



Challenges in the implementation of the local content curriculum in urban schools

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ABSTRACT

The Local Content Curriculum (LCC) plays a crucial role in strengthening cultural identity and enhancing the relevance of education in multicultural societies. However, its implementation in urban schools, particularly in Makassar City, faces significant challenges. This study aims to identify the main obstacles in LCC implementation, considering socio-cultural dynamics, resource availability, educational policies, and student perceptions. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with teachers, principals, and students, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Thematic analysis was applied to interpret the data. The findings reveal four key obstacles: misalignment between instructional content and students' diverse cultural backgrounds, limited resources and teacher training, a centralized curriculum policy, and students' perceptions of LCC as irrelevant to their academic futures. Based on these findings, the study recommends reformulating national education policies to provide more autonomy for schools in designing relevant local curricula. It also urges the government to offer ongoing, locally responsive teacher training and ensure the availability of contextual learning materials. At the implementation level, schools and teachers should adopt pedagogical strategies that link local content with students' social realities, fostering meaningful and empowering learning experiences.

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ABSTRAK

Kurikulum Muatan Lokal (KML) memiliki peran strategis dalam memperkuat identitas budaya dan meningkatkan relevansi pendidikan di masyarakat multikultural, namun pelaksanaannya di sekolah-sekolah perkotaan, seperti di Kota Makassar, masih menghadapi berbagai kendala yang kompleks. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi hambatan utama dalam implementasi KML dari aspek sosial-budaya, sumber daya, kebijakan pendidikan, dan persepsi peserta didik. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan guru, kepala sekolah, dan peserta didik, observasi non-partisipan, serta studi dokumen. Analisis data dilakukan secara tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan empat kendala utama: ketidaksesuaian materi dengan latar belakang budaya peserta didik yang heterogen, keterbatasan sumber daya dan pelatihan guru, kebijakan kurikulum yang terlalu terpusat, serta persepsi peserta didik terhadap relevansi KML yang rendah. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut, rekomendasi kebijakan yang disarankan mencakup perlunya reformulasi kebijakan pendidikan nasional yang memberi ruang struktural dan otonomi lebih luas kepada sekolah dalam menyusun kurikulum lokal yang relevan. Pemerintah juga perlu menyediakan pelatihan guru yang berkelanjutan dan berbasis kebutuhan lokal, serta menjamin ketersediaan bahan ajar kontekstual. Di tingkat pelaksana, sekolah dan guru disarankan untuk menerapkan strategi pedagogis yang mengaitkan muatan lokal dengan realitas sosial peserta didik guna menciptakan pembelajaran yang bermakna dan berdaya guna.

Kata Kunci: implementasi kurikulum; muatan lokal; sekolah perkotaan

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INTRODUCTION

The Local Content Curriculum (LCC) plays a crucial role in Indonesian education, considering the cultural diversity that each region possesses. As part of the national education system, LCC aims to introduce, preserve, and cultivate an understanding of culture and local wisdom among the younger generation. However, the implementation of this curriculum in urban schools, such as those in Makassar, faces significant challenges. Makassar, the capital city of South Sulawesi Province, serves as a meeting point for various social and cultural groups. The cultural diversity in this city presents a significant challenge for schools in developing a curriculum that is relevant to all students, given the diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds (Dwi & Setiyadi, 2024). One phenomenon in the implementation of LCC in Makassar is the difficulty in determining local materials that are suitable for the cultural diversity of students. Urban schools often face a dilemma in selecting materials that can be accepted by all students, given the significant cultural differences between groups.

For example, materials about local languages or traditional arts relevant to Makassar's culture might not be considered relevant by students from the Bugis ethnic group or other regions. A study shows that the implementation of LCC at State Junior High School 13 Makassar faces challenges in balancing local education based on regional wisdom with the demands of the more uniform and standardized national curriculum (Yuyun & Ardiansyah, 2021). These challenges have drawn further attention in this study, which aims to explore in depth the social, cultural, and resource-related obstacles affecting the implementation of LCC in urban schools. Through in-depth qualitative research, this study aims to understand how cultural diversity in Makassar influences students' acceptance of LCC materials and how educational policies, as well as resource limitations such as teacher training and teaching materials, impact the implementation of the curriculum.

The research also reveals that the absence of tailored training programs for teachers in urban areas is a significant factor hindering the effective delivery of local content, particularly in multiethnic communities where cultural relevance plays a crucial role in learning outcomes (Yi et al., 2024). This research also examines the phenomenon of student perceptions, where LCC is often seen as an additional subject that is not considered crucial for their academic future. This finding aligns with research that indicates many students in urban schools tend to focus more on subjects deemed more relevant to national exams, thus considering local content less important (Mutia, 2023). The scientific novelty of this research lies in its in-depth exploration of the challenges in implementing LCC in urban schools, particularly in Makassar. This topic has not been extensively discussed in the existing literature. This study distinguishes itself by combining aspects of social, cultural, and resource factors in the implementation of LCC and examining their impact on students' perceptions.

One gap found in the literature is the lack of studies discussing the connection between education policies, cultural diversity, and student perceptions. This research aims to fill this gap and provide practical and applicable solutions for implementing LCC in urban school environments. The primary objective of this research is to explore the social and cultural challenges, resource challenges, curriculum and policy challenges, and student perceptions that influence the implementation of LCC in urban schools, particularly in Makassar. This research aims to investigate how cultural diversity in Makassar influences students' acceptance of LCC content and how educational policies, combined with resource limitations such as teacher training and teaching materials, contribute to these barriers. Through an in-depth qualitative approach, this study aims to provide new insights into making LCC more relevant and inclusive for students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds in urban areas, offering practical solutions to enhance its implementation and make it more effective and applicable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Local Content Curriculum: Definition and Objectives

The LCC plays a crucial role in preserving local cultural values within the school education environment. Recent research suggests that the primary goal of LCC is to introduce, teach, and enrich students' knowledge of local culture, including regional languages, arts, and traditions. The study emphasizes that a locally-based curriculum can help students understand and appreciate their own culture through more contextual learning that is connected to their surrounding environment (Halil et al., 2024). This highlights the importance of integrating local culture into the curriculum to build a strong cultural identity in future generations. In the context of education in Indonesia, LCC is highly relevant for strengthening the nation's diverse cultural identity.

According to the study, LCC plays a significant role in shaping students' character, as it involves the teaching of local culture, which encompasses moral values and local wisdom. Through this process, students not only acquire cultural knowledge but also internalize these moral values (Aura et al., 2023). For example, the introduction of local culture, such as arts, dance, or regional languages, can strengthen relationships between different social and cultural groups in society. Furthermore, research emphasizes that the implementation of LCC in early childhood education can help students develop a better understanding of cultural diversity from an early age, which, in turn, enhances tolerance among groups (Taib et al., 2024).

Urban Schools: Characteristics and Challenges

Urban schools face unique challenges in implementing LCC. A primary characteristic of urban schools is their high level of cultural diversity. Students in large cities, such as Makassar, often come from diverse social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. The research indicates that educators frequently encounter challenges in ensuring that educational materials have a positive impact across all cultural contexts, which can impact student engagement and learning outcomes (Kotluk & Aydin, 2021). Moreover, another challenge faced by urban schools is the tendency to prioritize the national curriculum, which is more standardized and focuses on subjects related to national exams, thereby neglecting the importance of local content. In many urban schools, the pressure to prepare students for national exams often leads to LCC being regarded as an additional subject that does not contribute directly to students' academic results (Sapna et al., 2025). This indicates a gap between curriculum policy and actual teaching practices.

Obstacles in the Implementation of Local Content Curriculum

The implementation of LCC in urban schools faces several obstacles that may hinder its success. The lack of adequate training for teachers in teaching locally culturally based materials (Yohana et al., 2025). Most teachers lack the necessary skills and understanding to effectively teach LCC, primarily due to the scarcity of resources for training specifically related to local content instruction. This issue is further compounded by the scarcity of teaching materials that match the characteristics of the local culture that should be taught in schools. Recent studies have shown that local government support in providing resources, such as local teaching materials, teacher training, and supporting facilities, is often inadequate, which becomes a significant barrier to the implementation of the LCC.

Research indicates that although local policies and regulations are in place, limitations in funding, contextual teaching materials, and supporting facilities still hinder the successful integration of Minangkabau culture into the education curriculum in Padang (Dewi, 2024). This highlights the importance

of more concrete support from local governments to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of LC implementation. Furthermore, research in Jenepono, South Sulawesi, on the application of locally illustrated learning media found that teachers face significant challenges in implementing LCC due to the unavailability of relevant textbooks and learning media, despite the implementation of curriculum autonomy policies (Al-Pajri et al., 2024).

Curriculum Implementation Theory

Curriculum implementation theory provides a framework for understanding how curriculum policies are actualized in school learning practices. The success of implementation heavily depends on the competence of teachers, support from the education system, and community participation (Hadisaputra et al., 2024). In the context of the LCC, teachers' readiness to adapt local materials according to students' social and cultural contexts plays a crucial role. The development of a contextual curriculum must actively involve the community's voice, as integrating local knowledge and values through collaboration with stakeholders has been proven to enhance the relevance and acceptance of the curriculum in school practices (Mpuangnan & Ntombela, 2024). Therefore, curriculum implementation theory must place community participation and cultural context at the core of the planning and implementation strategies for LCC. In line with the findings, the development of a curriculum based on local values becomes more effective when teachers are given the freedom and responsibility to design teaching methods that align with the context of their respective regions (Widana et al., 2023).

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study research design. This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the complex phenomenon of the constraints in implementing the LCC in the specific context of urban schools in Makassar. A case study enables researchers to explore the experiences and understandings of educational practitioners in implementing curriculum policies within a contextual and real-life setting. The primary data sources in this study comprise data obtained through in-depth interviews with teachers, school principals, and students, as well as secondary data in the form of school policy documents, LCCs, and records of lesson implementation. Data collection techniques include semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. This approach allows flexibility in exploring contextual information and provides space for participants to share their experiences in a narrative and reflective manner.

The selection of participants was carried out using purposive sampling with a criterion-based approach. The participant criteria include teachers actively teaching local content, school principals involved in curriculum planning and evaluation, and students who have taken the subject. The number of participants was not predetermined but was adjusted until data saturation was achieved. The initial plan involved 5-10 teachers, 3-5 principals, and 5-7 students to triangulate perspectives. In addition, this study employed a case selection approach, involving schools with diverse backgrounds, including both public and private institutions, as well as junior and senior high school levels. Schools were selected from different regions of Makassar city to capture the various constraints in implementing local content, which may be influenced by differing social, cultural, and institutional conditions.

This strategy aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles faced across different types of urban schools. The data obtained from interviews were subsequently analyzed through three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction phase, the researcher sorted the relevant information that aligns with the study's focus, such as the types of constraints that emerged during the implementation of the curriculum. Subsequently, the data were presented in the form

of thematic summaries to facilitate the understanding of the relationships between categories. The final phase involved concluding by identifying patterns and key themes that comprehensively explain the constraints in implementing the LCC. The researcher employed source triangulation and member checking with participants to ensure data validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social and Cultural Constraints

The first finding comes from the analysis of interviews and classroom observations, which revealed a mismatch between the local content taught and the cultural background of urban students. Students in large cities tend to come from various regions and often lack a strong connection to the local culture of Makassar. This results in low student participation in the LCC lessons. The following **Table 1** presents the results of interviews with six teachers, four students, and two school principals.

Table 1. Summary of Interview Findings on Socio-Cultural Barriers in LCC Implementation

No	Informant	Institution	Quoted Statement
1	Teacher 1	Public Senior High School B	"Many of my students come from outside Makassar, so when I teach local culture, such as traditional dances or the Makassar language, they are not enthusiastic."
2	Teacher 2	Public Junior High School C	"Some students are more familiar with Bugis or Toraja culture rather than Makassar."
3	Teacher 3	Private Senior High School D	"The curriculum does not provide the flexibility needed to adapt materials to students' backgrounds."
4	Teacher 4	Private Junior High School A	"Certain local cultural content feels disconnected from the lives of students in a more diverse urban setting."
5	Teacher 5	Public Junior High School E	"I have tried linking local cultural content to contemporary issues, but it is still hard to engage all students."
6	Teacher 6	Private Senior High School F	"The main challenge is making the content meaningful for students who do not identify with that culture."
7	Principal 1	Public Junior High School 3	"Local content has traditionally only reflected dominant Makassar culture, without considering the diversity of our students."
8	Principal 2	Private Senior High School C	"We need a curriculum model that allows the integration of other relevant cultural perspectives to make learning more inclusive."
9	Student 1	Private Senior High School B	"I do not understand the local culture being discussed, because I grew up in a different environment."
10	Student 2	Public Junior High School E	"I am more interested in learning about the culture from my parents' place of origin than Makassar's local culture."
11	Student 3	Public Senior High School D	"We are more focused on subjects that are tested, like Math and English."
12	Student 4	Private Junior High School F	"It would be more interesting if local content lessons compared Makassar culture with others."

Source: Research 2025

Resource Constraints

Observations and documentation indicate that the lack of teaching materials and inadequate teacher training are significant obstacles to the implementation of the curriculum. Many teachers have expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of adequate training on how to develop materials or integrate local content

into lessons. Schools also face limitations in facilities for practicing local cultural activities. The following **Table 2** presents the results of interviews with seven teachers and three school principals.

Table 2. Summary of Interview Findings on Resource Constraints in the Implementation of the LCC

No	Informant	Institution	Quoted Statement
1	Teacher 1	Public Senior High School B	"Many of my students come from outside Makassar, so when I teach local culture such as traditional dances or the Makassar language, they show little interest."
2	Teacher 2	Public Senior High School B	"We lack training, textbooks, and instructional media specifically designed for local content."
3	Teacher 3	Private Junior High School C	"I have never received specialized training for teaching local content, so I rely on improvised materials from the internet."
4	Teacher 4	Public Junior High School D	"Most of the learning resources we use are not relevant to the local context of students in Makassar."
5	Teacher 5	Public Junior High School E	"We are often asked to develop LCC teaching materials ourselves, yet there are no clear guidelines."
6	Teacher 6	Public Senior High School F	"I simply reuse materials from previous years because no new textbooks are provided."
7	Teacher 7	Private Junior High School G	"We need context-specific training, not generic programs that barely address local content curriculum."
8	Principal 1	Public Junior High School 1	"Local government policies have yet to guarantee dedicated funding for the development of LCC."
9	Principal 2	Private Senior High School C	"We independently develop local teaching materials since the education department provides none."
10	Principal 3	Private Junior High School B	"So far, there has been no specialized training for our teachers on how to develop and implement LCC."

Source: Research 2025

Curriculum and Policy Constraints

Based on curriculum planning documents and interviews with school principals, it was found that LCC has not been strategically integrated into the school curriculum. Many schools in urban areas are more focused on the national curriculum, which is considered more relevant to exam needs and academic achievement. At the same time, local content is often viewed as supplementary material, considered less important. Policies that do not support the implementation of local content, combined with pressure to achieve broader academic targets, often result in the local curriculum being neglected or implemented half-heartedly. This leads to a low level of attention to local content in teaching and learning activities in urban areas. **Table 3** presents the results of interviews with four school principals and five teachers.

Table 3. Summary of Interview Findings on Curriculum and Policy Constraints in the Implementation of the LCC

No	Informant	Institution	Quoted Statement
1	Principal 1	Public Junior High School C	"Local content is often merely inserted, not treated as an integral part of the learning process."
2	Principal 2	Public Senior High School A	"Our curriculum is overloaded. The focus remains on subjects included in the national exams."
3	Principal 3	Private Junior High School B	"There is no specific strategy for implementing LCC; teachers are left to figure it out on their own."
4	Principal 4	Private Senior High School D	"Our school policies follow the centralized structure, leaving little room to develop a local curriculum."

No	Informant	Institution	Quoted Statement
5	Teacher 1	Public Junior High School A	"We are assigned to teach LCC, but no specific time allocation is provided in the schedule."
6	Teacher 2	Private Senior High School B	"LCC content is often squeezed in at the end of lessons or when there is extra time."
7	Teacher 3	Public Senior High School C	"The national curriculum is too rigid; we struggle to incorporate local culture into exam-oriented subjects."
8	Teacher 4	Private Junior High School D	"The local curriculum lacks clear assessment standards, so it tends to be neglected."
9	Teacher 5	Private Senior High School E	"We are never involved in developing LCC content, even though we are the ones delivering it."

Source: Research 2025

Student Perceptions

Based on interviews with several students, it was found that many do not consider local content to be important in their education. For some students, the LCC is often viewed as a subject that does not directly contribute to their exams or academic future. **Table 4** presents the results of interviews with six students.

Table 4. Summary of Interview Findings on Students' Perceptions of the LCC

No	Informant	Institution	Quoted Statement
1	Student 1	Private Senior High School B	"The local content subject feels like a formality. It does not relate to our future goals."
2	Student 2	Public Junior High School C	"I attend LCC classes, but I do not think they will help me in college later."
3	Student 3	Public Senior High School D	"We focus more on subjects that are tested, like Math and English."
4	Student 4	Private Junior High School A	"Local content has no exam score, so we consider it less important."
5	Student 5	Private Senior High School E	"If I had the choice, I would rather take English courses than local content lessons."
6	Student 6	Public Junior High School F	"I only attend because it is mandatory, but I do not feel connected to the material."

Source: Research 2025

The findings from previous interviews presented in this study provide empirical support for the main themes identified. The four themes, derived through systematic stages of thematic analysis, reflect the complexity of challenges in implementing the LCC within urban school contexts. Each theme is grounded in the direct participation of informants from diverse backgrounds—teachers, school principals, and students—and triangulated through multiple data sources, including interviews, classroom observations, and official documents. A summary of these thematic findings, along with their sub-themes, data sources, and participant frequencies, is presented systematically in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Summary of Thematic Findings

No	Main Theme	Sub-Finding	Data Source	Participant Frequency
1	Social and Cultural	Mismatch between student culture and the content of LCC	Interviews, Observations	6 teachers, four students, two principals

No	Main Theme	Sub-Finding	Data Source	Participant Frequency
2	Resources	Lack of teacher training, teaching materials, and facilities	Interviews, School Documents	7 teachers, three principals
3	Curriculum and Policy	Focus on the national curriculum and academic exams	Documents, Interviews with principals	4 principals, five teachers
4	Student Perceptions	Perception that LCC is less important for students' future	Student Interviews	6 students

Source: Research 2025

Discussion

Analysis of Social and Cultural Constraints

The social and cultural constraints faced in implementing the LCC are significantly influenced by the mismatch between the culture being taught and the students' cultural backgrounds. Research indicates that students in urban areas, such as Makassar, typically come from various regions with diverse cultural backgrounds. As a result, they lack emotional attachment and practical engagement with the local culture, which leads to low participation in LCC lessons. This phenomenon aligns with a socio-cultural approach to learning. Recent research emphasizes the importance of addressing the socio-cultural gap between curriculum content and students' life experiences through the adaptation and reconstruction of local content in multicultural classrooms. Effective curriculum reforms must focus on integrating culturally relevant materials and teaching practices that align with the diverse social and cultural backgrounds of students. Integrating local cultural contexts into literacy activities has been shown to enhance student engagement in the learning process significantly.

Recent research demonstrates how cultural relevance in learning materials strengthens students' connection with the content, making it more meaningful. The study emphasizes that when educators incorporate local cultural knowledge into literacy lessons, students become more engaged and motivated to learn (Stein et al., 2025). This approach not only supports academic achievement but also strengthens students' cultural awareness and identity. Many elementary schools face difficulties in teaching local culture that is unfamiliar to most of their students (Sukadari & Huda, 2021). When LCC content does not align with students' cultural identities, they tend to feel psychologically alienated in the learning process. Therefore, there is a need for a more responsive local curriculum that accommodates the cultural diversity of students, particularly in urban areas with diverse ethnic populations. Research indicates that urban environments shape how students perceive and respond to cultural values that they may not encounter in their daily lives. The importance of integrating social dynamics and cultural diversity into the curriculum in large cities has a significant impact on student engagement with the material being taught (Soler & Rosser, 2024).

Therefore, to ensure that the local content curriculum in cities like Makassar remains effective, it is necessary to consider these cultural diversity factors. As a solution, an inclusive, culture-blending approach can be applied in the development of local content curricula, for example, by incorporating comparisons between Makassar's culture and other cultures that are more familiar to the students, such as Bugis, Toraja, or their respective regions of origin. A study reveals that a cross-cultural approach can foster students' emotional connection to the lesson content (Sasaki et al., 2024). Along with the growing demand for more inclusive education, an adaptive curriculum has become crucial, especially in the context of pluralistic urban communities. Reveal that inclusive education, which takes cultural diversity into account, can enhance accessibility and the effectiveness of learning in highly heterogeneous communities (Aigbe et al., 2025). This is particularly relevant to large cities, which often comprise diverse cultural

backgrounds, where a curriculum strategy responsive to socio-cultural diversity becomes crucial to the success of local education.

Analysis of Resource Constraints

The lack of relevant teaching materials for local content and limited teacher training are significant obstacles to the effective implementation of the LCC. Many teachers lack the skills and support necessary to develop teaching materials that align with the social and cultural context of students, especially in areas with high cultural diversity. This situation contributes to a decline in the quality of material delivery and low student engagement in the learning process. Research indicates that the absence of culturally-based training for teachers hinders their ability to connect lesson content to students' real-life experiences (Ratri et al., 2024). As a result, the learning process becomes less meaningful because the material feels foreign and disconnected from students' contexts. Moreover, the scarcity of in-depth teaching materials and the lack of access to ongoing professional development remain fundamental issues in various schools, particularly in urban and suburban areas. The study emphasizes that the current curriculum design and teacher training often fail to fully accommodate the needs and characteristics of local students (Mpuangnan & Ntombela, 2024).

The existing curriculum remains top-down and lacks flexibility, offering limited space for teachers to adapt materials to the social and cultural backgrounds of students in the classroom. This results in the LCC material not always being relevant to local conditions and being unable to fully connect with students' daily lives, as found in their research, which assessed the challenges of implementing a curriculum sensitive to local contexts. Research also highlights issues related to institutional coordination in the implementation of local curricula (Warnaini et al., 2025). They found that the lack of coordination between teachers, school authorities, and local education departments is one of the main reasons for the failure of optimal LCC implementation. The biggest challenge, according to them, lies in the unavailability of training that equips teachers with the understanding and skills needed to integrate local cultural values into their teaching practices. Without strong structural support, many teachers end up relying on national materials that are contextually irrelevant and thus are unable to address the cultural diversity of their students effectively.

Analysis of Curriculum and Policy Constraints

One of the significant obstacles in the implementation of the LCC is the dominance of national education policies that emphasize exam results and academic achievements. Many schools prioritize subjects included in national exams, while LCC is often viewed as a supplementary subject considered less important. This excessive focus on exam standards reduces schools' flexibility in developing locally based cultural learning materials, resulting in the marginalization of local values, which should be an integral part of education. Research reveals that LCC has significant potential in strengthening students' cultural awareness and identity (Anwar & Sukirman, 2024). However, its implementation remains limited due to pressure from central policies that standardize curriculum content nationally. Schools lack sufficient autonomy to adjust teaching materials to the local cultural characteristics of their students.

As a result, local content is often merely inserted symbolically without adequate pedagogical planning, thus losing the essence of contextual and meaningful learning. National education policies need to be reformulated to provide a structural space for the development of contextual curricula, promoting the success of LCC. Involving schools in determining local content can enhance the relevance of education, particularly in multilingual and multicultural contexts such as Indonesia (Rafael et al., 2024). They emphasize that policies that empower schools to integrate local culture into the curriculum will enhance students' connection to the learning material and improve the overall quality of education. Furthermore, a

culturally based curriculum approach requires support from policies that favor decentralization and local initiatives. The study emphasizes the importance of incorporating local culture into the Indonesian education curriculum, which can foster community involvement in supporting education and strengthen social bonds (Nuriadi, 2023; Pulhehe, 2024).

This approach also emphasizes the need for autonomy in designing a curriculum that respects local wisdom, which is becoming increasingly important amidst the more decentralized educational policy changes. In the urban context of multicultural cities like Makassar, the importance of contextualizing the curriculum becomes increasingly urgent. The diversity of students' ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds demands flexibility in the selection and delivery of learning materials. The concept of curriculum design is diverse and based on the potential of the archipelagic region (Kasman, 2024). They propose that schools be given the freedom to design curricula that are responsive to the social, cultural, and geographical potential of their respective regions. With this approach, learning becomes more meaningful, not rigidly bound to national standards, and capable of addressing the challenges of diversity faced in urban environments.

Analysis of Student Perceptions

The LCC is designed as a strategic effort to accommodate cultural values, regional potential, and the specific needs of local areas within the national education system. However, its implementation in practice often faces serious challenges, particularly in terms of student perceptions. The majority of students view LCC as a subject that is irrelevant to their exams or academic future, which affects their participation and engagement in the learning process. This trend reflects students' preference for subjects that are included in national exams, such as Mathematics and English, which they perceive as the primary determinants of academic success. This perception aligns with findings in the context of education in Turkey, which indicates that exam pressure leads students to prioritize core academic subjects over skill-based or local subjects (Yakar, 2022). In Indonesia, a similar phenomenon occurs at various levels of educational institutions, where LCC is often viewed as an unnecessary additional burden (Desalegn et al., 2023). When students do not see the connection between LCC and their prospects, a lack of motivation arises, which is a state of having an intrinsic unwillingness to learn.

Students' motivation is significantly influenced by their perceptions of the direct relevance of a subject to real-life applications or the workforce (Pascu et al., 2023). Therefore, a more contextual pedagogical approach is required to raise students' awareness of the importance of LCC. LCC teaching materials need to be explicitly connected to students' daily lives, local culture, and regional economic potential. A study on learner agency found that when students are given space to explore material based on local experiences, engagement and a sense of ownership of the learning process increase significantly (Pisani & Haw, 2023). Such an approach also aligns with the vision of the Pancasila Student Profile, which emphasizes character, cooperation, and global diversity. Additionally, the use of project-based learning (PBL) methods, which focus on solving real-world problems in the surrounding environment, can be an effective strategy. Research indicates that project-based learning fosters increased student motivation and collaboration, particularly in subjects previously considered less relevant (El-Hassan et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study reveals several key obstacles in the implementation of the LCC in urban schools, particularly in Makassar. The main findings of this research reveal a mismatch between the local content taught and the diverse cultural backgrounds of the students, which is exacerbated by resource limitations, including insufficient teaching materials and inadequate teacher training. Additionally, the dominance of the national

curriculum has limited the flexibility to incorporate local content, and students perceive the LCC as less relevant to their academic needs. The contribution of this research lies in the systematic mapping of the challenges in implementing LCC within the context of urban multiculturalism, an area that has not been extensively examined. This study enriches the academic discourse on the importance of curriculum differentiation and the need for a contextual approach within the national education system. Policy implications include the need for reformulating education policies to provide more structural space and greater autonomy for schools in designing relevant local curricula. The government should also ensure the provision of continuous, locally based teacher training and ensure the availability of contextual learning resources. In practice, schools and teachers must adopt pedagogical strategies that connect local content to the social realities of students, making LCC a meaningful and valuable learning experience. Future research should explore comparative studies between urban and rural settings, investigate students' perspectives more deeply, and assess the long-term impact of LCC implementation on learning outcomes and the development of cultural identity.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to the publication of this article. The authors affirm that the data and content of the article are free from plagiarism.

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