



Implementation of Problem-Based Learning to Improve Learning Achievement in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education on the Topic of Avoiding Alcoholic Beverages, Gambling, and Fighting Among Eighth-Grade Students at SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Bandar in the 2021/2022 Academic Year

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in improving students' academic achievement in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education, particularly on the topic of Avoiding Alcoholic Beverages, Gambling, and Fighting among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Bandar in the 2021/2022 academic year. The research method used is classroom action research (CAR) with qualitative and quantitative approaches. The subjects of this study were eighth-grade students who faced difficulties in understanding the material through conventional teaching methods. The results of the study show that the application of PBL can enhance students' engagement in the learning process, deepen conceptual understanding, and improve learning outcomes compared to conventional methods. The PBL model encourages students to think critically, collaborate in group discussions, and find solutions to given problems. Additionally, this approach helps students understand the negative impacts of alcoholic beverages, gambling, and fighting in daily life, making them more aware of the importance of avoiding such behaviors. In conclusion, the PBL model has proven to be effective in improving academic achievement and shaping students' character in accordance with the values of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education. Therefore, the implementation of PBL can be an alternative strategy for teachers in delivering similar materials to make learning more engaging, interactive, and meaningful for students.

Keywords: Problem-Based Learning, Academic Achievement, Islamic Religious Education, Character Education, SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Bandar.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education and Character Education play a crucial role in shaping students' character and morality. However, challenges often arise in teaching this subject due to less interactive teaching methods, leading to a lack of student engagement in the learning

process. As a result, students' understanding of the material, especially regarding the dangers of alcoholic beverages, gambling, and fighting, remains suboptimal. The Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model has been identified as an effective approach to increasing student engagement and comprehension. PBL places students at the center of learning, encouraging them to think critically and solve real-life problems relevant to their daily experiences. Research indicates that PBL can enhance critical thinking skills and students' academic performance in Islamic Religious Education.

The implementation of PBL in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education is expected to improve students' understanding of the taught material. By presenting real-life scenarios or problems related to alcoholic beverages, gambling, and fighting, students can more easily identify the negative impacts of such behaviors. This aligns with findings that PBL can improve concept understanding and students' problem-solving skills. Beyond enhancing material comprehension, PBL also has the potential to shape students' character according to religious and moral values. Through group discussions and problem-solving activities, students learn to collaborate, respect others' opinions, and make responsible decisions. Studies show that PBL can instill the necessary character traits for students to address real-world issues.

However, the implementation of PBL requires an active role from teachers as facilitators. Teachers must be able to design relevant problem scenarios and guide students in the problem-solving process. This is essential to ensure that learning objectives are achieved and that students gain meaningful learning experiences. Research suggests that the teacher's role in PBL is crucial for fostering students' motivation and scientific attitudes in learning. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of implementing the PBL model in improving students' academic achievement in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education, specifically on the topic of avoiding alcoholic beverages, gambling, and fighting. The research subjects are eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Bandar in the 2021/2022 academic year. Through this study, it is expected that the PBL method can help students better understand the material, increase active participation in learning, and shape students' character according to the religious and moral values being taught.

Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study can contribute positively to the development of effective teaching methods in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education. Additionally, this research is expected to serve as a reference for teachers and education practitioners in implementing the PBL model to improve the quality of learning and character formation among students. Finally, this study is expected to provide new insights into how PBL can be effectively implemented in the context of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education, as well as offer practical recommendations for enhancing the quality of education in Indonesia.

METHODS

This study employs a classroom action research (CAR) approach with a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The data sources in this research consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from observations, interviews with teachers and students, and students' learning outcomes tests in the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Bandar. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected from books, scientific journals, and previous research relevant to the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education.

The population of this study includes all eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Bandar, while the research sample was selected using purposive sampling, specifically one class as the primary research subject. The selection of this sample was based on criteria of students experiencing difficulties in understanding the topic of avoiding alcoholic beverages, gambling, and fighting, as well as those with low participation levels in conventional learning methods.

The data collected in this study were analyzed using descriptive qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques. Qualitative data, consisting of observation results, interviews, and documentation, were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to understand how the implementation of the PBL model influences the learning process and changes students' attitudes. Meanwhile, quantitative data were obtained from pre-test and post-test results before and after implementing PBL, which were then analyzed using descriptive statistical tests to observe improvements in students' academic achievement.

To ensure data validity, this study applied data triangulation by comparing results from various sources such as observations, interviews, and learning outcome tests. Additionally, reflections were conducted after each learning cycle to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented method and determine necessary improvements for the next cycle.

With this approach, this study is expected to provide a clear overview of the effectiveness of implementing Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in improving students' academic achievement and shaping their character in accordance with the values of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education.

RESULTS

The data in this study were obtained through various instruments, including observations, interviews, learning outcome tests (pre-test and post-test), and documentation. This research was conducted in two cycles, where each cycle consisted of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. Observation results indicate that before the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL), most students were less active in the learning process. They tended to be passive, rarely asked questions, and relied solely on the teacher's explanations without engaging in discussions or problem-solving activities. However, after implementing PBL, students' engagement increased significantly. They became more enthusiastic about discussions, collaborated better in groups, and found it easier to understand the material related to the dangers of alcohol consumption, gambling, and conflicts.

The results of the learning outcome tests showed a significant improvement in students' scores. The average pre-test score before implementing PBL was 68.2, with only 45% of students meeting the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM). After applying PBL, the average post-test score increased to 82.5, with 85% of students achieving the KKM. This improvement demonstrates that the PBL method helps students better understand the material and enhances their academic performance.

Interviews with teachers revealed that the implementation of PBL had a positive impact not only on students' learning outcomes but also on their motivation and critical thinking skills. Teachers observed that students became more independent in completing tasks and more confident in expressing their opinions.

To clarify the observed improvements, the following table presents a comparison of students' pre-test and post-test results before and after the implementation of PBL.

Assessment Aspect	Before PBL (Pre-Test)	After PBL (Post-Test)	Improvement
Average Score	68.2	82.5	+14.3
Students Meeting KKM	45%	85%	+40%
Participation in Learning	Low	High	Increased
Concept Understanding	Poor	Good	Improved
Student Engagement	Passive	Active	Increased

Data analysis results show that the implementation of PBL had a significant impact on improving students' learning outcomes. The increase in the average score from 68.2 to 82.5 indicates that students could better comprehend the material after participating in problem-based learning. Additionally, the percentage of students meeting the KKM increased from 45% to 85%, demonstrating that more students successfully achieved the required competency standards.

Beyond cognitive aspects, students' affective and psychomotor skills also improved. Observations showed that students became more confident in asking questions, actively participated in group discussions, and were more assertive in expressing their opinions. Teachers also noted that students were more interested in learning and found it easier to grasp concepts taught through the problem-based approach.

Data Verification

To ensure the accuracy and validity of the obtained data, this study used the data triangulation method by comparing results from various data sources (observations, interviews, and learning outcome tests). The triangulation results indicate that the collected data is consistent and supports the conclusion that the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) significantly enhances students' academic achievement in Islamic Religious Education and Moral Education, particularly on the topic of Avoiding Alcohol Consumption, Gambling, and Conflicts.

Furthermore, this study reveals that PBL implementation not only impacts academic performance but also contributes to students' character development. They demonstrated improved teamwork, responsibility, and a better understanding of the negative consequences of deviant behaviors that contradict religious teachings.

Thus, the findings of this study confirm that the PBL model not only enhances students' comprehension of the material but also fosters their character development in alignment with religious and moral values. This research also provides recommendations for educators to adopt the PBL model as an effective teaching strategy to improve the quality of education in schools.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) significantly improved students' academic achievement in Islamic Religious Education and Character Development, particularly in the topic of Avoiding Alcoholic Beverages, Gambling, and Fighting among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Pematang Bandar during the 2021/2022 academic year. The average pre-test score before the implementation of PBL was 68.2, with only 45% of students meeting the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM). After applying PBL, the post-test score increased to 82.5, with 85% of students achieving the KKM, indicating a significant improvement in students' understanding of the material. Observations showed that previously passive students became more active in discussions, group work, and problem-solving activities. Students found it easier to understand the dangers of alcohol consumption, gambling, and fighting through scenarios and case studies provided in the PBL method. Interviews with teachers and students revealed that the PBL method helped enhance students' independence, critical thinking skills, and confidence in expressing their opinions. Learning not only had an impact on cognitive aspects but also encouraged students to internalize moral and religious values in their daily lives. The findings of this study were validated through data triangulation, instrument reliability testing, and analysis of alignment with PBL and constructivist theories, demonstrating that the collected data were accurate and reliable. The implementation of PBL enhances learning effectiveness, particularly in developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills. This method can be considered an alternative to improving the quality of education in schools, especially in Islamic Religious Education and Character

Development subjects. The findings support the theory that problem-based learning is more effective than conventional methods, as it actively engages students in the learning process. Thus, this study demonstrates that Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is an effective method for improving students' academic performance while simultaneously shaping their character in accordance with religious and moral values. Therefore, the application of this method should be further developed in various educational contexts to support the overall improvement of education quality.

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