

## **PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING (PBL) IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: APPLYING INNOVATIVE METHODS FOR HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING**

**Nurul Khotimah**

Tutor Universitas Terbuka  
nurulkhotimh05@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *This study presents detailed steps for the implementation of PBL in PAI and explores its impact on students' understanding of Islamic values. The process begins with identifying Islamic issues relevant to students' lives, facilitating the formation of collaborative working groups, and guiding students through in-depth research using Islamic sources. The analysis of Islamic values then guides students in formulating solutions that are in accordance with religious principles. The emphasis on personal reflection and evaluation provides a forum for students to evaluate the learning process and the resulting solutions. Optionally, the implementation of real actions gives a practical dimension to learning, allowing students to implement their solutions in a community environment. Holistic assessments include aspects of concept comprehension, collaborative skills, presentation creativity, and students' personal reflection. The findings of the study show that PBL in PAI not only improves the understanding of Islamic values, but also strengthens students' critical and social skills. The implications of this research stimulate critical thinking and debate related to the effectiveness of PBL in linking Islamic teachings to students' daily lives.*

**Keywords:** *Holistic Understanding, Islamic Religious Education, Innovative Methods, Problem Based Learning*

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini menyajikan langkah-langkah terperinci penerapan PBL dalam PAI dan mengeksplorasi dampaknya terhadap pemahaman siswa tentang nilai-nilai Islam. Proses dimulai dengan identifikasi masalah Islami yang relevan dengan kehidupan siswa, memfasilitasi pembentukan kelompok kerja kolaboratif, dan memandu siswa melalui penelitian mendalam dengan menggunakan sumber-sumber Islam. Analisis nilai-nilai Islam kemudian membimbing siswa dalam merumuskan solusi yang sesuai dengan prinsip-prinsip agama. Penekanan pada refleksi pribadi dan evaluasi menyediakan wadah untuk siswa mengevaluasi proses pembelajaran dan solusi yang dihasilkan. Opsionalnya, implementasi tindakan nyata memberikan dimensi praktis pada pembelajaran, memungkinkan siswa menerapkan solusi mereka dalam lingkungan masyarakat. Penilaian holistik mencakup aspek pemahaman konsep, keterampilan kolaboratif, kreativitas presentasi, dan refleksi pribadi siswa. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa PBL dalam PAI tidak hanya meningkatkan pemahaman nilai-nilai Islam, tetapi juga memperkuat keterampilan kritis dan sosial siswa. Implikasi penelitian ini merangsang pemikiran kritis dan perdebatan terkait efektivitas PBL dalam mengaitkan ajaran Islam dengan kehidupan sehari-hari siswa..

**Keywords:** *Pemahaman Holistik, Pendidikan Agama Islam, Metode Inovatif, Problem Based Learning*

## Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) occupies a strategic position within the educational system as it seeks not only to develop students' religious knowledge but also to cultivate moral character, ethical awareness, and spiritual responsibility. In the context of twenty-first-century education <sup>1</sup>, PAI is expected to equip students with the ability to understand Islamic teachings comprehensively while applying these values to address contemporary social, ethical, and environmental challenges <sup>2</sup>. Consequently, the instructional process in PAI should move beyond the traditional transmission of religious knowledge toward learning experiences that encourage critical reflection, active participation, and the practical application of Islamic principles in everyday life <sup>3</sup>.

Despite its important role, the implementation of PAI in many educational settings continues to face significant challenges. Learning activities often remain teacher-centered, emphasizing memorization and the acquisition of factual religious knowledge rather than encouraging students to analyze real-life issues from an Islamic perspective. Such instructional practices may limit students' opportunities to develop higher-order thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and the capacity to relate religious concepts to authentic situations. As a result, students may possess adequate theoretical knowledge of Islamic teachings while experiencing difficulties in applying these principles to real-world problems <sup>4</sup>.

The rapid social, technological, and cultural changes of the twenty-first century further reinforce the need for innovative pedagogical approaches in Islamic Religious Education <sup>5</sup>. Today's students are expected to demonstrate not only cognitive competence but also critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and ethical decision-making skills. These competencies are widely recognized as essential for navigating increasingly complex societal challenges. Therefore, educational approaches that actively engage students in authentic

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<sup>1</sup> Mokh Firmansyah, Iman, "Pendidikan Agama Islam: Pengertian, Tujuan, Dasar Dan Fungsi," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 17, no. 2 (2019): 79–90.

<sup>2</sup> M Arif Khoiruddin and Dina Dahniary Sholekah, "Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius Siswa," *Jurnal Pedagogik* 06, no. 01 (2019): 123–44.

<sup>3</sup> Sulaiman Sulaiman, "Hakikat Manusia Sebagai Pendidik Dalam Perspektif Filsafat Pendidikan Islam," *Auladuna: Jurnal Prodi Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* 1, no. 1 (2019): 91–99, <https://doi.org/10.36835/au.v1i1.165>.

<sup>4</sup> Hardi Tambunan, "The Effectiveness of the Problem Solving Strategy and the Scientific Approach to Students' Mathematical Capabilities in High Order Thinking Skills" 14, no. 2 (2019): 293–302.

<sup>5</sup> Mauhibur Rokhman and Fathul Amami, "Integration of Islamic Religious Education and Science Learning in Elementary School," *Ta Dib: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (2021): 331–39, <https://doi.org/10.29313/tjpi.v10i2.8971>.

learning experiences have become increasingly relevant for improving the quality and effectiveness of PAI instruction.

One instructional model that addresses these educational demands is *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL)<sup>6</sup>. PBL is more than a teaching strategy; it represents an educational philosophy that places students at the center of the learning process by engaging them in the investigation and resolution of authentic, contextual problems. Through this approach, students actively construct knowledge by identifying problems, collecting and analyzing information, collaborating with peers, evaluating alternative solutions, and reflecting on their learning experiences<sup>7</sup>. Consequently, PBL promotes meaningful learning while simultaneously fostering higher-order thinking, communication, collaboration, and lifelong learning skills.

*Problem-Based Learning* was initially introduced in the early 1960s at McMaster University in Canada as an innovative instructional approach for medical education. The model was developed in response to concerns that traditional lecture-based instruction was insufficient to prepare students for solving complex professional problems<sup>8</sup>. Due to its effectiveness in improving critical thinking, self-directed learning, and practical problem-solving skills, PBL has since been adopted across various disciplines and educational levels, including science, engineering, social sciences, and teacher education<sup>9</sup>. More recently, researchers have highlighted the potential of PBL to enhance learning in religious education by connecting theoretical knowledge with authentic social and moral issues.

The implementation of PBL is founded on several fundamental principles that distinguish it from conventional instructional approaches<sup>10</sup>. First, learning begins with the presentation of authentic and complex problems that stimulate students' curiosity and encourage inquiry. Rather than receiving information directly from teachers, students are challenged to investigate the causes of the problem and identify relevant sources of information. Second, collaborative learning constitutes a central component of PBL, as students work in small groups to exchange ideas, negotiate meaning, and develop shared solutions<sup>11</sup>. Third, independent inquiry and critical analysis enable students to construct

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<sup>6</sup> R. T. Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, "Learning Together and Alone: Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Learning (5th Ed.)," *Asia Pasific Journal of Education* 22, no. 1 (2002).

<sup>7</sup> John R Savery et al., "Problem Based Learning: An Instructional Model and Its Constructivist Framework," 1996.

<sup>8</sup> R. I Arends, *Learning to Teach (9th Ed.)* (McGraw-Hill., n.d.).

<sup>9</sup> Robyn M Tamblyn and B N Se, "Problem-Based Learning An Approach to Medical Education," n.d.

<sup>10</sup> David Jonassen et al., "Constructivism and Computer-Mediated Communication in Distance Education," n.d.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Pate and Greg Miller, "Effects of Think-Aloud Pair Problem Solving on Secondary-Level Students' Performance in Career and Technical Education Courses," *Journal of Agricultural Education* 52, no. 1 (March 2011): 120–31, <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2011.01120>.

knowledge through exploration, reflection, and evidence-based reasoning. Finally, students communicate their findings through presentations and discussions, allowing them to receive feedback, defend their arguments, and refine their understanding. These interconnected stages create a learning environment that is both intellectually challenging and socially interactive<sup>12</sup>.

Within the context of Islamic Religious Education, PBL offers considerable potential to enhance students' understanding and internalization of Islamic values<sup>13</sup>. By investigating authentic issues such as environmental conservation, poverty, social justice, digital ethics, religious tolerance, or moral dilemmas from an Islamic perspective, students are encouraged to integrate Qur'anic teachings and Prophetic traditions into practical decision-making processes. This contextual learning experience helps bridge the gap between religious theory and everyday practice, enabling students to appreciate the relevance of Islamic teachings in addressing contemporary societal challenges<sup>14</sup>.

Furthermore, PBL contributes to the development of learners' cognitive, affective, and social competencies. The collaborative nature of PBL strengthens communication and teamwork skills, while the inquiry process encourages independent learning, creativity, and critical thinking<sup>15</sup>. Simultaneously, the integration of Islamic ethical principles throughout problem-solving activities promotes character development, empathy, responsibility, and moral reasoning. Consequently, PBL supports the holistic objectives of Islamic Religious Education by integrating intellectual growth with the formation of positive attitudes and behaviors.

Although numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of *Problem-Based Learning* in improving learning outcomes across various educational disciplines, research specifically examining its implementation in Islamic Religious Education remains relatively limited. Existing studies have primarily focused on students' academic achievement, with less attention given to how PBL facilitates the internalization of Islamic values, promotes ethical reasoning, and develops students' ability to solve authentic problems from an Islamic

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<sup>12</sup> Nur Asih, "Peningkatan Kemampuan Pemecahan Masalah Matematis Dan Kemandirian Belajar Siswa Menggunakan Model Pembelajaran Means End Analysis," *Jurnal Pendidikan Matematika* 8 (2019): 12.

<sup>13</sup> Aminuddin Hassan et al., "The Role of Islamic Philosophy of Education in Aspiring Holistic Learning," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 5 (2010): 2113–18, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.423>.

<sup>14</sup> Winda Agustina, Hamengkubuwono Hamengkubuwono, and Wandi Syahindra, "Model Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah Umum," *At-Ta'dib: Jurnal Ilmiah Prodi Pendidikan Agama Islam* 18, no. 20 (2020): 112, <https://doi.org/10.47498/tadib.v12i02.365>.

<sup>15</sup> Regina Bruder Liljedahl, Peter, Manuel Santos-Trigo, Uldarico Malaspina, *Problem Solving in Mathematics Education, Encyclopedia of Mathematics Education*, 2014, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4978-8\\_129](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4978-8_129).

perspective. This gap indicates the need for further investigation into the pedagogical potential of PBL within the unique context of PAI<sup>16</sup>.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the implementation of *Problem-Based Learning* in Islamic Religious Education and examine its contribution to students' understanding of Islamic values, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. By analyzing the application of PBL in PAI learning, this study is expected to provide theoretical and practical insights for educators seeking to design more contextual, student-centered, and meaningful learning experiences that are aligned with the objectives of Islamic education and the competencies required in the twenty-first century<sup>17</sup>.

## Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to explore the implementation and potential of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI)<sup>18</sup>. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of the learning process, participants' experiences, and the educational value of PBL in fostering students' understanding and application of Islamic values. The case study design allowed the researchers to investigate the phenomenon within its real-life educational context and to examine the interaction between instructional practices, student engagement, and learning outcomes.

The study focused on the implementation of PBL in PAI learning activities, with particular attention to how authentic, Islamic-related problems were incorporated into classroom instruction and how students responded to these learning experiences. The research sought to identify the strengths, challenges, and educational implications of PBL in promoting critical thinking, collaborative learning, problem-solving abilities, and the internalization of Islamic values.

Data were collected through multiple qualitative techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. These techniques included classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations were conducted to

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<sup>16</sup> Ali Wafa, "Integration of Religious Knowledge with Science and Technology in Islamic Education," *Maklumat: Journal of Da'wah and Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (December 2023): 11–20, <https://doi.org/10.61166/maklumat.v1i1.2>.

<sup>17</sup> Bin Zhao and Nirwana Anas, "DEVELOPMENT OF A LEARNING MEDIUM BASED ON EFAS TRADITIONAL GAME (ENGKLEK FUN AND SMART) TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' COMMUNICATION ABILITY IN THEMATIC LEARNING," *Al-Bidayah : Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Islam* 15, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 165–82, <https://doi.org/10.14421/albidayah.v15i1.818>.

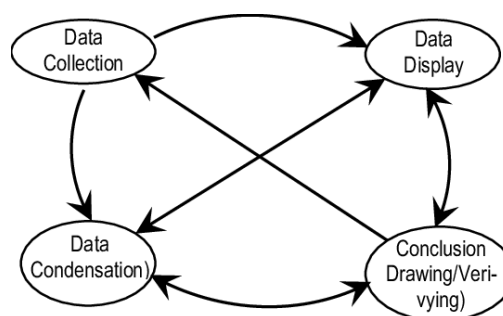
<sup>18</sup> John W. Creswell, *Fourth Edition: Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approach*, SAGE, fourth Edi, vol. 59 (Los Angeles, 2018).

examine the implementation of PBL, students' participation, collaborative interactions, and the instructional strategies employed by teachers. Semi-structured interviews with teachers and students were carried out to gain deeper insights into their perceptions, experiences, and reflections regarding the implementation of PBL in Islamic Religious Education. In addition, relevant instructional documents, including lesson plans, learning materials, students' assignments, and assessment records, were analyzed to support and validate the findings obtained through observations and interviews.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling, involving teachers who had experience implementing PBL in PAI classes and students who actively participated in the learning process. This sampling technique enabled the researchers to obtain rich and relevant information from participants who possessed direct experience with the phenomenon under investigation.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis involved several stages, including data reduction, coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation. Initially, all qualitative data were transcribed and organized systematically. The researchers then coded meaningful units of information, grouped similar codes into broader categories, and identified recurring themes that reflected the implementation, benefits, and challenges of PBL in PAI learning. Finally, the themes were interpreted in relation to the research objectives and relevant educational theories.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, the study employed several strategies, including data triangulation, source triangulation, and member checking. Triangulation was achieved by comparing information obtained from observations, interviews, and document analysis, while member checking was conducted by asking participants to verify the accuracy of the researchers' interpretations. These procedures strengthened the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the research findings<sup>19</sup>.



<sup>19</sup> Miles Mathew B. and Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis A Sowerbook of New Metodhs* (New York: Sage Publications., 1987).

### Figure 1. Reserch Analysis

Through this methodological framework, the study provides an in-depth understanding of how *Problem-Based Learning* can be effectively implemented in Islamic Religious Education and how it contributes to the development of students' understanding of Islamic values, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills in authentic learning contexts.

## Discussion

### Definition and Concept of *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL)

Definition and Concept of *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL) is a learning method that puts students in an active role to solve real-world problems<sup>20</sup>. The learning process begins by presenting a challenging problem, which is then solved through collaboration, research, and reflection. In the context of PAI, PBL can be directed to explore ethical, moral, and social issues relevant to students' daily lives. *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL) is a learning approach that puts students in situations where they are faced with real-world problems that require solutions. In several implementations of *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL)<sup>21</sup>, an additional stage known as practical application is incorporated to provide students with opportunities to implement the solutions they have developed in authentic real-world contexts. This stage enables students to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical experience by applying their knowledge to address actual problems within their communities or school environments. Consequently, students not only acquire conceptual knowledge but also develop the ability to translate that knowledge into meaningful actions. Such experiential learning strengthens students' understanding of the subject matter while fostering a sense of social responsibility and active citizenship<sup>22</sup>.

The effectiveness of PBL is further supported by a comprehensive assessment system consisting of both formative and summative assessments. Formative assessment is conducted continuously throughout the learning process to monitor students' progress, identify learning difficulties, and provide constructive feedback that facilitates improvement. In contrast, summative assessment is administered at the end of the instructional process to evaluate the

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<sup>20</sup> Tamblyn and Se, "Problem-Based Learning An Approach to Medical Education."

<sup>21</sup> Savery et al., "Problem Based Learning: An Instructional Model and Its Constructivist Framework."

<sup>22</sup> Andrew Wells Garnar, *Educational Technology, Spaces for the Future*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203735657-8>.

overall achievement of the intended learning outcomes<sup>23</sup>. Assessment in PBL extends beyond the measurement of conceptual understanding and encompasses students' problem-solving abilities, critical thinking skills, collaborative performance, communication skills, and the quality of the final product or proposed solution. Such a comprehensive evaluation framework ensures that both the learning process and learning outcomes are assessed holistically.

Conceptually, PBL creates a challenging and engaging learning environment that encourages students to become active participants in constructing knowledge. By confronting authentic and contextual problems, students are motivated to investigate issues critically, collaborate with peers, and develop innovative solutions based on evidence and logical reasoning<sup>24</sup>. Consequently, PBL promotes the development of higher-order thinking skills, lifelong learning competencies, and practical skills that are transferable to everyday life. Therefore, PBL serves not merely as an instructional strategy for delivering content but also as a pedagogical approach that promotes meaningful, contextual, and student-centered learning experiences.

### **Steps for Implementing *Problem-Based Learning* in Islamic Education (PAI)**

The implementation of *Problem-Based Learning* in Islamic Education can be systematically organized into several interconnected stages. The first stage involves identifying authentic Islamic-related problems that are relevant to students' daily experiences<sup>25</sup>. PAI teachers are encouraged to select contemporary issues that reflect Islamic values and social realities, such as poverty, social justice, environmental responsibility, ethical behavior, or moral challenges encountered within schools and society. Presenting contextual problems enables students to recognize the relevance of Islamic teachings in addressing real-life situations<sup>26</sup>.

Following problem identification, students are divided into small collaborative learning groups. Working in heterogeneous groups encourages active interaction, mutual respect, shared

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<sup>23</sup> Charles M Reigeluth and Yunjo An, *Merging the Instructional Design Process with Learner-Centered Theory* (Routledge, n.d.).

<sup>24</sup> Reza Rachmadtullah et al., "Elementary School Teachers' Perspectives on Utilizing Artificial Intelligence for Developing Learning Media," *Journal of Integrated Elementary Education* 4, no. 1 (July 7, 2024): 71–82, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jieed.v4i1.21994>.

<sup>25</sup> Anielson Barbosa Da Silva et al., "Problem-Based Learning: A Proposal for Structuring PBL and Its Implications for Learning among Students in an Undergraduate Management Degree Program," *REGE Revista de Gestão* 25, no. 2 (2018): 160–77, <https://doi.org/10.1108/REGE-03-2018-030>.

<sup>26</sup> N Khaledian, M., Morovat, Q., & Moradi, "Effects of Spirituality Therapy with Emphasis on Islamic Teachings on the Depression Symptoms and Adaptability of the Students with Abnormal Grief. 220-227 2," *World Scientific News*, 2016, 57.

responsibility, and *collaborative problem-solving*<sup>27</sup>. This stage also develops students' interpersonal and communication skills while fostering teamwork, leadership, and collective decision-making abilities.

The next stage is in-depth investigation, during which each group explores the selected problem through systematic inquiry. Students collect information from various credible sources, including academic literature, empirical evidence, and Islamic references such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and scholarly interpretations. The integration of Islamic sources distinguishes PBL in Islamic Education by ensuring that students' analyses and proposed solutions are grounded in Islamic principles and values.

After gathering relevant information, students engage in analysis and critical thinking. At this stage, they examine the causes and implications of the identified problem, evaluate alternative solutions, and critically assess each option from both academic and Islamic perspectives. This analytical process encourages students to move beyond rote memorization toward reflective thinking, evidence-based reasoning, and the practical application of Islamic ethical values in contemporary contexts<sup>28</sup>.

Based on their analysis, each group collaboratively develops practical and feasible solutions that align with Islamic teachings. The proposed solutions are expected to address the identified issues while reflecting the principles of justice, compassion, responsibility, and social welfare emphasized in Islam. Through this process, students learn to formulate realistic recommendations that can be implemented within their communities or educational settings<sup>29</sup>.

The final stage consists of group presentations and classroom discussions. Each group presents its findings and proposed solutions before the class, providing opportunities for peer evaluation, constructive feedback, and academic dialogue. These presentations enable students to strengthen their communication skills, defend their arguments using evidence and Islamic references, and reflect upon alternative perspectives offered by their classmates. Classroom discussions also facilitate collaborative knowledge construction and reinforce students' understanding of both the problem and its potential solutions.

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<sup>27</sup> Amany Annaggar and Rüdiger Tiemann, "Collaborative Problem Solving in Chemistry Education The Gamification Effect on Individual and Collaborative Modelling of Problem Solving Skills," no. September 2015 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.10212.60806>.

<sup>28</sup> Jane McCartney and Shirley Anne Boschmans, "Evaluation of an Intervention to Support the Development of Clinical Problem Solving Skills during a Hospital-Based Experiential Learning Program for South African Pharmacy Students," *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning* 12, no. 5 (2020): 590–601, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2020.01.016>.

<sup>29</sup> Howard Middleton, "Problem-Solving in Technology Education as an Approach to Education for Sustainable Development," *International Journal of Technology and Design Education* 19, no. 2 (2009): 187–97, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10798-008-9075-3>.

Overall, the implementation of *Problem-Based Learning* in Islamic Education extends beyond improving students' mastery of religious concepts. It cultivates critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, and problem-solving skills while simultaneously fostering the internalization of Islamic values. By connecting religious teachings with authentic societal issues, PBL transforms Islamic Education into a more contextual, meaningful, and relevant learning experience that prepares students to address the complex challenges of the twenty-first century while maintaining a strong foundation in Islamic ethics and principles.

### **Benefits of Problem-Based Learning in Islamic Education**

The implementation of *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL) in Islamic Education (PAI) offers numerous pedagogical advantages that extend beyond the acquisition of religious knowledge. As a student-centered instructional approach, PBL promotes meaningful learning by engaging students in authentic problem-solving activities that require the integration of Islamic teachings with real-life experiences. This approach enables students to construct knowledge actively while simultaneously developing cognitive, social, ethical, and practical competencies required in the twenty-first century<sup>30</sup>.

One of the primary benefits of PBL is its ability to foster a deeper understanding of Islamic values. Rather than merely memorizing religious concepts, students are encouraged to investigate authentic issues related to Islamic teachings, examine them from multiple perspectives, and apply Qur'anic principles and Prophetic traditions to contemporary situations. This process facilitates meaningful learning by enabling students to internalize Islamic values and recognize their relevance in everyday life.

PBL also contributes significantly to the development of analytical and critical thinking skills. Throughout the learning process, students are required to identify problems, analyze available information, evaluate evidence, and formulate well-reasoned conclusions. These activities encourage learners to think critically about moral, ethical, and social issues while considering solutions that are consistent with Islamic principles. Consequently, students develop higher-order thinking skills that enable them to address complex challenges with logical reasoning and ethical awareness<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Berti Dyah Permatasari, Gunarhadi, and Riyadi, "The Influence of Problem Based Learning towards Social Science Learning Outcomes Viewed from Learning Interest," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education* 8, no. 1 (2019): 39–46, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v8i1.15594>.

<sup>31</sup> Hera Heru Sri Suryanti and Siti Supeni, "A Problem Based Learning (PBL) Model in Developing Students' Soft Skills Aspect," *International Journal of Higher Education* 8, no. 8 (2019): 62–69, <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v8n8p62>.

Another important advantage of PBL is the enhancement of problem-solving skills. Students are actively involved in designing practical and innovative solutions to authentic problems by integrating Islamic values with empirical knowledge. This process strengthens their ability to evaluate alternative solutions, make informed decisions, and implement strategies that are both feasible and ethically responsible. As a result, learners acquire problem-solving competencies that are applicable not only in academic settings but also in their personal and social lives<sup>32</sup>.

Furthermore, PBL facilitates the integration of Islamic values into practical contexts. By engaging with real-world problems, students bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Instead of viewing Islamic teachings as abstract concepts, learners experience how values such as justice ('adl), compassion (rahmah), honesty (amanah), and social responsibility can guide decision-making and behavior in everyday situations. This contextual learning approach enhances students' ability to apply religious principles in diverse social environments<sup>33</sup>.

The collaborative nature of PBL also strengthens students' communication and teamwork skills. Working in small groups encourages learners to exchange ideas, negotiate differing viewpoints, and collaborate in developing shared solutions. These interactions cultivate interpersonal competencies, including active listening, constructive dialogue, leadership, and collective decision-making. Such skills are increasingly recognized as essential competencies for lifelong learning and professional success<sup>34</sup>.

Another significant benefit of PBL is its capacity to enhance intrinsic learning motivation. Because learning activities revolve around authentic and personally relevant problems, students become more engaged and take greater ownership of their learning. The opportunity to investigate meaningful issues and propose realistic solutions increases curiosity, promotes active participation, and fosters sustained interest in Islamic Education<sup>35</sup>.

In addition to cognitive development, PBL contributes to the strengthening of social and ethical competencies. Through collaborative inquiry and reflective discussion, students learn to appreciate diverse perspectives, respect differing opinions, and consider the ethical

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<sup>32</sup> Johan Irmansyah et al., "Children's Social Skills through Traditional Sport Games in Primary Schools," *Cakrawala Pendidikan* 39, no. 1 (2020): 39–53, <https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v39i1.28210>.

<sup>33</sup> Iryna Babik et al., "Means-End Problem Solving in Infancy: Development, Emergence of Intentionality, and Transfer of Knowledge," *Developmental Psychobiology* 61, no. 2 (2019): 191–202, <https://doi.org/10.1002/dev.21798>.

<sup>34</sup> Azizul Ghofar Candra Wicaksono, "Perbandingan Kemampuan Kognitif dan Metakognitif Mahasiswa Dengan Gaya Belajar Yang Berbeda," *Media Penelitian Indonesia* 10, no. 2 (2016): 142–53.

<sup>35</sup> Abdul Hakim bin Abdullah, "Pendidikan Islam Dalam Era Revolusi Industri 4.0," *Tamaddun* 21, no. 1 (2020): 127, <https://doi.org/10.30587/tamaddun.v21i1.1384>.

consequences of their decisions. The incorporation of Islamic ethical principles throughout the learning process supports the development of responsible, empathetic, and socially conscious individuals<sup>36</sup>.

Where opportunities permit, PBL also incorporates the implementation of real-world actions based on students' proposed solutions. This experiential component enables learners to translate classroom discussions into concrete actions within their schools or communities. Such authentic experiences reinforce conceptual understanding while cultivating a sense of civic responsibility and commitment to Islamic moral values<sup>37</sup>.

Moreover, PBL promotes contextual learning by ensuring that instructional activities are grounded in authentic situations encountered by students. Contextualized learning experiences enable learners to understand the practical significance of Islamic teachings and appreciate their relevance in addressing contemporary social issues. This approach makes learning more meaningful and increases the likelihood of long-term knowledge retention.

PBL further encourages learner autonomy and independent learning. Students assume greater responsibility for identifying learning needs, locating relevant information, evaluating evidence, and constructing knowledge independently. This self-directed learning process strengthens students' confidence, initiative, and lifelong learning skills, which are essential for adapting to rapidly changing educational and societal contexts<sup>38</sup>.

An equally important advantage of PBL is the opportunity for continuous formative assessment. Throughout the instructional process, teachers observe students' participation, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving performance while providing timely and constructive feedback. Continuous assessment enables educators to monitor learning progress, identify areas requiring improvement, and support students in achieving the intended learning outcomes more effectively<sup>39</sup>.

Overall, the implementation of *Problem-Based Learning* in Islamic Education provides comprehensive educational benefits that encompass cognitive, affective, social, and behavioral domains. Beyond enhancing students' understanding of Islamic teachings, PBL cultivates

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<sup>36</sup> Abdullah Hamid et al., "The Implementation of Mobile Seamless Learning Strategy in Mastering Students' Concepts for Elementary School," *Journal for the Education of Gifted Young Scientists*, December 2019, 967–82, <https://doi.org/10.17478/jegys.622416>.

<sup>37</sup> Saeful Anam et al., "The Moral Education and Internalization of Humanitarian Values in Pesantren: A Case Study from Indonesia," *Journal for the Education of Gifted Young Scientists*, December 2019, 815–34, <https://doi.org/10.17478/jegys.629726>.

<sup>38</sup> Kevin Dunbar, "Problem Solving Problem Solving," *A Companion to Cognitive Science*, no. May (1998): 289–98.

<sup>39</sup> Herbert A Simon and Allen Newell, "Human Problem Solving: {The} State of the Theory in 1970.," *American Psychologist* 26, no. 2 (1971): 145–59, <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0030806>.

critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, ethical reasoning, and problem-solving abilities. By integrating Islamic values into authentic learning experiences, PBL prepares students to become reflective, responsible, and morally grounded individuals who are capable of addressing contemporary societal challenges while remaining committed to the principles of Islam.

## Conclusion

In the face of increasingly dynamic educational demands, the *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL) method opens new doors to increase the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. Through PBL, students not only learn about Islamic teachings theoretically, but also engage in the process of challenging problem-solving, relating them to the realities of everyday life.

The implementation of PBL in PAI subjects follows detailed steps, starting from the identification of relevant Islamic issues, the establishment of collaborative working groups, to the presentation of solutions and the implementation of concrete actions. In this process, students not only hone their analytical skills and creativity, but also deepen their understanding of Islamic values. The benefits of PBL in PAI learning include a deep understanding of Islamic values, the development of analytical skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Involvement in work groups also improves students' social and communication skills. In addition, PBL stimulates students' intrinsic motivation because it brings learning into the context of their own lives.

In conclusion, PBL is not just a learning method, but an educational philosophy that accommodates a holistic understanding and application of Islamic values in students' daily lives. The implementation of PBL in PAI learning can be an innovative step to produce a generation that not only understands Islamic theory, but is also able to apply it in real actions in society.

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