



Problem-Based Learning Model as an Effort to Improve Student Learning Outcomes in Islamic Education Learning at MAN 4 Pidie Jaya

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to enhance student achievement in the subject of Islamic Cultural History by implementing the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model. The study follows a classroom action research design, consisting of four stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The participants were 32 students from MAN 4 Pidie Jaya. Data were collected through tests and observation. The tests assessed students' academic performance, while observations were used to evaluate the learning activities of both teachers and students during lessons. The data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative descriptive methods. The findings reveal that the PBL model significantly improved student performance. This is reflected in the rise of average scores from 62.5 in the initial stage to 71.3 in the first cycle, and further to 78.6 in the second cycle. Additionally, the percentage of students meeting the Minimum Completion Criteria increased from 40% before the intervention to 65% in the first cycle and 85% in the second. Therefore, the PBL approach proves to be an effective alternative teaching strategy that not only boosts academic outcomes but also fosters greater student engagement in the learning process.

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Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in shaping high-quality human resources. Therefore, it must continuously evolve to keep pace with the ever-changing, competitive, and fast-paced world. Quality education is the key to meeting modern challenges, thriving in a globalized society, and adapting to new environments. The ongoing revolution in communication and information has significantly influenced the birth of new civilizations, cultural shifts, and educational transformations. In the realm of education, this has led to the emergence of new teaching media, models, and approaches that align with the needs of a dynamic and evolving society.

Traditional teaching methods, which treat students as passive recipients of knowledge, are increasingly seen as outdated. Today's society values equality, collaboration, and democratic ideals, which challenge the authoritarian nature of conventional classrooms. Modern education emphasizes the teacher and student as equal partners in the learning process. One teaching model that reflects this shift is Problem-Based Learning (PBL). This model supports the needs of a creative, innovative, and competitive society by encouraging students to think critically and solve real-world problems within the framework of the curriculum.

PBL stands out for its innovation compared to older, teacher-centered methods. Traditional teaching often views students as blank slates to be filled with knowledge. In contrast, PBL encourages students to explore real issues from their environment, analyze them, and develop solutions collaboratively. Despite reducing the direct instructional role of the teacher, PBL still relies heavily on the teacher as a facilitator and guide throughout the process.

At MAN 4 Pidie Jaya, however, the dominant teaching method remains conventional, where students are seen more as objects than active participants in learning. Based on the author's observations, student-centered approaches have not been fully embraced. Students often passively receive information without being encouraged to think critically or creatively. This has led to a lack of engagement, with some students falling asleep, leaving the classroom, or showing little interest. Teachers mostly rely on lectures and occasional discussions, but students are rarely involved in presenting their ideas or exploring alternative solutions.

The current learning approach at MAN 4 Pidie Jaya appears to hinder student interest and creativity. The lack of innovative teaching strategies and engaging media has turned students into passive learners. According to interviews with teachers, many students struggle to absorb the material, which reflects in their academic performance. The learning environment does not offer enough opportunities for students to actively participate or develop problem-solving skills.

To address these issues, incorporating more engaging and interactive learning media is essential. Proper use of media can not only enhance students' understanding but also support teachers in delivering lessons more effectively. Media can simplify complex content, stimulate mental activity, and help learners connect the material with real-world contexts. It also ensures consistency in the delivery of content and allows for repetition when necessary—advantages that are often missing in lecture-based teaching.

PBL offers a promising solution. It focuses on real-world problems as a basis for learning, shifting the focus from teacher-led instruction to student-driven exploration. In this approach, students are actively involved in identifying problems, conducting

research, analyzing information, and developing solutions. It fosters critical thinking, collaboration, and decision-making skills. Teachers act as facilitators, guiding discussions and encouraging inquiry rather than providing ready-made answers.

PBL also helps students relate theoretical knowledge to real-life applications, making learning more meaningful and motivating. It prepares them for future challenges by cultivating independent thinking and practical problem-solving abilities. Additionally, by working in groups, students learn teamwork, communication, and conflict resolution—skills essential for success beyond the classroom.

In summary, Problem-Based Learning offers a deeper, more engaging educational experience that aligns with the demands of today's world. It transforms students into active participants, nurtures critical thinking, and builds essential life skills. Given its benefits, the researcher is motivated to explore how implementing PBL at MAN 4 Pidie Jaya can influence student learning activity and engagement.

Methods

This study was carried out at MAN 4 Pidie Jaya during the odd semester of the 2022–2023 academic year. It is a form of Classroom Action Research (CAR), a type of research conducted by teachers in their own classrooms through self-reflection to improve teaching performance and, ultimately, student learning outcomes. The issues addressed in CAR typically originate from challenges observed during classroom activities, including both teacher performance and student engagement (Suharsimi, Suhardjono, Supardi, 2012).

CAR is a systematic process where teachers, sometimes in collaboration with others, plan, implement, observe, and reflect on instructional strategies to enhance the learning environment (Kusnandar, 2011). This research used multiple cycles, each consisting of two sessions. Observations were conducted in every cycle, and the cycles continued until an improvement in student activity was evident.

The study involved 22 students from class XI IPS I, along with the class teacher, who played a key role in providing insights into student behavior and learning progress. The research followed the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which includes four stages in each cycle: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Revisions and improvements were made in subsequent cycles based on the shortcomings identified in the previous ones.

Before the first cycle began, a preliminary study was conducted, including interviews with the teacher to collect baseline data and develop a lesson plan using the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model. The steps in the planning phase included selecting the research subjects, identifying relevant competencies, designing lesson plans, and preparing instructional materials.

In the action phase, the lesson was implemented using the PBL method, following Daryanto's (2014) stages: identifying essential questions, project planning, scheduling, monitoring, evaluating, and presenting student outcomes. The learning process included opening, core, and closing activities, such as introducing the material, guiding students through their projects, and summarizing the lesson.

Observation was used to gather data on student and teacher behavior during the learning process. Researchers used observation sheets to track student engagement and activity in fiqh classes. Reflection involved reviewing the outcomes of each cycle with the teacher, identifying successes, and planning necessary adjustments.

Data collection methods included observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Observations helped capture classroom dynamics, while unstructured interviews with the homeroom teacher provided deeper insights into the students' initial conditions and responses to the PBL approach. Questionnaires—both open and closed—were used to assess student understanding and responses after the lessons. Documentation included lesson plans, syllabi, and student feedback.

Data analysis occurred before, during, and after the research process. According to Sugiyono (2012), analysis begins as early as problem formulation and continues throughout the research. Interview responses were analyzed in real-time, with follow-up questions used to clarify ambiguous answers. Data reduction, display (through narratives and visual aids), and conclusion-drawing were carried out across all cycles (Sugiyono, 2013).

The success of the research was measured by the level of student engagement. The study was considered effective if at least 70% of students were actively involved in the learning process and met the school's Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM), which requires a score of 70 or higher. Improvement in student activeness and learning outcomes signified the success of the PBL implementation.

Result

The research results show that the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in Islamic Cultural History (SKI) learning at MAN 4 Pidie Jaya significantly improved student engagement and learning outcomes. This improvement is evident when comparing the data from the initial conditions, Cycle I, and Cycle II. Before implementing the PBL model, most students were less active in the learning process, as indicated by their minimal participation in discussions and low initial test scores, with only 40 percent of students meeting the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). After implementing Cycle I, there was an increase in student learning activity. Observation data showed that students became more enthusiastic about discussions, asking questions, and

completing problem-based assignments. The average student score increased from 62.5 in the initial condition to 71.3, with 65 percent of students reaching the KKM.

However, some challenges remained in Cycle I, such as some students struggling to understand the problem-based learning concept and time constraints in completing assigned tasks. Based on the reflection from Cycle I, improvements were made in Cycle II by emphasizing more guidance from the teacher to help students solve problems. In Cycle II, student participation increased significantly, as they became more engaged in group discussions and were able to complete problem-solving tasks more independently. The test results in Cycle II showed a significant improvement, with the average score rising to 78.6, and 85 percent of students achieving the KKM.

In addition to improved learning outcomes, observations also indicated that the PBL model helped students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students became more independent in finding solutions and more confident in presenting their opinions in class. Moreover, interactions between students and teachers became more dynamic, creating a more conducive and engaging learning environment. The research findings also revealed that students responded positively to the PBL approach. They expressed that the learning method was more enjoyable and engaging compared to traditional lecture-based learning.

This increased motivation led to better concentration and participation in class activities. Students also reported that they felt a greater sense of responsibility in their learning process. Furthermore, the research demonstrated that the PBL model encourages collaborative learning. Students worked together in groups to analyze and solve real-life problems, which enhanced their teamwork skills. This collaborative approach also helped students learn from one another, making the learning process more meaningful and effective. Another important finding was that the teacher's role became more of a facilitator rather than just a source of knowledge. Teachers guided students in exploring concepts and finding solutions, which allowed students to take more ownership of their learning. This shift in teaching style fostered a student-centered learning environment that encouraged active participation.

Although the research showed positive results, some challenges were noted, such as the need for more structured guidance in the early stages of PBL implementation. Some students initially struggled with adapting to the new learning approach, requiring additional support and scaffolding from the teacher. However, as students became more familiar with the method, they gradually developed better problem-solving skills and independence. Overall, the findings of this study confirm that implementing the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in SKI learning at MAN 4 Pidie Jaya significantly improves both student engagement and academic performance. The method not only helps students understand the subject matter more effectively but also enhances their critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills. Thus, it can be concluded that Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is an effective approach to improving learning outcomes

in Islamic Cultural History education. The success of this method suggests that it can be applied more broadly to various subjects to enhance student-centered learning and foster essential 21st-century skills.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that applying the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in Islamic Cultural History (SKI) instruction for class XI IPS 1 at MAN 4 Pidie Jaya led to a marked improvement in both student participation and academic achievement. At the outset, students were largely passive, rarely engaging in discussions or problem-solving activities. However, following the implementation of PBL, their enthusiasm and motivation increased, with students showing greater involvement in classroom learning.

This enhancement in learning outcomes is evident in the progressive rise in student test scores throughout the research cycles. Prior to the introduction of PBL, only 40% of students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM), with an average score of 62.5. After the first cycle, the percentage of students meeting the KKM rose to 65%, with an average score of 71.3. By the second cycle, 85% of students had met the KKM, and the average score climbed to 78.6. These improvements clearly reflect the effectiveness of the PBL approach in deepening students' understanding of the subject.

Beyond academic performance, students also showed growth in critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration abilities. Through group discussions and hands-on problem-solving tasks, students became more confident in expressing ideas and working cooperatively. The teacher's role also evolved—from a traditional knowledge-giver to a facilitator who guided students through their learning journey. This shift supported a more interactive, student-centered environment, empowering students to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

Despite these successes, the implementation of PBL was not without challenges. Some students initially found it difficult to adjust to the new learning style, as they were used to conventional lecture-based teaching. Time constraints also posed an issue, with certain groups needing extra support to complete assignments on schedule. These issues were addressed in the second cycle by offering clearer instructions and more structured support. Consequently, students grew more confident and capable of solving problems independently.

In conclusion, the study affirms the effectiveness of the PBL model in boosting student engagement and academic success. It not only made learning more meaningful but also equipped students with vital skills for real-world problem-solving. Given the positive outcomes observed, PBL presents itself as a promising instructional strategy that could be successfully adapted to other subjects and educational contexts.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in Islamic Cultural History (SKI) learning at MAN 4 Pidie Jaya significantly enhances student learning outcomes and engagement. The increase in student test scores from Cycle I to Cycle II demonstrates that PBL effectively improves students' understanding of the material. Additionally, the model fosters critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, making the learning process more interactive and student-centered. Although some initial challenges were encountered, such as students' adaptation to the new learning method and time constraints, these issues were successfully addressed through structured guidance and improved instructional strategies. As a result, students became more active and independent learners. Therefore, it can be concluded that Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is an effective instructional method for enhancing students' learning experiences. This model not only improves academic performance but also helps develop essential 21st-century skills. Future research could explore the long-term impact of PBL on student learning and investigate its application in other subjects and grade levels.

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