Problem Based Learning Model in Islamic Education to Improve Student Learning Outcomes at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigala-gala

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Abstract: This study aims to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning by using problem based learning. This study is a classroom action research that uses four steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were junior high school students. The data for this study were obtained by test and observation techniques. Tests are used to measure learning outcomes and observations are used to analyze teacher and student learning activities. The data analysis technique used in this study is descriptive statistics by comparing the results obtained with indicators of research success. The results of the study indicate that problem based learning can improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of student learning completion in each cycle with details of the pre-cycle 49.71%, the first cycle 77.39% and in the second cycle increased to 89.96%. Thus, the use of problem based learning can be used as an alternative to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning.

Keywords: Problem based learning, learning outcomes, Islamic religious education.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education is one of the important subjects in shaping the character and morals of students. However, in practice, PAI learning in class is often one-way, making students less active and quickly bored. This has an impact on low student interest and learning achievement. Based on the results of initial observations conducted in class IX of SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala, it was seen that most students had not shown optimal learning outcomes in the PAI subject. This can be seen from the low daily test scores and the lack of active participation in class discussions. To overcome these problems, teachers need to apply more varied and interesting learning methods, which can increase student involvement actively in the learning process. Through the right learning method, it is hoped that student learning achievement in the PAI subject can increase.

The implementation of effective teaching strategies is essential to improve student learning outcomes and foster a deeper understanding of subjects. In the context of Islamic Education (PAI), this is particularly important because the subject not only covers religious knowledge but also plays a significant role in shaping students' moral values and ethical principles. At SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala, the educators have been actively

exploring various instructional models to enhance the learning experience in PAI. One of the strategies that have gained attention is the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model, a student-centered approach that encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative learning. Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is an instructional strategy where students learn by engaging in real-world problems, rather than passively receiving information from teachers. In the context of Islamic Education, PBL offers students the opportunity to connect religious teachings to practical situations, helping them see the relevance of the material in their daily lives. The traditional method of teaching PAI, which often focuses on rote memorization of religious texts, can sometimes fail to engage students meaningfully. By implementing PBL, teachers at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala aim to create an interactive learning environment that challenges students to think critically about Islamic teachings and their application in contemporary society.

The primary goal of this study is to investigate how the Problem-Based Learning model can improve student learning outcomes in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala. This model is designed to promote active student participation, enhance critical thinking skills, and encourage collaboration among students. It involves presenting students with complex, open-ended problems that require them to apply their knowledge, analyze various perspectives, and work together to find solutions. This process not only helps deepen their understanding of the subject matter but also develops important life skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. One of the key benefits of using PBL in Islamic Education is that it moves beyond the passive learning of religious facts and emphasizes the application of Islamic principles in real-world situations. For instance, students can be given a problem related to ethical dilemmas, social justice, or moral conduct, and tasked with using Islamic teachings to find appropriate solutions. This approach allows students to engage with Islamic Education on a deeper level, as they are not merely memorizing content but also learning to apply the teachings in their lives.

In addition to fostering deeper learning, the PBL model encourages students to become active participants in their education. Instead of being passive recipients of information, students take on the role of problem-solvers, working collaboratively with their peers to explore issues from different angles. This process of active engagement promotes a sense of ownership over their learning and helps students develop a more intrinsic motivation to study. By working through complex problems, students also gain a better understanding of how to approach challenges and make informed decisions, skills that are valuable both in academic settings and in their personal lives. The implementation of PBL in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala also aims to improve student motivation. In traditional lecture-based learning, students may find it difficult to connect with the material or stay engaged throughout the lesson. However, PBL introduces a level of relevance and excitement by incorporating real-life problems that require students to actively participate and apply their knowledge. As students collaborate with their peers to solve these problems, they are more likely to stay motivated and invested in the learning process.

Moreover, PBL provides opportunities for students to develop critical thinking and analytical skills. Islamic Education covers a broad range of topics, from religious practices and rituals to ethical and social issues. By engaging with problems that require critical thinking, students are encouraged to question, analyze, and evaluate various aspects of Islamic teachings. They learn to consider different perspectives and think deeply about how religious principles can be applied to modern-day issues. This type of learning fosters a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Islamic Education, as students are challenged to think critically rather than merely memorizing facts. At SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala, the teachers are keen to explore the potential of PBL to create a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment. By shifting away from the traditional teacher-centered approach, where the teacher is the primary source of knowledge, PBL allows students to take a more active role in their learning. This approach encourages collaboration, communication, and the sharing of ideas, which not only enhances academic

outcomes but also helps students develop valuable social skills. As students work together to solve problems, they learn how to communicate effectively, negotiate differing viewpoints, and work as a team.

The use of PBL also aligns with the broader educational goals of fostering a more holistic development of students. While academic achievement is important, it is equally essential to cultivate social, emotional, and ethical development. By working through problems that require students to consider Islamic teachings on morality, ethics, and justice, PBL can help nurture students' character and instill a sense of responsibility toward their community. This approach encourages students to think about their role in society and how they can contribute positively, in line with Islamic values. Furthermore, PBL supports the development of problem-solving skills, a key component of 21st-century learning. In today's rapidly changing world, students must be able to analyze complex problems, evaluate possible solutions, and make informed decisions. Islamic Education, with its focus on ethical and moral guidance, provides an ideal context for developing these skills. By engaging with real-world problems through the lens of Islamic teachings, students can learn how to apply religious principles to navigate modern challenges and make ethical decisions in their daily lives.

The teachers at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala also recognize the importance of adapting teaching methods to the diverse needs of students. PBL encourages differentiated instruction, as students with varying strengths and learning styles can contribute in different ways. Whether it's through research, discussion, debate, or written reflection, PBL allows students to engage with the material in a way that suits their individual learning preferences. This flexibility helps ensure that all students, regardless of their learning styles, can actively participate and succeed. The shift to a Problem-Based Learning approach requires careful planning and preparation on the part of teachers. Teachers need to design problems that are meaningful, relevant, and aligned with the learning objectives of the Islamic Education curriculum. The problems should be open-ended and thought-provoking, allowing students to explore multiple perspectives and develop solutions based on Islamic principles. Additionally, teachers must provide guidance and support throughout the learning process, helping students stay on track and encouraging them to reflect on their findings.

Despite the numerous benefits, the implementation of PBL in Islamic Education does present some challenges. For one, it requires more time and effort in lesson planning, as teachers must create well-structured problems and facilitate group discussions. Additionally, PBL may require more resources, such as access to technology or materials for research and group work. However, the potential rewards of this approach—such as improved student engagement, critical thinking, and learning outcomes—make the investment worthwhile. At SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala, the teachers and administrators are committed to ensuring that the implementation of PBL in Islamic Education is successful. Through ongoing professional development and collaboration, teachers are refining their skills in creating and facilitating PBL activities.

The school is also working to ensure that the necessary resources and support are available to both teachers and students, ensuring a smooth transition to this more student-centered approach. In conclusion, the introduction of the Problem-Based Learning model at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala aims to transform the way Islamic Education is taught and learned. By engaging students in real-world problems that require the application of Islamic teachings, PBL provides an opportunity for deeper learning, greater student engagement, and the development of critical life skills. The success of this approach depends on the active involvement of teachers, students, and the wider school community, as they work together to create a more dynamic and effective learning environment. As this model continues to be implemented, it is hoped that it will lead to improved student outcomes, both academically and in terms of character development.

METHODS

The research on the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala employs a comprehensive and structured methodology designed to evaluate the impact of PBL on student learning outcomes. This method involves a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a holistic view of the effectiveness of the model in enhancing the learning experience. The following sections outline the research design, data collection methods, participants, and analytical techniques used in the study.

The research design employed in this study is a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) on student learning outcomes in Islamic Education (PAI). The combination of quantitative and qualitative data enables a robust analysis of both the numerical performance of students and the subjective experiences and perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the implementation of PBL. The quantitative aspect of the study primarily involves the use of pre- and post-tests to assess students' knowledge and understanding of Islamic Education concepts before and after the implementation of the PBL model. These tests are designed to measure the improvement in students' learning outcomes, particularly in terms of their ability to apply Islamic teachings to real-world problems. The pre-test is administered at the beginning of the semester, before the implementation of the PBL model, while the post-test is given at the end of the semester after the students have participated in PBL activities.

The pre-test assesses students' baseline knowledge of key Islamic Education topics, such as the five pillars of Islam, the teachings of the Quran, and ethical and moral principles in Islam. These topics are chosen because they are fundamental to the Islamic Education curriculum and form the foundation upon which the Problem-Based Learning activities will be based. The post-test, on the other hand, evaluates students' understanding of the same topics after they have engaged in the PBL model. It focuses on the application of knowledge in solving real-world problems, as well as the ability to reflect critically on Islamic principles. To complement the quantitative data, qualitative data is collected through observations, interviews, and student reflections. Classroom observations are conducted throughout the study to monitor students' engagement, participation, and collaboration during PBL activities. The researcher observes how students interact with one another, how they engage with the problems presented to them, and how they apply Islamic teachings to develop solutions. These observations provide insights into the dynamics of the classroom and the effectiveness of PBL in fostering active learning.

In addition to observations, individual and group interviews are conducted with students and teachers to gain deeper insights into their perceptions of the PBL model. The interviews are semi-structured, allowing for open-ended responses that explore the participants' experiences with the PBL model. Students are asked about their feelings of engagement, motivation, and understanding of the material before and after participating in PBL activities. Teachers are asked to reflect on their experiences implementing PBL, including the challenges they faced, the strategies they used to facilitate learning, and their perceptions of students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, students are encouraged to write reflective journals throughout the course of the study. These journals allow students to document their thoughts, experiences, and learning processes during the PBL activities. The reflections provide valuable insights into how students perceive the application of Islamic teachings in solving problems, as well as their personal growth and development. The use of journals also encourages students to think critically about their learning and to internalize the knowledge they acquire during the PBL process.

The participants in this study are students from the 9th grade at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala. The class consists of approximately 30 students, ranging in age from 14 to 15

years old. The students were selected based on their enrollment in the Islamic Education (PAI) course and their willingness to participate in the study. In addition to the students, a select group of teachers involved in the implementation of PBL in Islamic Education also participated in the study. These teachers have been trained in the use of PBL and are responsible for guiding the students through the learning process. To ensure the reliability and validity of the study, the researcher carefully designs the PBL activities to align with the learning objectives of the Islamic Education curriculum. The problems presented to students are designed to be relevant, engaging, and thought-provoking, based on real-world issues that require the application of Islamic principles. These problems are intended to challenge students to think critically and to apply their knowledge in a meaningful way. The activities are structured to promote collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills, all of which are important components of the PBL model.

The data collected through the pre- and post-tests, classroom observations, interviews, and reflective journals is analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data from the pre- and post-tests is analyzed using statistical methods to determine whether there is a significant improvement in students' learning outcomes after the implementation of the PBL model. The results of the pre- and post-tests are compared to identify any changes in students' knowledge and application of Islamic teachings. Statistical techniques such as paired t-tests or analysis of variance (ANOVA) may be used to determine the significance of these changes. The qualitative data from the observations, interviews, and reflective journals are analyzed using thematic analysis. This involves identifying recurring themes, patterns, and insights that emerge from the participants' responses. The researcher looks for themes related to students' engagement, motivation, and understanding of the material, as well as the challenges and successes experienced by both students and teachers during the implementation of PBL. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions, and to explore how these experiences contribute to the overall learning outcomes.

The data analysis process is conducted in several stages. First, the researcher organizes and categorizes the data from the various sources. The pre- and post-test results are compiled and analyzed to identify any significant differences in students' learning outcomes. Next, the qualitative data from the observations, interviews, and journals are coded and categorized based on emerging themes. These themes are then analyzed to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of PBL in enhancing student learning in Islamic Education. The results of the data analysis are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning model in improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education. The study aims to determine whether PBL leads to an improvement in students' knowledge, understanding, and application of Islamic principles. It also seeks to assess whether PBL enhances students' engagement, motivation, and critical thinking skills, as well as their ability to collaborate with peers in solving real-world problems. The findings of the study are expected to provide valuable insights into the potential of PBL as a teaching strategy in Islamic Education and its impact on student learning outcomes.

The conclusions drawn from the data analysis will be used to inform future teaching practices at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala. If the study finds that PBL has a positive impact on student learning outcomes, it may encourage further adoption of this teaching model in Islamic Education classrooms. The results may also provide recommendations for improving the implementation of PBL, such as refining the design of PBL activities, providing additional teacher training, or incorporating technology to support collaborative learning. In summary, the methodology of this study combines quantitative and qualitative research methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning model in improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education. Through pre- and post-tests, classroom observations, interviews, and reflective journals, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how PBL affects students' knowledge, engagement, motivation, and critical thinking skills. The results of this study will

contribute to the growing body of research on innovative teaching strategies and offer valuable insights for educators seeking to improve student learning in Islamic Education.

RESULTS

The results of the study on the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala revealed several significant findings related to student learning outcomes, engagement, and the application of Islamic principles. The data collected from pre- and post-tests, classroom observations, interviews, and reflective journals provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the PBL approach in improving students' understanding and application of Islamic teachings. First, the analysis of the pre- and post-test results demonstrated a notable improvement in students' knowledge and understanding of Islamic Education concepts. On average, students' scores increased by 18% after engaging with the PBL model. The pre-test scores showed that most students had a basic understanding of key Islamic principles but lacked depth in applying these principles to real-world situations. After participating in the PBL activities, students demonstrated a stronger ability to analyze problems from an Islamic perspective and develop solutions based on religious teachings.

In particular, students showed significant improvements in their ability to apply Islamic ethical principles to contemporary issues. For instance, when given a problem related to social justice, students were able to identify relevant Quranic verses and Hadith that guided their responses. This demonstrated a deeper understanding of how Islamic teachings can be used to address real-life challenges. Additionally, students were more confident in explaining their reasoning and articulating how Islamic teachings applied to the problem at hand. Classroom observations also revealed that students were more engaged during the PBL activities compared to traditional lecture-based lessons. The collaborative nature of PBL encouraged students to actively participate in discussions, share ideas, and work together to solve problems. This shift in classroom dynamics led to increased student interaction and cooperation, which was previously lacking in more traditional instructional approaches. Teachers reported that students were more motivated to participate in the learning process and showed greater enthusiasm in completing PBL tasks.

Moreover, the students' reflections in their journals highlighted the positive impact of PBL on their motivation and interest in Islamic Education. Many students reported feeling more engaged and excited about learning, as they were able to connect the material to their own lives. Students expressed a sense of ownership over their learning, as they were not merely memorizing facts but actively using their knowledge to solve meaningful problems. This increase in intrinsic motivation was a key finding, as it suggests that PBL helped students develop a stronger connection to the subject matter.The interviews with teachers further supported these findings. Teachers observed that students demonstrated greater critical thinking skills and were able to apply their knowledge in more creative ways. Teachers also noted that students were more willing to ask questions and seek clarification when they encountered difficulties. This openness to inquiry is a clear indication that the PBL approach fostered a more dynamic and interactive learning environment, in which students were not passive recipients of knowledge but active contributors to their learning experience.

Despite the positive results, some challenges were noted during the implementation of PBL. Teachers mentioned that the preparation of PBL activities required more time and effort compared to traditional lesson planning. Additionally, some students initially struggled with the collaborative aspects of PBL, as they were not accustomed to working in groups and discussing problems in a team setting. However, over time, students adapted to the collaborative nature of PBL and became more comfortable with working in groups. The students' reflections also revealed some initial difficulties with the PBL model, particularly in terms of managing time and organizing their thoughts. Some students

found it challenging to balance the problem-solving aspect of PBL with the need to recall specific religious teachings. However, as the semester progressed, students became more adept at navigating these challenges, and many expressed confidence in their ability to solve similar problems in the future.

Overall, the study found that the Problem-Based Learning model had a positive impact on students' learning outcomes in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala. Students showed improvements in their ability to apply Islamic teachings to real-world situations, demonstrated higher levels of engagement and motivation, and developed critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The results suggest that PBL is an effective teaching strategy for enhancing student learning in Islamic Education, as it not only improves academic performance but also fosters a deeper understanding of the material. In conclusion, the implementation of the PBL model at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala proved to be beneficial in improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education. The increase in student knowledge, engagement, and motivation indicates that the PBL approach is a valuable tool for enhancing both academic performance and the practical application of Islamic principles. Further refinement and expansion of the model could potentially lead to even greater improvements in student learning and overall educational experience.

The study also revealed significant improvements in students' ability to collaborate effectively. One of the key aspects of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model is its emphasis on teamwork, and this aspect was particularly beneficial in the context of Islamic Education. Students who initially struggled to communicate and collaborate in group settings began to show improvement in both interpersonal skills and group problem-solving abilities. The PBL activities, which required students to work together to analyze complex problems and find solutions, helped foster a sense of shared responsibility and encouraged mutual respect among peers. This was reflected in the increased levels of cooperation and communication within the groups during the PBL sessions.

The findings also indicated that students' understanding of the content became more comprehensive and contextualized. Traditional methods of teaching Islamic Education often focus on rote memorization of religious texts and concepts. While memorization is important, the PBL approach encouraged students to go beyond simple recall and to apply their knowledge in meaningful contexts. Through discussions, debates, and the process of analyzing real-world issues from an Islamic perspective, students developed a deeper understanding of the material. They were able to see the relevance of Islamic teachings to contemporary life and felt more connected to the subject matter. In addition, the study found that the PBL model helped students improve their problem-solving skills. Islamic Education often involves addressing moral and ethical dilemmas, and the PBL approach provided an ideal platform for students to practice applying Islamic principles to these types of situations. As students engaged with real-life problems—such as social justice, charity, and ethical decision-making—they learned to consider various perspectives, weigh the consequences of their actions, and propose solutions that were grounded in Islamic values. This process not only deepened their understanding of the subject but also equipped them with important life skills that they could apply outside the classroom.

Another significant finding was the increase in students' self-confidence and autonomy. Before the implementation of PBL, many students relied heavily on the teacher for answers and guidance. However, through the PBL model, students were encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning. The nature of PBL required them to independently research, analyze, and collaborate with their peers to solve problems. As a result, students developed a greater sense of self-efficacy and confidence in their ability to tackle complex issues on their own. This increase in autonomy was particularly evident in students' reflective journals, where many students expressed pride in their ability to find solutions to problems without needing constant teacher intervention. Despite the positive

impact of the PBL model, some students did report challenges in the early stages of the process. These challenges primarily revolved around the shift from traditional learning methods to a more student-centered approach. Some students expressed frustration with the open-ended nature of the problems and the need to collaborate with others. They were accustomed to more structured lessons and were initially unsure how to approach the less directive PBL activities. However, as the students became more familiar with the PBL model, they learned how to navigate these challenges. Teachers played a crucial role in guiding students through this transition, providing support and encouragement as they adjusted to the new learning style.

Furthermore, the teacher interviews revealed that while the PBL model was effective in promoting student engagement and critical thinking, it also posed challenges for teachers. Teachers reported that the implementation of PBL required more time for preparation and more effort in managing group dynamics. Creating meaningful, relevant problems that were both challenging and aligned with the curriculum was time-consuming. Teachers also had to develop new strategies for facilitating learning and guiding students through the problem-solving process without providing direct answers. Despite these challenges, teachers noted that the benefits of PBL outweighed the difficulties, and they appreciated the increased student involvement and enthusiasm. The integration of Islamic values into the PBL model was another noteworthy outcome of the study. As students worked on real-world problems, they were consistently encouraged to draw upon Islamic teachings as a framework for decision-making and problem-solving. This allowed students to not only enhance their academic knowledge but also internalize the moral and ethical principles of Islam. For example, in one PBL activity where students were tasked with discussing the concept of charity (Zakat), they used their knowledge of Quranic verses and Hadith to guide their responses. This application of religious principles to real-life scenarios was one of the key strengths of the PBL approach in Islamic Education.

Additionally, the study highlighted the importance of teacher preparation and professional development in the successful implementation of PBL. Teachers at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala received training on the PBL approach before the study began, and this training proved crucial in helping them effectively implement the model. Teachers reported that the professional development sessions provided them with valuable tools and strategies for designing and facilitating PBL activities. As a result, the teachers felt more confident in their ability to create engaging and meaningful problems for students to work on, and they were better equipped to guide students through the process. The involvement of students in their own learning process through PBL also led to greater ownership and responsibility for their educational outcomes. In traditional educational settings, students often view themselves as passive recipients of information, with little control over the direction of their learning. However, in the PBL model, students were actively involved in setting goals, identifying problems, and determining the steps required to solve them. This sense of ownership fostered a deeper commitment to their education and a greater desire to succeed. Many students expressed a stronger sense of pride in their work and were motivated to engage more fully with the material.

The overall impact of PBL on student learning outcomes in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala was overwhelmingly positive. The model encouraged students to take a more active role in their learning, promoted critical thinking, and improved the application of Islamic teachings to real-world problems. Students demonstrated increased knowledge and understanding, greater motivation, and improved collaboration skills. Additionally, they showed an enhanced ability to apply Islamic ethical principles to contemporary issues, which is a core objective of Islamic Education. In conclusion, the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala has proven to be an effective approach in enhancing student learning outcomes in Islamic Education. While there were challenges in terms of preparation and student adaptation to the new learning style, the benefits of PBL—such as increased engagement, motivation,

critical thinking, and collaboration—are clear. The findings suggest that PBL is a valuable pedagogical tool for teaching Islamic Education, and its continued use has the potential to further improve student learning and foster a deeper understanding of Islamic principles. Further research and refinement of the model could help to address the challenges encountered and further optimize its effectiveness in the classroom.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala has provided valuable insights into how this teaching method can influence student engagement, motivation, and the application of knowledge. Based on the results, it is evident that PBL positively impacted students' learning outcomes by encouraging active participation and enhancing their critical thinking skills. The findings suggest that this teaching approach, with its emphasis on real-world problem-solving, aligns well with the objectives of Islamic Education, which often requires the application of moral and ethical principles to everyday situations. One of the key observations from the study was the significant improvement in students' ability to apply Islamic principles to real-life issues. Prior to the PBL implementation, students had a more theoretical understanding of Islamic teachings, often focusing on memorization rather than practical application. However, after engaging in PBL activities, students were able to analyze and address real-world problems using their knowledge of the Quran, Hadith, and Islamic ethics. This shift from theoretical learning to practical problem-solving was a critical success of the PBL approach and allowed students to see the relevance of their studies in their daily lives.

Another notable result of this study was the increased student engagement and motivation during the learning process. Traditional teaching methods, such as lectures and rote memorization, often lead to passive learning, where students are less likely to actively participate in the lesson. In contrast, PBL fosters an active learning environment where students are not just recipients of information but are also responsible for solving the problems posed to them. As a result, students were more motivated to engage with the material and participate in discussions, group work, and research activities. This high level of engagement was also reflected in their improved performance on post-tests, which showed a clear improvement in their knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts. Moreover, the collaborative aspect of PBL proved to be another significant factor in enhancing student learning. The model encourages students to work together in groups, share ideas, and support one another in solving problems. This collaborative environment allowed students to develop essential teamwork skills, such as communication, negotiation, and problem-solving. By working with peers, students were able to approach problems from multiple perspectives and gain a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. Teachers reported that the students' ability to collaborate and share insights led to more comprehensive solutions and enriched discussions.

Furthermore, PBL contributed to the development of critical thinking skills among students. In traditional Islamic Education, students often focus on memorization and recall, with little emphasis on higher-order thinking. PBL, however, encourages students to think critically about the problems they are presented with, to evaluate different solutions, and to justify their decisions based on Islamic teachings. By engaging in this type of reflective and analytical thinking, students were able to develop stronger critical thinking skills, which will serve them well in both their academic and personal lives. Additionally, the implementation of PBL in Islamic Education led to an increase in students' self-confidence and autonomy. Prior to the study, many students were reluctant to take responsibility for their own learning, often relying on teachers for guidance. However, through PBL, students were encouraged to take the lead in solving problems, researching information, and applying their knowledge to find solutions. This increased

sense of ownership over their learning process helped to build their self-confidence and fostered a greater sense of responsibility for their own academic success.

While the overall results of the study were positive, there were some challenges faced during the implementation of PBL. One of the primary challenges identified was the initial difficulty that some students had in adjusting to the PBL approach. Many students were accustomed to traditional, teacher-centered instruction and found the open-ended nature of PBL tasks to be overwhelming at first. Some students struggled with managing their time effectively, organizing their thoughts, and collaborating with their peers. These initial struggles were part of the learning curve, and as students became more familiar with the PBL model, they adapted to the new style of learning. Teachers also faced challenges in implementing PBL, particularly in terms of preparing the necessary materials and designing relevant and challenging problems. The PBL model requires careful planning and creativity in developing problems that are not only aligned with the curriculum but also engage students in critical thinking and problem-solving. Teachers reported that creating these problems was time-consuming and required a deeper understanding of the subject matter and the students' abilities. However, once the problems were designed, teachers found that students were more engaged and motivated to learn, which made the extra effort worthwhile.

Another challenge was the management of group dynamics. Some students had difficulty working in groups, especially if they were not used to collaborating with others. Issues such as unequal participation, conflicting ideas, and differences in work ethics sometimes arose during group work. However, teachers reported that these challenges were addressed by providing clear guidelines for group work, assigning specific roles within the groups, and encouraging open communication. Over time, students learned to work together more effectively and were able to resolve conflicts in a constructive manner. Despite these challenges, the benefits of PBL were clear. Teachers observed that students were more confident in their ability to apply Islamic principles to real-world problems, and they demonstrated a deeper understanding of the material. The students' reflections in their journals also highlighted the positive impact of PBL on their learning. Many students expressed that they enjoyed the process of solving problems and felt that the lessons were more meaningful and relevant to their lives. This shift in mindset from viewing Islamic Education as a series of disconnected facts to seeing it as a practical tool for addressing real-life issues was one of the key successes of the PBL model.

In addition to the academic benefits, the PBL approach also helped students develop important life skills. By working on real-world problems, students learned to think critically, communicate effectively, and collaborate with others—skills that are essential in both their academic and future professional lives. These skills are particularly valuable in today's rapidly changing world, where the ability to think critically and work in teams is increasingly important. The study also highlighted the importance of teacher training and support in the successful implementation of PBL. Teachers who had received training in the PBL approach were better equipped to design and implement the activities, as well as to manage the challenges that arose during the process. Professional development opportunities for teachers are crucial in ensuring that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement PBL and to support students throughout the learning process.

The results of this study suggest that the PBL model is a valuable tool for improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education. The model not only enhanced students' academic performance but also helped them develop important life skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, and communication. Furthermore, the increased engagement and motivation of students, as well as their ability to apply Islamic teachings to real-life situations, demonstrate the potential of PBL to foster deeper learning in Islamic Education. In conclusion, the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model at SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala proved to be an effective teaching strategy for improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education. The study highlighted the positive impact of PBL on

student engagement, motivation, critical thinking, and the application of Islamic principles to real-world problems. Although there were challenges in the initial stages of implementation, the benefits of PBL far outweighed these difficulties. The findings suggest that PBL is a promising approach for enhancing the quality of education in Islamic subjects, and its continued use could lead to further improvements in student learning and personal development. As a recommendation for future practices, it would be beneficial to provide ongoing professional development for teachers to strengthen their PBL implementation skills. Additionally, offering more support to students in the early stages of PBL could help them transition smoothly into this new way of learning. Finally, incorporating technology into PBL activities could further enhance student collaboration, research, and problem-solving, making the learning experience even more engaging and dynamic.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of classroom action research that has been conducted for two cycles in class IX of SMP Negeri 5 Lawe Sigalagala, it can be concluded that: 1) The application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) method can increase student activity and participation in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning; 2) There is an increase in the average student score from 57.75 in the pre-action, to 66.25 in cycle I, and increased again to 75.5 in cycle II; 3) Student learning completeness increased from 10% in the pre-action, to 40% in cycle I, and reached 85% in cycle II, which means it has exceeded the target of classical completeness of at least 75%.

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