IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING MODEL IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' LEARNING INDEPENDENCE

Andre Fanani[1], Syaiful Rizal[2]
[1,2] Universitas KH Achmad Muzakki Syah Jember, Indonesia

Article Info

ABSTRACT

Innovation in learning methods is essential to ensure that education runs well. By using the right media, methods, tools, and materials, the learning process can be more interesting, effective, and enjoyable for students. This research intends to find out how the implementation of a project-based learning model can increase students' learning independence in Islamic Religious Education subjects, as well as to identify the obstacles faced by educators in this process. We chose the descriptive qualitative research method to provide a comprehensive picture. The subjects in this research were students and Islamic education teachers of class VIII MTSN 2 Jember. We collected data using interview techniques, observation, and document study methods. We then descriptively analyzed the data through stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the research show that the application of the project-based learning model to material regarding the introduction and understanding of believing in prophets and apostles shows enormous potential in increasing student learning independence. In this lesson, the projects involve creating works or engaging in activities that relate to believing in prophets and apostles. With this approach, students not only develop skills in searching for and processing information from various sources but are also able to apply religious values in the context of everyday life in a more meaningful way. The obstacles encountered in implementing this learning model are intensive time management and limited resources.

Corresponding Author:

Andre Fanani,
Universitas KH Achmad Muzakki Syah Jember, Indonesia
Email: andrefanani10@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the essential needs in human life (Max-Neef, 2017). Education is a place for students to develop their various potentials optimally in the physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects (Aripin, 2024). The learning process (Kurniansyah & Daveta, 2018) develops this potential, leading to changes in students (Ocktilia, 2022). Students' achievements and their spiritual attitudes in daily life demonstrate these changes (Zaini & Fahmi, 2023). Islamic education (IE) has a very significant contribution to the growth and development of spiritual achievements and

attitudes (Bassar et al., 2021). The form of achievement that can be produced by Islamic religious education is that students have sufficient knowledge of the Islamic religion (Azhar et al., 2022). As for the implementation of daily life, students have spiritual attitudes: obedience to worship, carrying out Islamic teachings, and religious tolerance (Sultoni, 2021).

It is natural that society's demands for education are increasing as time goes by. Government reforms, including curriculum enhancement, educational facility upgrades, and improvements in the teaching and learning process, are crucial for meeting these demands and producing quality human resources to face the era of globalization (Farid & Pramukantoro, 2013). Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System regulates the role of education in building a quality Indonesian population. Via Invite This law states that national education serves to develop and form a national identity and civilization that enhances the intelligence of the nation, while also aiming to cultivate the character and dignity of its citizens. It seeks to nurture students' potential to become individuals who believe in and are devoted to God Almighty, possess noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, and capable, and grow into democratic and responsible citizens.

Many educational theories and practices applied in Indonesia are based on concepts that come from abroad (Purwanto & Wafa, 2023). Many educators and educational practitioners in Indonesia learn about the importance of students' self-development from educational theories developed abroad. Concepts such as active learning, project-based learning, scientific approaches, and many more often form the basis of education in Indonesia. This phenomenon reflects the importance of exchanging cross-cultural educational ideas and practices to improve the quality of education globally (NM, 2021; Sjøen, 2023).

Assessing the quality of learning in terms of process and results is a very appropriate approach. Ensuring the active involvement of students in the learning process (as a process indicator) and achieving positive changes in students (as an outcome indicator) is key to assessing learning success. In the context of process assessment, if at least 75% of students are actively involved both physically, mentally, and socially during learning, it shows that learning has succeeded in creating a learning environment that motivates and supports students' active participation. Meanwhile, in outcome assessment, if there is a positive change in at least 75% of students after learning, it indicates that learning has succeeded in achieving learning objectives and provides a significant impact on student development in the context of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Thus, focusing on these two aspects when evaluating the quality of learning helps ensure that the process is not only effective but also has a real impact on student development (Earley & Porritt, 2014; González-Salamanca et al., 2020).

The success of the learning process closely correlates with the success of education. An effective learning process must facilitate two-way communication and develop students' creative thinking to acquire new knowledge (Lin & Wu, 2016). An active and contextual learning approach can be optimal with the support of appropriate media, methods, tools, and materials (Marougkas et al., 2023; Faiz et al., 2023). In the

technological era, various digital media and learning tools continue to develop rapidly, enabling educators to provide learning experiences that are more interactive and relevant to students' needs (Haleem et al., 2022).

Preliminary studies by the author indicate that it appears that the crisis of student learning independence at MTSN 2 Jember requires serious attention. The crisis of student learning independence at MTSN 2 Jember is visible in several forms, such as high dependence on teachers, low learning motivation, lack of time management skills, and minimal problem-solving abilities. Observations in class show that students tend to be passive and only respond when asked directly by the teacher, without taking the initiative to ask or discuss. Interviews with Islamic education teachers revealed that many students only study when taking exams and often ask basic questions that they should be able to answer on their own with little effort. Interviews with students indicated that most found it difficult to study independently without direct guidance from the teacher. Documentation of academic achievement shows a decline in average scores in several subjects, including Islamic education, as well as many assignments and projects not being completed on time. This data shows that there are gaps that require intervention, and this research aims to address these needs by implementing a learning model, Project-Based Learning (PjBL), to increase student learning independence in Islamic education subjects.

Project-based learning offers opportunities for students to be actively involved in exploring subject matter through projects that are relevant to real life (Mutanga, 2024; Puspitaloka et al., 2024). In this process, students can develop independent learning skills such as problem-solving, creativity, teamwork, and responsibility for the results of their work. Thus, project-based learning improves understanding of concepts and helps students to become more independent in their learning process. Learning independence emphasizes the importance of children having control over their own learning process (Maisuroh & Aisyah, 2024). When students can become independent in learning activities, they will be more active, can master effective learning strategies, be able to regulate behavior, and have high self-confidence. Independence in this context is not about being alone but rather about having the ability to manage learning independently. The process of achieving learning independence is a journey that requires effort and practice; when achieved, it can become an inner strength for students in their pursuit of excellence in learning (Simamora & Pasaribu, 2023). Earning independence includes seven aspects or indicators, namely self-confidence, ability to work alone, ability to make decisions, responsibility, desire to compete for progress, and a disciplined and positive personality in learning.

Research by Wibowo et al. (2024) models the application of project-based learning through the lens of the Merdeka Curriculum to develop learning creativity in Islamic religious education. This research shows that project-based learning at high school, especially in Islamic religious subjects through the Merdeka program, is effective in increasing students' creativity and learning independence. This learning model helps students to be actively involved in the learning process, develop critical thinking skills, and produce work that reflects their understanding of the subject matter. The difference

between this research and Anggelia et al.'s (2022) research is the emphasis on student independence in learning Islamic religious education. Although both examine a small number of problems related to project-based learning and student creativity, this research highlights aspects of independent learning and its application in the context of Islamic religious learning.

Furthermore, Indra et al. (2024) conducted research on project-based learning in Islamic religious education. This research emphasizes educators' efforts to increase student learning independence through project-based learning models in Islamic Religious Education subjects. The focus is on how teachers as facilitators assign tasks to students to solve problems, produce products, make decisions, and carry out investigative activities so that student creativity and motivation can increase. This research places a greater emphasis on promoting student learning independence within the framework of Islamic education through a project-based learning model, which distinguishes it from the research conducted by As'ari et al. (2022). Although both discuss the use of project-based learning in the context of Islamic religious education, this research highlights educators' efforts to increase student learning independence through this approach.

Additionally, the results of this research show that project-based learning can create an intriguing learning experience for students where they can be actively involved in the process. The project method allows students to think freely and creatively under the guidance of a teacher so they can learn to face problems and identify solutions independently, rather than just memorizing certain concepts (Dhohir et al., 2025). The difference between Purnawanto's (2019) research and this research is the emphasis on educators' efforts to increase student learning independence through project-based learning models in Islamic religious education subjects. Although both discuss the application of the project method in the context of Islamic religious education, this research highlights educators' efforts to strengthen students' learning independence through this approach.

This research is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of efforts made by educators to increase students' learning independence in Islamic Religious Education subjects through learning models like Project-Based Learning (PJBL). Apart from that, this research also aims to identify the obstacles faced by educators in this process. By finding and developing knowledge related to the PJBL method, it is hoped that this research can provide clear information and facts about effective strategies to improve student learning independence, as well as solutions to overcome various possible obstacles. The benefit of this research is to support educators in creating a more independent, effective, and relevant learning process for students in the current technological era.

2. METHOD

We chose the descriptive qualitative research method to provide a comprehensive picture. In class VIII of MTSN 2 Jember, the researcher selected the study site. The research subjects included both students and teachers who teach Islamic Religious

Education. The technique used in selecting the sample is purposive sampling, which is based on certain characteristics that are thought to have a close relationship with the characteristics you want to study in a previously known population. This technique designated students as key informants in the research, while Islamic Religious Education subject teachers also became informants.

Several data collection techniques used in research are observation, interviews, and documentation. Inductive data analysis techniques were used in this research, which means it is based on specific facts. Reviewing the data obtained from written notes, recordings, and other sources initiates the data analysis process. In this research, researchers used three stages of data analysis, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Using the triangulation method to test the validity of data is an excellent approach in research. Using triangulation techniques, researchers collect data from various sources or use various data collection methods to verify or validate research findings. This approach can increase the credibility and reliability of the data produced. By applying the triangulation method, research can ensure that the data used has high feasibility and credibility so that research results become more trustworthy and relevant. This research intends to find out how the implementation of a project-based learning model can increase students' learning independence in Islamic Religious Education subjects. Below is presented the PjBL model, which is the object of this research in Figure 1.

Figure 1. PjBL Model

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The project-based learning model is a teaching method that encourages students to gain new knowledge based on experience through real activities (Wahyuni & Fitriana, 2021). By using the project-based learning (PJBL) learning model, participants are taught to explore content (material) using various methods that are meaningful to themselves and carry out experiments collaboratively.

As is known, project-based learning is a learning model that exposes students to practical problems through learning stimuli. Learning Project-Based Learning These students are trained to:

a) Be responsible for what they are responsible for.

b) Assess the work plan and work according to the plan that has been made.

c) Competent in a healthy manner.

d) Apply or seek knowledge that has been learned (Junita et al., 2023).

Based on data collection obtained from MTSN 2 Jember through interviews with Islamic education teachers. Additionally, the author employs observation, interviews, and documentation methods as supplementary techniques to enhance the data collected. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this research will focus on providing a detailed description and analysis of how the PJBL learning model helps improve students' independence in learning Islamic education at MTSN 2 Jember.

Based on the results of data mining in the field, it is known that the teacher has implemented the project-based learning model in Islamic education subjects regarding belief in prophets and apostles. Regarding the implementation of this model and its impact on increasing student learning independence, the author will explain it in the following points:

Implementation of the Project Based Learning Model in Increasing Students' Learning Independence in Islamic Education Subjects

Implementation of learning models the implementation of project-based learning (PJBL) in Islamic religious education subjects at MTSN 2 Jember has been shown to effectively increase student learning independence through a structured approach.

a. The first stage is introduction; this approach begins with an introductory stage that creates a conducive atmosphere with class conditioning and group greetings, which helps students focus and be ready to learn. Religious values are introduced through basmalah reading, according to the Islamic Education learning context, while explaining the purpose of the material to provide direction and motivation to students.

b. The second stage is the core activity. At the core activity stage, the teacher provides a brief explanation of the material, such as believing in the prophets and apostles of Allah, and starts a discussion about the project that will be implemented. Students are involved in preparing projects collaboratively with teachers, using interactive presentation media such as slides or videos to develop their creativity and deepen their understanding of the characteristics of Rasul in the context of digital life.

Additionally, the teacher continuously evaluates the project preparation process to ensure that it aligns with both classroom learning and projects conducted outside of the classroom. Teachers provide guidance as needed to facilitate student-centered learning, encouraging their independence in learning.

The final stage includes an assessment of students' understanding of Islamic education material and their ability to apply this knowledge in projects. This evaluation provides feedback to students and supports the holistic development of their abilities. This approach uses technology and learning media effectively and integrates online resources to support student exploration in Islamic education learning, such as videos, simulations, and online platforms for collaboration and research.

Overall, the PJBL approach in the Islamic education context at MTSN 2 Jember not only increases students' learning independence through direct experience but also deepens their understanding of religious values in the context of everyday life. Educators increase student learning independence in Islamic education subjects through the PjBL learning model by following several structured stages. namely:

a. Identify a Topic or Theme

The topic or theme identification stage begins with the teacher's approach to introducing the project to students. The teacher explains the project context and the objectives of this learning activity, synchronizing it with the Islamic education curriculum being studied. This explanation not only links the project to Islamic educational material but also gives students a clear understanding of how it will help them understand and apply the religious values studied.

b. Project Planning

Second, the project planning stage involves collaboration between students and teachers. Together, they set specific goals to be achieved through this project, planned concrete steps to be taken, and set an appropriate time schedule for completing it. Students are encouraged to conduct independent investigations and in-depth studies to understand Islamic education topics relevant to their projects. They use various sources of information, such as textbooks and the internet, and may also conduct interviews with experts to gain a broader and more profound perspective.

c. Project Implementation

Third, the project implementation stage is the focus point where students work independently or in groups to create products or artifacts that demonstrate their understanding of materials. This product can be a multimedia presentation, poster, video, or other creative media that visualizes students' understanding of the religious values being studied. During this process, students not only implement their knowledge but also develop collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.

d. Presentation of Project Results

The final stage is the presentation of the project results, where students can share the results of their work with the class or community. Through these presentations, students hone their communication skills and broaden their experience in conveying their ideas and knowledge effectively. Presentations also encourage in-depth reflection on their learning process as well as providing feedback from peers or teachers to improve the quality of their final product.

The PJBL approach in Islamic education learning does not only focus on knowledge transfer but also on active, applicable, and in-depth learning experiences. Through these

stages, it is hoped that students can develop their learning independence and gain a deeper and more relevant understanding of religious values in the context of their daily lives. This approach is not just about preparing. The results of the interview with DR (Islamic education teacher at MTSN 2 Jember) reveal that.

> *"The use of technology and learning media effectively supports the implementation of the PJBL learning model in the Islamic education learning context. One of the main aspects discussed is the use of interactive presentation media, such as slides and learning videos, which teachers use to introduce Islamic education concepts in a visual and engaging way. This technique facilitates deeper understanding of the material and sparks student interest with open-ended questions and case studies in presentations."*

Apart from that, the use of online resources is also an important focus in this approach. Teachers actively look for relevant videos, simulations, and websites to support students in exploring and investigating the projects they are working on. This approach helps students gain additional information and deepen their understanding of Islamic education material more thoroughly. In the creative product creation stage, teachers provide support in using technology to create content such as video documentaries, podcasts, or blogs. This activity not only requires students to express their understanding creatively but also stimulates deep reflection about their learning experiences in the context of the PJBL project.

Furthermore, the use of online learning platforms such as group discussions, forums, and online assignment rooms really supports collaboration between students. These features facilitate more intensive communication and collaboration in developing ideas and solving problems in the Islamic education learning context. Finally, online research assignments that teachers assign to students through databases and online information sources, such as electronic journals and digital encyclopedias, provide opportunities for students to develop information search skills and analyze data relevant to PJBL projects. This approach not only enriches students' learning experiences but is also consistent with the main aim of the PJBL model in increasing students' learning independence in Islamic education subjects.

Overall, teachers do have a crucial role in developing project-based learning models (PJBL) with the aim of increasing students' interest in learning at school. From the literature review, the teacher's role in PJBL is not limited to formal curriculum aspects but covers broader dimensions, including learning design, guidance during project implementation, classroom management, evaluation, professional development, and being a favorable role model (Dole et al., 2017).

Application of learning models Project-based Learning (PJBL) can be applied to all subjects that are adapted to the existing submaterials. Through Project-Based Learning (PJBL), students will be faced with a problem or given a project related to the material, and then students will be asked to solve or create a project/activity based on questions and problems, which is then continued with the process of searching, investigating, and

discovering for themselves so that students gain complete knowledge by using the ideas or new ideas they have learned. Students can benefit from the development of theories, concepts, and information into something new and different (Ilyas & Rosyidah, 2023).

Project-based learning (PJBL) has several advantages to be applied in learning, namely: 1) increasing students' sense of learning motivation to learn, encouraging their ability to do important work, and they need to be appreciated; 2) the increase makes students more active and successful in solving complex problems; 3) training in utilizing artistic and technological media and materials through ergonomic, hygienic, ecosystemic, and metacognitive principles; 4) producing finished and appreciative works that are ready to be utilized and used in life and are insightful and the basis for appropriative development of the latest technology and local wisdom technology. Project-based learning is an in-depth investigation of a topic from the real world. This project is well designed so that students can overcome real problems and important issues that occur in everyday life in accordance with current developments, especially those that occur in the learning process (Arif & Aziz, 2023).

Research has proven that the PJBL model enhances student learning independence. Research conducted by Anjarsari et al. (2021) showed that the average score obtained by students in mathematics subjects with data presentation material increased to 85.26. This study proves that learning is based on project-based learning, can increase student learning independence, and can improve student learning outcomes (Saputra, 2024).

Obstacles in Increasing Students' Learning Independence in Islamic Education Subjects Through the Project Based Learning Model

According to the results of the interview with DR, there are several obstacles to implementing learning using the Project-Based Learning (PJBL) model, namely:

a. Longer Learning Preparation

Implementing PJBL requires more intensive and detailed learning preparation. Field research results indicate that this process involves time-consuming stages, including careful project planning and thorough integration of Islamic education values into the project. The results of the authors' analysis highlight that this in-depth preparation influences teaching effectiveness and supports student engagement in more meaningful and relevant learning.

b. High Collaboration Skills of Students

The main challenge in PJBL is the collaboration skills that students need to participate effectively in groups. Research indicates that learning models that foster social interaction and collaboration among students are necessary to support students in developing these skills. The results of the author's analysis underline the need for an approach that focuses on developing these soft skills, both through structured group assignments and targeted collaborative exercises.

c. Determination of Time Limits

The difficulty of setting time limits can affect the learning plans that have been set. The results of field research show that setting the right time for each stage of the project is crucial in maintaining the quality of learning outcomes. The results of the

author's analysis emphasize that learners require a flexible but structured approach in time planning, considering the complexity of the task and the student's skill level to maximize the desired learning achievements.

d. Strict supervision

Adequate teacher supervision is necessary in the PJBL context to maintain students' focus on learning objectives. Research shows that an adaptive supervision approach, which considers students' individual learning styles, can increase learning effectiveness. The results of the authors' analysis highlight that supervision is not only about physical monitoring but also provides the pedagogical support necessary to support students' holistic development.

e. Adequate Technology Support

Implementing PJBL requires solid technological infrastructure, including stable internet access and adequate supporting software. Field research indicates that a lack of technological resources can be a serious obstacle to integrating technology into project-based learning. The results of the author's analysis emphasize the importance of investment in educational technology infrastructure and training for teachers to utilize technology effectively to support student learning processes.

By being aware of these obstacles, teachers can take steps to overcome or minimize their impact so that the implementation of PJBL in Islamic education learning can run more smoothly and effectively. The implementation of learning models and project-based learning (PJBL) in Islamic education at MTSN 2 Jember has great potential to help students develop skills, increase their learning independence, and strengthen religious and moral values in everyday life. With this approach, educators act as facilitators and leaders of the learning process, providing support and guidance to students as they engage in learning projects. Providing constructive feedback is also important to help students improve their performance and develop a more profound understanding of Islamic education material and associated values. In this way, learning becomes more meaningful, and students are better prepared to face challenges in everyday life and in practicing religious teachings in the context of modern life.

The interview results indicated that students gave a very positive response to the learning model project-based learning (PJBL). They are more involved in learning, understand Islamic education concepts better, and can apply them in real-world situations, which is proof of the success of the PJBL implementation. This shows that this learning model is effective in increasing students' learning independence and creating meaningful learning experiences for them. With the positive response from students, it is hoped that the PJBL learning model can continue to be improved and integrated more widely in Islamic education at MTSN 2 Jember to provide greater benefits for students.

Analysis indicates that the use of the Learning Model Project-Based Learning (PJBL) in Islamic education at MTSN 2 Jember gave overall positive results. PJBL has proven to be effective in increasing students' learning independence. Islamic education teachers have planned lessons carefully, including choosing relevant projects, preparing the necessary materials, and choosing appropriate learning models. In addition, teachers

provide direction and guidance to students during the learning process, as well as offer constructive feedback to help students improve their understanding. Such behavior shows the teacher's commitment and involvement in providing meaningful and effective learning experiences for students in Islamic education learning. Next, MS, the Principal at MTSN 2 Jember, provided the following results from the interview:

"The primary impediment is the restricted timeframe for executing this learning model. Additional impediments include acquiring the necessary facilities and infrastructure, as well as essential teaching materials for executing the learning model. These impediments can influence the quality of education and the attainment of anticipated learning objectives. Time constraints may lead students to lose concentration and hastily finish learning assignments, resulting in suboptimal comprehension of the topic. Conversely, inadequate facilities and infrastructure may impede students' creativity in executing learning and development projects."

As stated by Islamic education teachers, the main obstacle is the limited time to implement this learning model. There are also obstacles in obtaining the necessary facilities and infrastructure, such as teaching materials to support the implementation of learning. These obstacles can affect the quality of learning and achievement of the expected learning goals. Time limitations can cause students to lose focus and rush to complete learning projects, resulting in less-than-optimal understanding of the material. On the other hand, limited facilities and infrastructure can hinder students' creativity in carrying out learning and development projects.

To overcome these obstacles, educators and schools must strive to provide appropriate support and equipment when implementing project-based learning. Additionally, efforts should be made to improve students' ability to collaborate and understand learning objectives. Continuous assessment that focuses on learning can also help overcome obstacles in implementing project-based learning.

4.   CONCLUSION

Model implementation Project-Based Learning (PJBL) in Islamic Religious Education subjects at MTSN 2 Jember shows outstanding potential in increasing student learning independence. With this approach, students not only develop skills in searching for and processing information from various sources but are also able to apply religious values in the context of everyday life in a more meaningful way. Even though they face obstacles such as intensive time management and limited resources, teachers can overcome them with strategies such as detailed time mapping, utilization of existing resources, and focused collaboration and training.

Thus, as a suggestion, PJBL supports the achievement of academic goals and provides a solid foundation for the development of students' independent attitudes and adaptability in the future.

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