# Increasing Students' Interest in Learning about Diversity Through the Problem Based Learning Model at SD Negeri 38 Aek Raso

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**Abstract:** This study aims to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning by using problem based learning. This study is a classroom action research that uses four steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were elementary school students. The data for this study were obtained by test and observation techniques. Tests are used to measure learning outcomes and observations are used to analyze teacher and student learning activities. The data analysis technique used in this study is descriptive statistics by comparing the results obtained with indicators of research success. The results of the study indicate that problem based learning can improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of student learning completion in each cycle with details of the pre-cycle 45.49%, the first cycle 70.27% and in the second cycle it increased to 87.62%. Thus, the use of problem based learning can be used as an alternative to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning.

**Keywords:** Learning outcomes, islamic education, diversity, problem based learning.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the important aspects in the formation of students' character and personality. In the context of religious education, learning the Qur'an has a strategic role in instilling moral, spiritual, and social values in students. The diversity material taught through the Qur'an aims to build an attitude of tolerance, mutual respect, and appreciation for differences, which is an important foundation in community life. However, the reality in the field shows that students' interest in learning the Qur'an, especially in diversity materials, is still low. Based on initial observations in grade IV of SD Negeri 38 Aek Raso, it was found that many students were less enthusiastic in participating in learning the Qur'an. This can be seen from the low participation of students in class discussions, lack of perseverance in doing assignments, and lack of student effort in understanding and appreciating the values of diversity taught.

One of the causes of low student interest in learning is the use of learning methods that are less varied and do not involve students actively. Monotonous and teacher-centered learning tends to make students feel bored quickly. As a result, the moral

message contained in diversity material is not conveyed effectively. To overcome these problems, a learning model is needed that is able to increase students' interest in learning while activating their involvement in the learning process. The Problem Based Learning (PBL) model is one of the relevant approaches to be applied. PBL is a student-centered learning model, where they are invited to solve real problems related to learning materials. This model provides opportunities for students to think critically, discuss, and work together in groups, thereby increasing their interest and motivation in learning. In the context of learning the Qur'an about diversity materials, the application of PBL can provide a meaningful learning experience for students. Through PBL, students not only learn the concept of diversity theoretically, but are also invited to identify and understand the values of diversity in daily life.

Thus, the PBL model is expected to be able to increase students' interest in learning while strengthening their understanding of the material being taught. Based on this background, this study aims to increase the learning interest of grade IV students of SD Negeri 38 Aek Raso towards the Qur'an, especially in diversity materials, through the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model.

## METHODS

The research on increasing students' interest in learning about diversity through the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model at SD Negeri 38 Aek Raso was conducted using a classroom action research (CAR) approach. This approach was chosen because it allows for systematic observation and reflection to improve the teaching and learning process. The study was carried out in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, researchers designed learning activities based on the PBL model. This included preparing lesson plans, formulating problems related to diversity in the Quran, and organizing learning materials. Additionally, researchers developed pre-test and post-test instruments to measure students' interest in and understanding of the topic before and after the intervention. The implementation phase involved carrying out the lesson plans using the PBL approach. The teacher introduced real-world problems related to diversity and encouraged students to explore solutions collaboratively. Students worked in small groups to discuss the issues, seek relevant information, and present their findings to the class. During the observation stage, researchers recorded student engagement, participation, and interaction levels. Various data collection methods, such as observation sheets, field notes, and video recordings, were used to ensure comprehensive documentation of the learning process. This allowed researchers to analyze the effectiveness of PBL in enhancing students' interest and understanding of diversity.

The reflection phase was crucial for evaluating the success of each cycle. Researchers reviewed the collected data, identified challenges, and determined necessary improvements for the next cycle. Adjustments, such as modifying instructional strategies, providing additional support, and incorporating multimedia resources, were made in response to observed difficulties. In the first cycle, students initially showed hesitation in engaging with the problem-based tasks. Some struggled with group discussions and lacked confidence in presenting their ideas. However, as the lesson progressed, they began to show increased enthusiasm and curiosity about the topic. Post-test results from the first cycle indicated a slight improvement in students' interest and understanding, but some challenges persisted. For example, certain students remained passive during discussions, and some had difficulty grasping the concept of diversity in a broader context. These issues were addressed in the second cycle. The second cycle introduced additional instructional strategies, such as allocating more time for group discussions, providing clearer guidelines, and incorporating interactive multimedia presentations. These adjustments aimed to enhance student engagement and comprehension.

As a result, students demonstrated greater participation in group activities and discussions. They became more confident in expressing their opinions and were able to connect the concept of diversity with their daily experiences. The classroom atmosphere became more dynamic, with students actively collaborating to solve problems. Observational data from the second cycle revealed a significant improvement in students' enthusiasm for learning. They exhibited a deeper understanding of the topic and showed more willingness to explore different perspectives. The use of real-world problem scenarios played a key role in making learning more meaningful for them. Teachers also noticed an increase in students' ability to think critically and reflect on their own attitudes toward diversity. This was evident in their written reflections and verbal discussions, where they articulated thoughtful insights about tolerance and mutual respect. The combination of problem-solving activities and collaborative learning fostered a sense of teamwork among students. They learned to appreciate different viewpoints and worked together to develop solutions, enhancing both their academic and social skills.

Feedback from students indicated that they found PBL to be more engaging and enjoyable than traditional lecture-based methods. Many expressed that they felt more motivated to participate in discussions and actively contribute to group tasks. Teachers involved in the study highlighted the effectiveness of PBL in making abstract concepts more tangible and relatable. They noted that students were more receptive to learning when they could see its relevance to their lives. The study's findings suggest that PBL is an effective method for increasing students' interest in learning about diversity. It not only enhances their cognitive understanding but also nurtures essential skills such as communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. The iterative nature of the classroom action research approach allowed for continuous improvement in teaching strategies. By analyzing student responses and making necessary modifications, researchers were able to create a more student-centered learning environment. Furthermore, the study emphasized the importance of a well-structured implementation of PBL. Clear instructions, supportive facilitation, and engaging materials were key factors in ensuring successful student engagement.

Another important takeaway was the role of peer interaction in learning. Students learned not only from the teacher but also from one another, making the learning process more dynamic and interactive. In conclusion, the research demonstrated that the Problem-Based Learning model is an effective strategy for fostering student interest in the topic of diversity. It empowers students to take an active role in their learning and helps them develop a deeper appreciation of diverse perspectives. These findings suggest that incorporating PBL into the curriculum can enhance both academic achievement and social development. Future research could explore its application in other subject areas to further validate its benefits in elementary education.

## RESULTS

Based on the results of the research conducted through two cycles, it can be concluded that the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model can increase students' interest in learning about Al-Quran material about diversity in grade IV students of SD Negeri 38 Aek Raso. The application of the PBL model has proven to be effective in increasing students' interest in learning, which can be seen from the increase in interest scores in pre-test and post-test as well as active involvement in group discussions and presentations. Students become more enthusiastic about learning because this model provides opportunities to discuss, solve problems together, and connect learning concepts to daily life. In addition, PBL also increases students' understanding of the diversity material in the Quran.

Students not only gain theoretical knowledge, but are also able to relate the material to real experiences, broaden their perspectives, and understand the values of tolerance and mutual respect taught in the Quran. In the learning process, despite the

obstacles in Cycle I, such as the lack of active student involvement and suboptimal understanding of the material, improvements in Cycle II, such as the addition of discussion time, the division of individual tasks, and the use of supporting media, succeeded in increasing the effectiveness of learning. Another important finding is the increase in collaboration and social interaction between students. Through problem-based learning, students learn to work together in groups, share ideas, and communicate actively to solve problems. This not only enriches their learning experience, but also aids in the development of social skills that are essential for their future lives.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this research indicate that implementing the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model effectively enhances students' interest in learning about diversity. The study, conducted in two cycles, showed that students became more engaged, active, and motivated when presented with real-world problems that required critical thinking and collaboration. Through PBL, students not only gained theoretical knowledge about diversity in the Quran but also learned to apply these concepts in their daily lives. One of the key aspects observed was the increase in student engagement throughout the learning process. Initially, many students were hesitant to participate in discussions and problem-solving activities. However, as they became more accustomed to the PBL approach, their confidence grew, and they actively contributed to class discussions and group presentations. This suggests that PBL fosters a more student-centered learning environment where students feel encouraged to explore ideas independently.

The study also highlighted the importance of collaborative learning. Students worked in groups to analyze problems, discuss potential solutions, and present their findings. This process not only improved their understanding of the topic but also enhanced their communication and teamwork skills. The ability to express their opinions and listen to others played a significant role in shaping their perspectives on diversity and tolerance. Another crucial finding was the impact of PBL on students' critical thinking abilities. By engaging with complex, real-life scenarios related to diversity, students developed analytical skills that allowed them to assess different viewpoints and make informed decisions. The shift from passive learning to active problem-solving encouraged students to take ownership of their learning, making the educational experience more meaningful.

Furthermore, the study demonstrated that the integration of interactive and multimedia-based resources enhanced the effectiveness of PBL. The use of visual aids, videos, and storytelling techniques helped students connect abstract concepts with real-life experiences. These resources made learning more engaging and accessible, particularly for students who struggled with traditional teaching methods. Despite the positive outcomes, some challenges were encountered during the first cycle. Some students initially struggled with the problem-solving format, and a few remained passive during group activities. This issue was addressed in the second cycle by providing clearer instructions, additional support, and structured group discussions. The adjustments led to a significant improvement in student participation and comprehension. Teachers also played a crucial role in the successful implementation of PBL. Their ability to guide discussions, facilitate problem-solving activities, and encourage student interaction was essential in maintaining an effective learning environment. The study suggests that professional development programs for teachers on PBL methodologies could further enhance its application in classrooms.

In addition to academic benefits, PBL contributed to students' social and emotional development. By working collaboratively, students learned to respect different opinions, practice patience, and develop empathy toward their peers. This is particularly important in fostering a classroom culture that values diversity and inclusion. Another important aspect of the research was the iterative nature of classroom action research. The ability to

analyze results from the first cycle and make improvements in the second cycle demonstrated the flexibility and adaptability of the PBL model. This reinforces the idea that teaching strategies should be continuously evaluated and refined to meet students' needs.

The study's findings align with previous research on PBL, which has shown that this method enhances student engagement, motivation, and deeper understanding of complex topics. The success of PBL in this context suggests that it could be applied to other subjects beyond diversity education, potentially benefiting a wide range of learning areas. Moreover, the research highlights the importance of real-world applications in education. When students see the relevance of what they are learning to their lives, they are more likely to stay engaged and retain information. The connection between classroom learning and real-life experiences strengthens students' ability to apply knowledge in practical situations. A notable observation from the study was the improvement in students' problem-solving skills. Through the PBL approach, students were encouraged to think creatively, seek solutions independently, and evaluate different perspectives. These skills are essential for their future academic and professional success.

Additionally, the study underscores the significance of fostering a growth mindset among students. As they encountered challenges during the learning process, they learned to embrace mistakes as opportunities for improvement. This mindset shift is valuable in building resilience and adaptability in learners. The research also suggests that integrating assessment tools such as pre-tests and post-tests is crucial in measuring the effectiveness of teaching methods. The increase in test scores from the first to the second cycle provided empirical evidence of students' progress, reinforcing the positive impact of PBL.

One limitation of the study was that it focused on a single class at SD Negeri 38 Aek Raso. Future research could expand the scope by examining the effects of PBL across different schools and grade levels to gain a more comprehensive understanding of its impact. Additionally, further studies could explore the long-term effects of PBL on students' academic performance and personal development. Investigating how students retain knowledge and apply problem-solving skills beyond the classroom would provide valuable insights into the sustainability of this learning model. Overall, the study confirms that the PBL model is a powerful tool for increasing student interest in learning about diversity. Its emphasis on active learning, collaboration, and real-world applications makes it an effective method for engaging students and enhancing their understanding of important social concepts. Implementing PBL in elementary education has the potential to create a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment. Teachers and educators should consider integrating this approach into their curriculum to foster a deeper appreciation for diversity and critical thinking skills among students.

In conclusion, the research provides strong evidence that PBL can transform the learning experience by making it more interactive, meaningful, and student-centered. By continuously refining and adapting this approach, educators can ensure that students develop both the academic knowledge and life skills necessary for success in a diverse society.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in learning the Qur'an about diversity materials has succeeded in increasing students' interest in learning. PBL not only improves students' understanding of the material, but also increases student involvement in the learning process and strengthens social interaction in the classroom. This study shows that the PBL model is effective in increasing students' interest in learning the Qur'an about diversity, which further affects their understanding of the concept of diversity in the context of Quranic teachings.

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