Project-based learning through reading is considered quite good in changing the character of student discipline, as well as a learning model that can increase students' motivation to learn, involve students to gather information and show their knowledge, and then implement it in the real world (Pasca & Mugara, 2021).

The Project Based Learning (PjBL) learning model is considered suitable in social studies education and social developments that occur. PjBL is one of the innovative learning models and emphasizes contextual learning and involves students to conduct investigations collaboratively, through complex activities so as to motivate students to be more active and take the initiative to obtain the things they want both in terms of knowledge, understanding, and skills (Kusadi et al., 2020). The Project Based Learning (PjBL) model provides new knowledge for students based on real experience through project-making activities (Lestari, 2024).

Based on the literature review that has been presented, it can be seen that character education, especially tolerance character, has been extensively researched in terms of urgency, social impact, and its relation to the quality of interaction and students' thinking ability. However, there is a research gap that lies in the lack of optimal empirical studies on the implementation of the PjBL model as a pedagogical strategy specifically designed to instill the tolerance character of elementary school students, especially in social studies learning with social values and diversity.

This study aims to describe the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) in instilling the tolerance character of elementary school students in social studies learning. This study uses a literature review consisting of empirical research that has been tested and published in reputable national and international journals. Through this learning model, students are expected to have a character of tolerance, and this research is expected to make a practical contribution to teachers and schools in developing integrated and effective character education.

2. Research Methods

2.1. Object, time and Place

The object of this study is in the form of an analysis of scientific studies on the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model in instilling the tolerance character of elementary school students, including national and international journal articles, seminar proceedings, scientific books, education policy documents, and relevant previous research results. This literature study research was carried out in a span of one month in January 2026, which included research activities for literature selection sources, content analysis, and preparation of study results. In literature study research, there is no place for research, but through tracing literature sources obtained from libraries, scientific journal databases, educational reference books, and official government policy documents.

2.2. Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique in this study uses literature studies or literature reviews. Data were obtained from various written sources relevant to the research topic, namely the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) in instilling the character of tolerance in elementary school students.

2.3. Data Analysis Techniques

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method used to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model in instilling the tolerance character of

elementary school students in social studies learning. This process involves identifying, evaluating, and integrating relevant articles, including national and international publications with a span of the last 10 years. The descriptive qualitative method is used to describe a phenomenon or event in detail and in depth by paying attention to the context and the related situation (Creswell, 2019). Data analysis involves a thorough review of previous research and relevant documents to deepen understanding of the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model in instilling the tolerance character of elementary school students in social studies learning. Thus, the descriptive qualitative method using literature studies is the right method to answer the formulation of the problem in this study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Research Results

Based on the results of a literature review of several relevant articles, it shows that the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model is effective in instilling the character of tolerance of elementary school students in social studies learning. The following presents relevant research findings on the use of the PjBL model to instill the tolerance character of elementary school students.

Table 1. A Collection of Articles for Analysis

Yes	Name & Year	Title	Results
1	Sitinjak et al., (2022)	Application of Project Based Learning for Develop Student Character with Based Local Wisdom in High School 1 Jabiren	The application of the PjBL method results in the characterization of students experiencing positive and significant development, especially for the character of tolerance, curiosity, activeness, openness to input, communicative, respecting the achievements and opinions of friends, accepting differences of opinion, and respecting teachers.
2	Bayu et al., (2022)	Implementation of Increasing the Value of Tolerance Character through PPKn Learning in Elementary Schools	The role of teachers such as examples, the design of school activities and policies such as inclusive culture, planned co-curricular programs are the main determinants in the success of instilling student tolerance character in elementary schools
3	Junita et al., (2023)	Implementation of the Project Based Learning (Pjbl) Learning Model in Shaping the Social Attitudes of Islamic Religious Education Students at SD Negeri 02 Rejang Lebong.	Implementing the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model at SD Negeri 02 Rejang Lebong, PAI teachers took several important steps such as identifying materials, designing relevant projects, collaborative learning, and providing constructive feedback. The main goal is to form positive social attitudes of students, such as cooperation, tolerance, empathy, and social care.
4	Trisnawati et al., (2024)	Development of PjBL-Based Staple Food Civilization Textbook to Foster Tolerance Character.	The implementation of the PjBL-based staple food civilization textbook shows an increase in tolerance character in children, which can be seen from the change in their attitudes in daily life.
5	Hasibuan et al., (2024)	The Effect of Project-Based Learning on Tolerance in Islam in SD 007 Tambusai Students	There was a significant increase in students' tolerance attitudes after the implementation of project-based learning. The project, which involves discussions about religious harmony and the creation of media such as posters, provides students with the opportunity to learn to appreciate each other's differences. Project-based

			learning has proven to be effective in increasing understanding and the practice of tolerance, which is in line with Islamic teachings on the importance of interfaith harmony.
6	Dongoran et al., (2024)	Developing Student Tolerance Character: Exploring Project Based Learning Models in Shaping Student Character	The Project Based Learning (PBL) Learning Model has a positive influence on the development of students' tolerance character in the educational environment. PBL can be an effective approach in developing desirable personality traits, such as tolerance, in addition to achieving academic goals.
7	Firti & Ahsani (2025)	Forming Multicultural Attitudes: Implementing Cultural Literacy Through Student Project-Based Learning at SDN 05 Teluk Wetan Jepara	By running cultural literacy projects such as exhibitions, wall magazines, co-curricular illustrated stories can help internalize the value of tolerance and appreciation of local culture.
8	Zainudin et al., (2025)	Project Based Learning (PjBL) Learning Model in Shaping Students' Social Attitudes at SDN 03 Kemuninglor Jember	The application of the PjBL model in PAI learning involves important steps, such as identifying learning materials, designing relevant projects, implementing collaborative learning, and providing constructive feedback. This model aims to build positive social attitudes in students, such as the ability to work together, tolerance, empathy, and social care.
9	Wulandari & Rochmania (2025)	Implementation of Project Based Learning Model in Character Cultivation According to Pancasila Values for Grade 5 SDN Bandung 1	The results of the research after being applied in grade 5 using the project-based learning model can help students grow as individuals in line with the principles outlined in "Pancasila". Based on the observation and analysis of the results of the problems given to the students, there is an improvement in several aspects of character, such as devotion to God Almighty (1st precept), respect for others (2nd precept), global diversity (3rd precept), deliberation (4th precept), and being fair to fellow human beings (5th precept).
10	Endrasti et al., (2023)	Increasing Tolerance and Cooperation through Project Based Learning (PjBL) on Environmental Change Materials	The results of the study showed an increase in tolerance and cooperation attitudes of students in class X-3 from cycle I to cycle II. In the first cycle, the average percentage score of the cooperative attitude was 40.02% and the average percentage score of tolerance was 50.99%. In cycle II, the average presentation score of cooperation attitude increased to 61.66% and the average presentation score of tolerance also increased to 70.83%.

Source: National Journal of Reputation

3.2. Discussion

Based on various studies that have been presented, there are consistent results that the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model has a positive effect on improving students' tolerance character and social attitudes, especially in elementary school. These findings are in line with the theories put forward by Piaget and also Vygostky regarding the theory of constructivism which emphasizes that knowledge and attitudes are built through direct experience and social interaction (Piaget, 1952; Vygotsky, 1978). In the implementation of PjBL, students are actively involved in collaborative activities, discussions, and project-based problem-solving so that the process of negotiating meaning, hearing each other's opinions, and learning to accept differences. This is a real context for the development of tolerance, as seen in research from Sitinjak et al., (2022), Junita et al., (2023), and Zainudin et al., (2025) which show that an increase in attitudes to respect differences in openness and student cooperation after the implementation of PjBL.

Another theory is explained through Bandura's social learning theory which states that social behavior develops through observation, interaction, and the use of learning models. In the context of PjBL, teachers play the role of facilitators or role models who show an inclusive attitude, while interactions between students in project groups strengthen the social learning process through real experiences. Research from Bayu et al., (2022) states that teacher examples, activity design, and school environment are important factors in the success of instilling tolerance. This shows that the application of the PjBL model is not only a cognitive learning strategy, but also a forum for the formation of social behavior.

From the perspective of character education, Lickona's concept supports the finding that character education includes aspects of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The PjBL model facilitates these three aspects in an integrated manner. Students understand the value of tolerance cognitively, squeeze the importance of these values through social interaction, and practice them in project completion and group work. Previous researches containing local wisdom, cultural literacy, and religious learning, show that contextual projects can be a medium for attitude formation because they are directly related to students' social reality. Thus, the character of tolerance is more effectively built through authentic experiences rather than one-way learning approaches.

The meaning of the overall findings is that PjBL functions as a means of learning as well as teachers' efforts in regulating the classroom atmosphere so that students can interact openly and respect each other. This is reinforced by Dewey's (2004) view of progressive education which emphasizes that schools are miniature societies where students learn to live together socially. However, variations in tolerance improvement between studies, as seen in the percentage difference in improvement in the study of Endrasti et al., (2023), suggest that the effectiveness of PjBL is influenced by the quality of implementation. Factors such as the relevance of the project, the ability of teachers to facilitate reflection on values, group management, and a school culture that supports openness are very important determining factors. Although in theory PjBL is very potential, the results will still be contextual and depend on practice in the field.

The implication in the field of education is the need to strengthen the capacity of teachers in designing projects based on real social issues which are included by providing space for reflection on values in the learning process. Schools need to build an inclusive culture so that tolerance learning does not stop at classroom activities only, but is manifested in school life and in the daily environment. In terms of curriculum, the PjBL approach is relevant to support the implementation of Strengthening Character Education and Pancasila Student Profiles, because it emphasizes collaboration, empathy, and appreciation for diversity. Overall, the results of this study confirm that the most effective character formation of tolerance occurs when these values are experienced directly through social interaction in project-based learning, in line with the theoretical foundations of constructivism, social learning, character education and development-oriented education.

3.3. Relevance to Research Objectives

The results of the research that have been discussed earlier, show a strong relationship with the research objectives formulated, namely analyzing the effectiveness of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model in instilling the tolerance character of elementary school students and understanding the process of character formation in the context of learning. The findings showed that there was an increase in the attitude of respecting differences, empathy, cooperation, and openness directly answering research questions regarding the implementation of PjBL contributed to the development of tolerance character. Through collaborative project activities, students not only understand the value of tolerance conceptually, but also experience it in a real context, so that research objectives that emphasize experiential learning can be achieved.

4. Conclusion

The Project Based Learning (PjBL) learning model can effectively help instill the tolerance character of elementary school students in social studies learning through contextual collaborative learning experiences, where students learn to respect differences, develop empathy, work together, and have social concerns. These findings confirm that the formation of tolerance character is more optimal if experienced directly in social interaction than through a one-way learning approach, so that PjBL has important implications as a learning strategy as well as strengthening character education in schools. The implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) learning model optimally has a positive influence on students, thus affecting the character of student tolerance. Based on the results of the literature, the Project Based Learning (PjBL) learning model is recommended as an effective pedagogical approach to instill and improve students' tolerance character in elementary schools.

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