



Improving Problem-Solving Skills through the Problem-Based Learning Method in Islamic Education Instruction at Schools

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ABSTRACT

The ability to solve problems is a fundamental skill that students need to have in facing the challenges of everyday life, including in the context of Islamic Education learning. However, many students still have difficulty in developing this skill, which can be seen from their low critical thinking skills and their dependence on teachers during the learning process. This study aims to analyze the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model in improving students' problem-solving skills in Islamic Education learning at SMPN 1 Kencong. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. Data were collected through observation and in-depth interviews with teachers and students, then analyzed using data reduction techniques, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that the application of a structured PBL model can create an active, collaborative, and meaningful learning atmosphere, and encourage students to think critically, independently, and be socially and spiritually responsible. As for obstacles such as time constraints and low student discussion skills, they can be overcome through careful planning and the use of appropriate learning media. Thus, PBL can help improve problem-solving skills and is worthy of being widely applied in Islamic Education learning. The contribution of this research is to provide practical understanding for educators in designing learning that is focused on students and directed at problem solving.

Keywords Problem Solving, Problem Based Learning, Islamic Education, Islamic Education Learning, Moral Development.

ABSTRAK

Kemampuan untuk memecahkan masalah merupakan keterampilan fundamental yang perlu dimiliki oleh siswa dalam menghadapi tantangan kehidupan sehari-hari, termasuk dalam konteks pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam. Namun, masih banyak siswa yang mengalami kesulitan dalam mengembangkan keterampilan ini, yang terlibat dari rendahnya kemampuan berpikir kritis dan ketergantungan mereka pada guru selama proses pembelajaran. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan model Problem Based Learning (PBL) dalam meningkatkan kemampuan pemecahan masalah siswa dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di SMPN 1 Kencong. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain fenomenologis. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan wawancara mendalam dengan guru dan siswa, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan model PBL yang terstruktur dapat menciptakan suasana belajar yang aktif, kolaboratif, dan bermakna, serta mendorong siswa untuk berpikir kritis, mandiri, dan bertanggung jawab secara sosial maupun spiritual. Adapun kendala seperti keterbatasan waktu dan rendahnya keterampilan diskusi siswa dapat diatasi melalui perencanaan yang matang dan pemanfaatan media pembelajaran yang sesuai. Dengan demikian, PBL dapat membantu meningkatkan keterampilan pemecahan masalah dan layak untuk diterapkan secara luas dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam. Kontribusi penelitian ini untuk memberikan pemahaman praktis bagi pendidik dalam merancang pembelajaran yang berfokus pada siswa dan diarahkan untuk pemecahan masalah.

Kata Kunci: Problem Solving, Problem Based Learning, Pendidikan Agama Islam, Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Pengembangan Karakter.

INTRODUCTION

Problem-solving is an important skill that every student needs to possess. Based on facts, there are many situations indicating that today's youth find it difficult to solve problems in their lives (Sulistiowati, 2022). According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2021, suicide was recorded as the leading cause of death among adolescents aged 15 to 29 worldwide, with more than 720,000 people losing their lives each year due to suicide (WHO, 2025). This phenomenon shows that many students have low problem-solving abilities (Arnita & Zulkarnaen, 2022). From this explanation, it indicates that the problem-solving skills of the younger generation are still at a low level. Moreover, in the context of education, if students are not taught problem-solving skills, they will experience difficulties in facing real-world challenges, lack critical thinking skills, and not be accustomed to independently and creatively finding solutions to complex problems.

Several studies explain the problem-based learning model. First, it focuses on improving students' critical thinking abilities, especially in Islamic Education learning, showing that the application of problem-based learning can provide more effective stimulation for developing students' higher-order thinking skills (Hidayati, 2024). Second, it discusses the effectiveness of problem-based learning and problem-solving methods in the context of mathematics education (Chrisdiyanto & Hamdi, 2023). Third, it explains the influence of problem-based learning on students' critical thinking abilities in science subjects (Adiilah Ishlahul & Haryanti Dwi, 2023). Fourth, it discusses the implementation of HOTS-based learning through P5 activities in Islamic Education learning (Fitroni et al., 2024). Fifth, it compares problem-based learning and problem-solving methods in improving students' critical thinking skills (Mustajab & Sutarni, 2024). The main difference between this research and previous studies lies in the focus on problem-solving skills through the problem-based learning method in the context of Islamic Education, which is analyzed more in-depth. Meanwhile, previous studies emphasize the enhancement of students' critical thinking skills generally within the field of education. Additionally, this research is also important to conduct because problem-solving skills are highly needed by students to face various complex modern life challenges, especially in making decisions based on religious values. This study also provides practical contributions for Islamic Education teachers in designing more interactive, contextual learning and being capable of developing students' life skills holistically.

This research aims to analyze the improvement of students' understanding and problem-solving skills through the problem-based learning method in everyday life. The student-centered problem-solving learning model plays an important role in developing students' ability to overcome various challenges so they can face each situation with confidence (Wibowo & Mardiyati, 2023). The problem-based learning method has proven to be effective in teaching problem-solving skills to students (Salahudin et al., 2022).



Therefore, the application of problem-based learning is highly needed as an alternative learning method expected to improve the quality of education and prepare students to face real-world challenges.

This research is based on the low problem-solving ability in improving students' learning competence. In the context of Islamic Education learning, problem-solving ability contributes significantly because it is not only related to cognitive aspects but also involves character formation and moral attitude development (Fitroni et al., 2024). Students are required to be actively involved because the learning process cannot proceed without activities to build knowledge among students (Jannah, 2022). With this learning approach, an interactive and collaborative learning environment can be created, where students learn in groups to discuss and solve problems, thereby increasing their engagement in the learning process.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological design. The research strategy identifies the essential experiences related to a phenomenon, and the procedures in phenomenology involve engaging a small number of subjects in depth (Creswell, 2009). This phenomenological approach was chosen to understand the experiences and perceptions of students, teachers, and related parties regarding the improvement of problem-solving skills through the problem-based learning method in Islamic Education lessons. Through this approach, the researcher seeks to clarify the meanings of the research subjects' experiences related to the implementation of problem-based learning in the classroom.

We conducted the research at SMPN 1 Kencong, employing techniques like interviews, observations, and documentation for data collection. We chose this location because it features a Islamic Education learning system that is relevant to problem-based learning. The data collected in this study came from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are data that directly provide information through interviews with Islamic Education teachers and students at SMPN 1 Kencong, while secondary sources do not provide direct data but come from documents or articles related to the research (Sugiyono, 2010).

The data analysis technique used in this study follows the phenomenological approach according to Miles and Huberman, which includes several stages: 1) Data reduction, filtering, and simplifying the research findings to locate relevant information; 2) data presentation, which involves organizing the reduced data into descriptive narratives; 3) conclusion drawing or verification, conducted by analyzing patterns and themes within the organized data. The conclusion reflects the meanings of the experiences of students and teachers in enhancing problem-solving skills through the problem-based learning method in Islamic Education lessons (Miles B et al., 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem Based Learning in Islamic Education Learning

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a teaching method that starts by presenting a problem in a real-world context, allowing students to tackle the issue while developing critical

thinking skills both individually and collaboratively, which helps them build knowledge from the challenges they encounter. This method teaches students to think critically and is considered effective for implementation in the current educational context because it can present authentic and meaningful problem situations, which are hoped to facilitate the problem-solving process effectively (Primadoniati, 2020). Problem-based learning requires active student engagement in a collaborative learning process, emphasizing students as the center of learning, as well as developing skills in solving problems and fostering independent learning ability to face life's challenges (Rodiyah, 2023).

The implementation of this problem-based approach offers various benefits for students, including: 1) students involved in problem-solving will apply existing knowledge or seek new knowledge, 2) Students can improve critical thinking abilities and be encouraged to take initiatives. 3) Students are trained to develop methods in discovering, asking questions, expressing, and explaining new ideas or concepts (Ningrum & Marsinun, 2022). Based on an interview with Bu Ifa, an Islamic Education teacher, she explained that since the application of problem-based learning, students have become more confident in expressing their opinions. Students have started to become accustomed to discussing and solving problems in small groups, which has proven to be very effective in shaping their ability to think critically and independently.

In the context of Problem-Based Learning, students' basic knowledge and initial abilities are taken into account, allowing them to have control over the learning process while they collaborate in groups to solve problems. This complex learning approach encourages the development of critical thinking skills and collaboration in problem-solving and aims to transform students from beginners to experts (Farnsworth, 2023). Problem-solving is a process involving structured thinking to identify solutions to specific problems, where students are expected to apply and develop knowledge, skills, and abilities to face unconventional problem-solving challenges (Ramadhani et al., 2024). Therefore, problem-based learning not only focuses on the final result in the form of answers but also emphasizes the thinking process and experiences gained by students.

Islamic Education is a conscious and planned effort to foster and develop understanding, faith, and application of Islamic teachings comprehensively in students. The goal of this education is to create individuals who are faithful, pious to Allah SWT, and possess good moral character in daily life both personally and socially. This education is carried out systematically using various methods tailored to students' developmental stages. As a result, Islamic education plays a role as a tool to shape Islamic character and strengthen spiritual morals. Islam highly values education and the learning process in human life, because the broader the knowledge one has, the stronger their faith in Allah SWT and the deeper their understanding of His teachings (Diyanti et al., 2023).

The subject of Islamic education, which is rich in normative values, requires an approach that is not only theoretical but also practical and contextual. In the educational context, this term refers to a continuous process of maintaining and developing physical growth and human potential optimally, resulting in experienced, ethical individuals capable of upholding religious teachings (Huda & Suwayu, 2022). Islamic education needs to be taught using methods that directly touch students' life experiences. The goal of Islamic

education is to build strong motivation within students to continue lifelong learning, as well as to equip them with skills to adapt effectively and to foster deeper trust in Allah SWT (Syafarin et al., 2023). The implementation of this model in Islamic Education learning is very relevant and strategic. With problem-based learning, students are not only asked to understand Islam's teachings from the text but also to practice applying those teachings in real situations. This aligns with the goal of Islamic education as a character and moral builder for students.

Based on the interview results with Bu Eska. Islamic Education teacher, she explained that the problem-based learning approach not only helps students understand Islamic Education material theoretically but also encourages critical thinking and analysis of issues based on Islamic values, starting with presenting real cases relevant to adolescents' lives. The problem-based learning model focuses on students, making it very suitable for current curriculum standards. In achieving curriculum goals, especially for Islamic religious education, educators are expected to adapt this approach with unique methods, media, and strategies (Novita et al., 2023). Problem-based learning in Islamic education is highly effective in developing students' critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills. In everyday life, many problems do not have single solutions and require consideration of values, ethics, and norms in Islam for resolution.

Through the problem-based approach, students are encouraged to analyze problems from various perspectives, seek relevant information, and make accountable decisions. Thus, students not only understand Islamic values but can also practically apply them in various life situations. Based on observation results at SMPN 1 Kencong in Islamic Education classes, it was noted that teachers have implemented the problem-based learning model in a structured manner. Learning begins with an introductory stage, followed by the main activities, and concludes with a reflection. An interview with Bu Saidah, Islamic Education teacher, stated that she chose to use the problem-based learning approach because she wanted to develop active, critical students who could connect Islamic teachings with real-life situations.

Based on interviews with some students at SMPN 1 Kencong, they conveyed that this method offers a different learning atmosphere compared to previous Islamic Education classes. They are no longer just passive recipients of information from teachers but are also encouraged to independently seek information, analyze issues, and formulate solutions through group work. Observations support the students' statements: during discussions, students showed enthusiasm in asking questions and engaging in small-group discussions. Several groups successfully presented solutions to given problems logically and effectively. Additionally, students' emotional involvement increased, as they appeared more enthusiastic about lessons—especially when tasks related to their social environment were assigned.

Problem-based learning in Islamic Education offers a relevant and engaging approach for students. By presenting real-world problems related to Islamic values, students are encouraged to think creatively and actively participate in the learning process (Isma et al., 2022). This problem-based approach can significantly enhance and transform Islamic Education learning experiences to be more concrete, aligned with current realities, and to motivate students to become more actively involved. It is an adaptable method that can be

used across various disciplines, including Islamic Education. This model is highly relevant within the educational context and can be integrated with other methods to achieve better learning outcomes (Jukhairin & Saparudin, 2024).

The Process of Improving Problem-Solving Skills Through Problem-Based Learning

In the PBL approach, the role of the teacher is not only as the main provider of information but also as a facilitator who guides the student learning process. The teacher's tasks include designing relevant and challenging problems, facilitating group discussions, providing feedback, and helping students reflect on their learning outcomes. Based on an interview with Bu Saidah, Islamic Education teacher, she explained that the improvement of students' problem-solving skills through problem-based learning is highly influenced by the teacher's role in facilitating learning. She stated that in implementing PBL, teachers need to design problems that match students' level of understanding and guide them through the learning process. With competent guidance from teachers and systematic planning, problem-based learning can function as an efficient teaching method in shaping intelligent and morally beneficial Muslim generations. Thus, the application of problem-based learning in Islamic Education lessons at SMPN 1 Kencong improves students' problem-solving abilities and supports the achievement of comprehensive Islamic education goals.

Based on an interview with Bu Ifa, Islamic Education teacher, she explained that the problem-solving process in PBL trains students to think systematically and critically because they are asked to identify the core of the problem, seek relevant information, and present their solutions in groups. On the other hand, an interview with Bu Eska stated that this improvement can be seen in students' enthusiasm for completing tasks, which makes them more motivated when faced with problems relevant to their lives. Meanwhile, interviews with several students revealed that the problem-based learning approach increases their engagement in the learning process, gaining skills in expressing opinions and learning to listen to different viewpoints. This process trains students to think openly, appreciate differing opinions, and seek middle-ground solutions to issues.

In general, there are several stages in the implementation of problem-based learning: The first step involves identifying a problem. This process begins with awareness of the problem to be solved. Students are expected to identify or understand what each individual and their social environment experience. Second, defining the problem. Students should be able to prioritize the issues. Third, formulating hypotheses. Students are expected to identify cause-and-effect relationships related to the problem and explore various solution alternatives. Fourth, data collection. Students are encouraged to gather relevant data. It is expected that students can compile the data, map it out, and present it in various formats for better understanding. Fifth, testing hypotheses. Students should have the ability to analyze and discuss findings to see the relationship with the problem being tested. Sixth, selecting a solution. This involves the ability to choose potential solutions and consider possible outcomes related to the chosen alternatives (Purnomo et al., 2022). In the implementation of problem-based learning, Islamic Education teachers at SMPN 1 Kencong follow these stages as follows:

1. Introduction

The introduction stage begins with activities to open the lesson, prepare students' mentality, and build motivation and connection to the material to be discussed. Based on an interview with Bu Ifa, Islamic Education teacher for 8th grade, she explained that at the beginning of the lesson, it starts with greetings, communal prayer, and a warm greeting to students. This step is taken to create a calm, enjoyable, and friendly learning atmosphere. Additionally, an interview with Bu Eska, Islamic Education teacher who teaches 9th grade, explains that the introductory phase is very important to raise students' awareness of the importance of problem-solving skills and as a link between Islamic Education material and the social realities they face, so students are more prepared to delve into the core of the learning. The introduction aims to create an effective learning atmosphere, so that students can participate maximally in the learning process. It functions as an initial step to motivate students, ensure readiness, and connect new material with previously learned material (Hermawan et al., 2024). This action not only serves as religious habituation but also as an effort to instill spiritual values before the learning process begins. Subsequently, teachers explain the learning objectives and the competencies to be achieved in a clear and communicative manner. Before starting the lesson, teachers first ensure that all elements of the learning process are ready, both in terms of materials, media, and classroom conditions.

Based on an interview with Bu Saidah, Islamic Education teacher, she emphasized that one important factor for the success of the introductory stage is providing students with the opportunity to express their opinions from the start. She explained that before starting the main topic, she often invites students to share personal experiences related to the theme to be discussed. This process successfully attracts students' attention and makes them enthusiastic to follow the subsequent learning process. From interviews with students, it was revealed that their interest in Islamic Education learning increased when teachers linked the material to real-life situations around them. Students felt appreciated when teachers asked for their opinions or experiences before beginning the lesson. This encourages them to be more active from the start and not hesitate to ask questions. Some other students added that with the opening activities, they can be more mentally prepared and not feel surprised when faced with problems to be solved in learning.

The learning environment at SMPN 1 Kencong is prepared to create a conducive, orderly atmosphere that supports students' concentration during learning activities. Teachers begin the lesson by giving greetings and building initial interaction through simple questions related to students' daily lives. This step aims to create a comfortable atmosphere and foster students' interest in the lesson. Additionally, teachers perform attendance to ensure their presence and physical and mental readiness. After that, teachers communicate the learning objectives to be achieved in the session, so students have a general idea of the direction and expected outcomes. Teachers also motivate students to be active in the learning process, emphasizing the importance of their role in expressing opinions and collaborating in groups. This introductory stage is an important step to move students from a non-learning condition to a focused and

directed learning atmosphere. After this, teachers begin to direct students to the core of the lesson according to the model used.

2. Core of the Learning

The core part is a crucial phase in implementing problem-based learning. The learning process will be carried out with steps based on the chosen learning model. This process begins with the teacher displaying a video and asking students to identify the problems contained within the video. Next, the teacher will divide students into several groups and instruct them to search for information and collect data to find solutions or problem-solving strategies (Aziz & Satria, 2022). Based on an interview with Bu Ifa, she explained that after the introduction, she starts the core of the lesson by presenting a real problem closely related to students' lives. According to observations with the Islamic Education teacher at SMPN 1 Kencong, in this phase, all learning activities focus on the problem-solving process that has been previously described. The teacher provides worksheets containing guides to identify problems, conduct analysis, seek data, solve problems, and present the results.

The teacher's role shifts from being a source of information to a facilitator who supervises discussions, provides guiding questions, and assists when groups experience confusion. Bu Eska, the Islamic Education teacher, added that in this core stage, all learning activities are directed toward achieving systematic and collaborative thinking skills. Meanwhile, Bu Saidah explained that the core stage is a very important process because this is where students are truly trained to solve problems in a structured manner. In this activity, students not only present solutions but also explain their reasons and religious basis. Bu Saidah stated that through this process, students learn to think more deeply, communicate opinions regularly, and accept feedback or questions from other groups.

Interviews with several students revealed that this learning process is the most challenging yet most memorable aspect because it teaches them to collaborate with friends in formulating solutions to problems. Other students said that group tasks made them better understand Islamic Education lessons because it is not just about reading and memorizing but also about applying religious values to face real problems. In this phase, the Islamic Education teachers at SMPN 1 Kencong and the involved students engage in a collaborative, problem-solving-oriented learning process through the stages in figure 1.

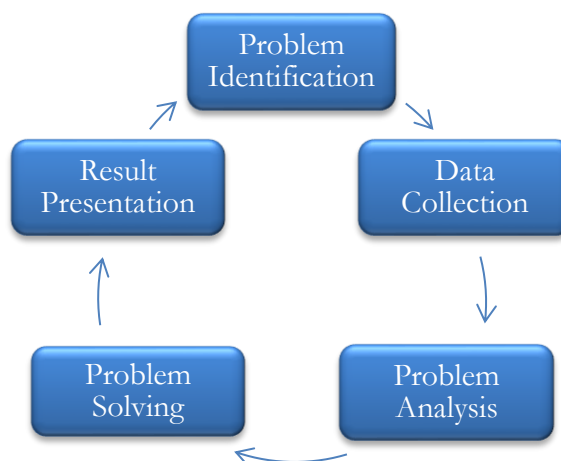


Figure 1. Problem-Solving Stages

a. Problem Identification

The initial stage in the implementation of problem-based learning is the presentation of the problem, where the teacher acts as a facilitator who innovatively presents a problematic situation relevant to everyday life and related to Islamic Education material. The problems posed are not just simple questions requiring complex answers but are open-ended problems that encourage students to explore. The problems designed aim to generate students' intellectual and emotional interest, thereby motivating them to actively engage in the learning process.

According to Bu Eska, a 9th-grade Islamic Education teacher, at this stage, the process begins with an awareness of the problem that needs to be solved. The application of problem-based learning not only makes students more active but also encourages them to think critically. She emphasizes that when students are faced with real problems, they must analyze the situation, connect it with religious values, and seek solutions independently. One factor that supports the successful implementation of problem-based learning is the use of various media and learning resources. Teachers at SMPN 1 Kencong try to incorporate videos, news articles, and recent cases to enrich the problems presented to students. Furthermore, they connect the learning problems with social realities, such as issues of bullying within the school environment, misusing information technology, and challenges faced by adolescents in maintaining integrity, all linked to Islamic teachings. Therefore, problem delivery functions not only to develop cognitive skills but also to shape students' attitudes and character values.

Bu Ifa, an Islamic Education teacher teaching 8th grade, explained that before using the problem-based learning model, Islamic Education lessons were still teacher-centered, where students only listened to explanations and took notes. However, after implementing PBL, students become more active, ask many questions, and are capable of seeking solutions to religious problems provided. This makes students more confident in expressing opinions and daring to connect Islamic Education material with their daily lives. The problem-based learning model, viewed

from the students' educational level, indicates that the higher the level of education, the better the critical thinking skills students possess (Karim, 2022). Based on observation results, the classroom atmosphere becomes livelier because students are motivated to participate in identifying and understanding problems.

b. Data Collection

The second stage in the implementation of problem-based learning is the process of information gathering, which is an explorative activity where students search, select, and organize information from various sources to analyze the predetermined problem. At SMPN 1 Kencong, teachers guide students to utilize diverse sources. In this activity, students are divided into small groups to discuss effective and relevant information search strategies. Based on an interview with Bu Ifa, an Islamic Education teacher, she explained that teachers act as guides who provide general directions and motivate students to be more independent in the information exploration process. Bu Eska also explained that teachers facilitate group discussions by providing worksheet guides. These worksheets contain exploratory questions that help students gather data, such as relevant Islamic legal sources related to the case, moral values contained, and examples of their application in daily life. According to Bu Saidah, this activity functions as a medium for collaborative learning because students need to divide tasks, complement each other, and discuss the data they obtained. She emphasizes that in this process, students also learn to sort out correct and Islamically aligned information.

Interviews with several students reveal that this stage is quite challenging because they have to find answers themselves, rather than just receiving explanations from the teacher. However, they feel they understand the material better because they have to read and interpret the verses or related content on their own. Students also admit that they find it easier to remember the content of lessons because they acquire it through the search process, not just by listening. Through this stage, students not only develop skills in searching for and processing information but also train their critical thinking abilities to assess data's suitability with Islamic principles. This stage becomes an important point in fostering students' sense of responsibility toward the learning process. Therefore, the data collection stage in PBL is not merely a process of searching for information but also functions to develop skills such as literacy, communication, and ethics. This stage makes Islamic Education learning more meaningful and relevant for students.

c. Problem Analysis

The third stage, known as problem analysis, is a key element in the thinking process within problem-based learning. It involves analyzing various aspects contained within the given problem. This activity can be carried out through small group discussions, enabling students to note important points related to the problem (Ernawati, 2015). At this stage, students must organize the information they have gathered, identify key variables related to the problem, build interconceptual connections, and evaluate. At SMPN 1 Kencong, students work collaboratively in groups to discuss their findings, formulate follow-up questions, and develop a

conceptual framework to understand the root causes of the issues faced. Based on an interview with Bu Ifa, a ISLAMIC EDUCATION teacher at this institution, she applies scaffolding techniques, providing gradual support that helps students shift from simple analysis to more complex analysis to build independent thinking structures. The teacher provides guiding questions and directs students when the discussion begins to stray from the context.

According to an interview with Bu Eska, students are asked to identify the factors causing the problems and the impacts they bring, subsequently linking them to values within Islamic teachings. The analysis process is conducted collaboratively within groups, with the teacher acting as a facilitator. Meanwhile, Bu Saidah stated that the analysis stage is the core of the problem-based learning process because it trains students to think critically and systematically. She encourages students to formulate tentative conclusions and record them in the form of concept maps or analysis tables. Classroom observations show students actively discussing, noting arguments, and organizing their group's thought processes. One student mentioned that this process helps them learn to listen to others' opinions and think from various perspectives. Students also feel that they are learning to assess a problem not only from the Islamic legal point of view but also from social and moral aspects.

d. Problem Solving

The fourth stage in the learning process is problem-solving, where students are asked to design and select the most appropriate solution for the analyzed problem. This process involves applying religious knowledge, moral principles, and critical thinking skills. Based on an interview with Bu Saidah, an Islamic Education teacher, she emphasized that students are tasked with formulating solutions to issues previously analyzed while considering sharia principles, moral values, and social conditions. The solutions must be rational, contextually appropriate, and applicable in students' daily lives. According to an interview with Bu Eska, the solutions proposed by students must be justifiable logically and aligned with Islamic teachings; students are encouraged to make wise decisions.

Teachers play an active role in providing feedback on the proposed solutions, expanding discussions with additional data or alternative viewpoints, and encouraging students to reflect critically on their chosen solutions. But Ifa, the Islamic Education teacher, added that this stage builds students' sense of responsibility in decision-making. She appreciates students' courage in expressing their ideas and guides the discussion so that each group member can share their opinion. Several students expressed that they enjoyed this process because they felt free to voice their thoughts and trusted in the process. The solution development process also involves collaboration, where students supply each other feedback and adjust based on real conditions they face. Therefore, the problem-solving stage is the peak in problem-based learning, demonstrating how well students understand and can apply religious teachings in daily life.

e. Result Presentation

The final stage involves presenting the discussion results, where each group of students delivers their analysis and solutions in front of the class. Presentations can be shared using various media, such as PowerPoint, posters, short videos, or drama simulations, depending on each group's creativity. The main goal of this stage is not only to share findings but also to train oral communication skills, scientific argumentation, and the ability to accept and give constructive criticism. At SMPN 1 Kencong, teachers provide guidance on effective presentation techniques, including roles for moderators, two presenters, note-takers, and operators. Other groups are given the opportunity to ask questions or give feedback on their peers' presentations. Teachers also direct and guide students on content accuracy, logical structure, and presentation style so that students can improve their thinking and communication skills for future development (Rodiyah, 2023).

According to an interview with Bu Eska, the Islamic Education teacher, each group is allocated time to present their issues, analysis, and solutions. Presentation media are adapted to students' creativity, such as posters, PowerPoint presentations, or short dramas. Bu Ifa added that teachers evaluate the presentation content, delivery, teamwork, and clarity of arguments. She also encourages other students to give responses, critiques, or questions. The interview results with Bu Saidah highlight that the presentation process is very important for building students' confidence and communication skills. Besides teachers' perspectives, interviews with students offer valuable insights into the application of problem-based learning. Most students stated that Islamic Education learning with this approach felt more interesting and challenging. Ninth-grade students mentioned that Islamic Education lessons typically consisted of lectures, but through this problem-solving activity, students are given the opportunity to work together to solve problems, making the learning process more active. Other students added that they feel they better understand religious values because they have to analyze real cases and consider how to apply Islamic principles in everyday activities.

3. Closing of the Learning Session

The final stage of the learning process is the closing, which is carried out as part of reflection and reinforcement of the lessons learned. The teacher guides students to summarize the discussion results and formulate core values gained from the problem-solving activities. The teacher also provides reinforcement of the Islamic Education concepts that have been studied. Additionally, the teacher gives feedback on the group work process and expresses appreciation for students' active participation. After all groups have completed their presentations, the teacher invites students to reflect together. Based on an interview with Bu Ifa, she explained that during this session, she posed questions about the lessons learned, the Islamic values that can be derived from the discussion, and their application in daily life. Bu Eska emphasized that at the closing, she stressed the importance of strengthening Islamic attitudes and character that emerged during the lesson, such as cooperation, mutual respect, and courage in presenting solutions. Bu Saidah added that the closing session is used to give feedback on the group

work process, discipline, and students' ability to argue. She also shared a brief evaluation through oral questions and written reflection sheets, which contain simple questions like the most memorable lesson of the day, difficulties faced, and ways to improve themselves in future lessons.

Some students expressed that they felt more confident and motivated to learn because their opinions were appreciated and considered important. Subsequently, the teacher provided a brief evaluation, either through oral questions or reflection sheets to be completed by students. Observation results in the classroom showed that the atmosphere during the closing was calm but meaningful. Students appeared attentive and listened carefully to the teacher's explanations. Some students nodded and smiled as the teacher appreciated their good group cooperation. The lesson was closed with a communal prayer and greetings, creating a religious atmosphere and strengthening emotional bonds between teachers and students. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess how well students have internalized the material and the learning process conducted. The evaluation results indicate improvements in several aspects of problem-solving skills, including: a) the ability to analyze problems; b) the ability to find relevant information; c) the ability to analyze and evaluate various alternative solutions; and d) the ability to make decisions based on Islamic values.

To further strengthen this success, educators suggest that problem-based learning should be implemented consistently and combined with reflective approaches, so that after solving problems, students can reflect on the values they have learned and how to apply them in daily life (Mardiyah et al., 2023). Islamic Education teachers are not only responsible for delivering information in a one-way manner but also more focused on guiding, posing stimulating questions, and supporting students in finding appropriate sources of learning. Educators believe that problem-based learning increases students' responsibility for their own learning process because they need to actively seek solutions, develop arguments, and present the results of group analyses in a structured manner.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the implementation of problem-based learning in Islamic Education at SMPN 1 Kencong significantly improves students' problem-solving abilities, both cognitively and affectively. Students can not only solve problems logically and systematically but also experience improvements in communication skills, collaboration, and self-confidence. It also encourages active and meaningful learning. Therefore, the application of problem-based learning is highly recommended to be broadly adopted in Islamic Education education as an effort to produce a generation that is not only intellectually smart but also possesses good morals and is responsible socially and spiritually.

Challenges and Solutions in Implementing Problem-Based Learning in Islamic Education

In the implementation of Islamic Education lessons, teachers strive to apply the Problem-Based Learning method as a strategy to improve students' problem-solving abilities. However, the implementation of PBL faces various obstacles, both from internal and external aspects. One of the main challenges is the limited available time for learning (Mulyadi

& Ratnaningsih, 2022). Based on interviews with students at SMPN 1 Kencong, they stated that the challenge faced in applying problem-based learning includes time constraints. The PBL process requires more time compared to traditional methods. This makes teachers choose topics that are truly important to explore through problem-based learning. The PBL model requires more time because it involves exploration of problems, group discussions, information searching, and presentation of results.

Another challenge arises from the teachers. Not all Islamic Education teachers possess adequate skills and understanding to implement problem-based learning efficiently. PBL is not just about giving questions or tasks to students to complete but requires careful planning, identification of relevant and challenging problems, and facilitation of effective discussions. Many teachers have not yet received specific training or professional development regarding PBL, so its implementation in the classroom is often less than optimal. The main solution is to provide ongoing training for Islamic Education teachers on how to implement PBL, including how to design problem-based learning scenarios that are relevant and contextual to students' lives. Moreover, the limited skills of students in discussing and solving problems also pose a problem. Many students are still accustomed to teacher-centered learning approaches, so when asked to think critically and collaborate in groups, they tend to be confused or even reluctant to participate. This is caused by their lack of mastery of basic religious content, which makes them lack confidence when asked to relate problems to Islamic values. Teachers are expected to be able to create problem scenarios that encourage critical thinking while remaining consistent with Islamic values.

On the other hand, limitations in learning facilities such as supporting media and internet access also hinder the effectiveness of PBL implementation. Based on an interview with one Islamic Education teacher, students at SMPN 1 Kencong are not allowed to bring electronic devices such as mobile phones. This policy is implemented to maintain focus and prevent misuse of technology within the school environment. Therefore, several solutions have been applied to overcome these various challenges. Teachers start to make more careful planning in preparing learning tools, and the problems given are made simpler and more focused so that they can be solved within limited time. Additionally, teachers utilize various social media such as videos, Islamic articles, and cases from daily life to attract students' interest (Kayati et al., 2023). Therefore, it is important for teachers to plan carefully, simplify existing problems, and utilize suitable learning media so that the implementation of problem-based learning continues to run effectively despite facing various limitations.

CONCLUSION

This study indicates that the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in Islamic Education lessons at SMPN 1 Kencong significantly improves students' problem-solving skills. Through structured PBL stages, students actively engage in understanding, analyzing, and resolving issues related to Islamic values within the context of daily life. This shows that the PBL approach not only encourages mastery of material but also fosters character, responsibility, and independence among students. The research's goal to explore the effectiveness of PBL in enhancing problem-solving skills has been successfully achieved.



Theoretically, this research reinforces the view that problem-based learning aligns with constructivist approaches, where knowledge is built through meaningful experience and interaction. Applying PBL in Islamic Education learning broadens the understanding that this approach is effective not only in exact or social sciences but also in religious education focused on values and morals.

Practically, schools and educators are advised to systematically integrate the PBL model into the Islamic Education curriculum by providing training for teachers and developing adaptable teaching tools based on this approach. Educational policies should also support active and contextual learning models to enhance the quality of the learning process and outcomes. Although the results show that PBL can be used as a solution to improve problem-solving abilities, there are some limitations to consider. Constraints such as limited learning time, students' readiness to discuss, and facilities pose challenges for full implementation of this model. Therefore, further research is recommended to explore integrative strategies combining PBL with reflective or digital approaches, as well as to study their practical application.

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