

OPTIMIZATION OF PAI LEARNING THROUGH THE PROBLEM BASED LEARNING METHOD IN GRADE VII PUTRI ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL MODERN DAARUL MUTTAQIEN 2 TANGERANG

Meilia Susiana ^{a*)}, J. Anhar Rabi Hamsah Tis'ah ^{a)}, H. Mujakir ^{a)}

^{a)} *University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang, Tangerang, Indonesia*

^{*)}*e-mail korespondensi: : susianameilia@gmail.com*

Article history: received 06 January 2025; revised 12 February 2025; accepted 18 April 2025

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.33751/ijmie.v4i1.12722>

Abstract. This research is motivated by the importance of improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning so that it is not only oriented toward knowledge but also able to foster students' critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative skills. The purpose of this study is to optimize Islamic Religious Education learning through the Problem Based Learning (PBL) method. The research method used is a qualitative approach, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving PAI teachers, student affairs teachers, and seventh-grade female students at Pesantren Modern Daarul Muttaqien 2 Tangerang. The results of the study show effective outcomes, where the PAI teacher successfully created a more active, collaborative, and contextual learning environment. The implementation of the Problem Based Learning method helps students understand religious material through an approach focused on solving problems relevant to their daily lives, making the learning process more meaningful and engaging. The teacher acts as a facilitator who guides students in finding solutions to problems related to the subject matter, thereby making learning more meaningful. The application of Problem-Based Learning in PAI for seventh-grade female students has proven to enhance the quality of the learning process while providing a more contextual and in-depth learning experience, in line with the objectives of Islamic education in pesantren.

Keywords: optimization of learning; Islamic religious education; problem based learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic religious education is a planned and conscious effort to prepare students to be able to believe, understand and practice Islamic teachings through guidance, teaching and training activities. Abdul Fatah stated that the general purpose of Islamic education is the realization of human beings as servants of Allah. Therefore, in the Islamic view, education must be able to make everyone a servant to Allah, with that servitude interpreted as an activity of worshipping him. (Milana [1]). Musthafa Al-Ghulayaini stated that Islamic education is the process of instilling good qualities in children during their growth period and giving them guidance and advice, so that these values become part of their personality, which then results in virtues, kindness, and love to contribute to the country. (Zulkifli [2])

Islamic religious education will provide many benefits to those who study it, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said from Mu'awiyah, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said,

مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفْقَهُهُ فِي الدِّينِ

"Whoever Allah wills to get all the good, then Allah will understand him about religion." (HR. Bukhari no. 71 and Muslim no. 1037).

The Prophet (saw) gave the parameter that the person who is given goodness by Allah is a person whose religion is understood by Allah, therefore on the other hand when Allah does not give goodness, Allah will keep him away from religion, therefore the way to get goodness from Allah is to learn and understand Islamic religious education, because with that a person will become calmer in his heart, know the purpose of his life. This hadith is one of the many virtues for someone who studies Islamic religious education and many others. (Sagita [3])

Optimization comes from the basic term optimal which means the best. Therefore, optimization is a process to achieve a job with great results and profits without reducing the quality and quality of the work. The definition of optimization according to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language is optimization comes from the word optimal which means best, highest, so optimization is a process to elevate or improve.

Winardi defines that optimization is the value obtained from the implementation of activities that meet the highest criteria by the goals achieved (Forasidah [4]). One of the main challenges in optimizing Islamic religious education learning is the dominance of conventional teaching methods, such as lectures. This approach is often one-way, so it is less actively involved in the learning process. As a result, students' motivation to learn becomes low, their understanding of the material becomes superficial, and the value of religious values is difficult to internalize deeply. This situation clearly creates challenges for students to create a more effective and meaningful learning experience. In the era of globalization, students are required to be able to think critically, creatively, communicatively, collaboratively, and solve problems. In order for students to achieve maximum quality, teachers' efforts are needed to carry out learning optimally, especially in terms of choosing appropriate teaching methods. Traditional teaching methods that tend to be one-way are considered less relevant to the needs of current students. Therefore, innovation in learning methods needs to be pursued, one of which is through the *problem based learning* (PBL).

Optimizing *problem-based learning* methods can be done in various ways. One of them is to carry out training for teachers so that they understand and can implement this method well. In addition, the provision of resources that support the learning process is also very important.

In the learning process, PAI teachers must always build a close relationship with students as a means to facilitate communication, between teachers and students by always being gentle, wise, and being a good example or example (*uswatun hasanah*) (Zubairi [5]). PAI teachers are educators who are responsible for teaching Islamic Religious Education subjects in schools. PAI teachers not only teach Islamic materials such as faith, worship, morals, and Islamic history, but also act as guides in the formation of students' character and morals in accordance with Islamic values.

Problem-based learning is an approach that puts students in a position as problem solvers. Through the *Problem Based Learning* method, students are faced with real situations that are relevant to daily life, so that the learning process is more contextual and applicative. In addition, *problem-based learning* encourages students to play a more active role in the classroom, so that they can follow the learning process well. Kamdi argues that *problem based learning* It is defined as a learning that involves students to try to solve problems through several steps of the scientific method so that students are expected to be able to learn knowledge related to the problem and at the same time students are expected to have skills in solving problems. (Susanto [6])

In line with this opinion, *problem based learning* refers to a learning approach that is oriented towards the process of solving problems by gaining the necessary knowledge. *problem based learning* is a learning method in which students learn through inspiration, group discussions, and utilizing relevant information. In order to attempt to solve problems both real and hypothetical, students are trained to combine knowledge and skills before they apply them to problems. (Rifai [7])

Limited time in the learning process is also a factor that inhibits a dense curriculum and the demands of high learning achievement often make teachers reluctant to implement *problem-based learning* which requires more time allocation than conventional lecture methods. In fact, *problem-based learning* requires students to actively think critically, and find solutions that take enough time. Lack of learning resources, lack of training and professional development and lack of project management skills are obstacles in the implementation of *problem-based learning methods*.

Based on the results of observations, it was found that the lecture method is still predominantly used in the learning process of Islamic religious education. Teachers talk and deliver material more, while students listen and take notes more. This causes students to have less opportunities to think critically and creatively, and less opportunities to develop communication and cooperation skills.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This method uses field research. Because this study uses a field research approach, the data obtained is really in accordance with the reality of the phenomena at the research location related to the Optimization of PAI Learning Through Methods *Problem Based Learning* in Class VII of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School Tangerang. This approach uses a qualitative approach, qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behaviors. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative research is a research method that produces descriptive data in the form of words, writings, and behaviors of the people observed (Winarta [8]). Qualitative descriptive research, which is to answer a problem that requires an in-depth solution in the context of the situation in question, is carried out reasonably without manipulation and in accordance with the facts. The data collection technique is carried out through triangulation (combined), data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize more on meaning than generalization.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Optimizing Islamic Religious Education Learning Through the *Problem Based Learning* (PBL) Method in Class VII of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School Tangerang

Based on interviews with resource persons at the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School in Tangerang, PAI learning in grade VII girls through the *problem based learning* method, PAI teachers present real problems that are relevant to the subject matter, then guide students to discuss, seek information, and find solutions both individually and in groups. This learning is not only focused on delivering material, but also on developing critical thinking skills, cooperation, and student independence

in solving problems.

In line with the opinion of Poerdwadaramin, optimization is the result achieved in accordance with the wishes effectively and efficiently (Ilmatius [9]). Optimization refers to the implementation of the teaching and learning process in the best way, so that students can understand the material in depth, be actively involved in learning, and the learning outcomes can be improved.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the optimization of Islamic religious education learning using *the problem based learning* (PBL) method in grade VII of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School Tangerang shows real results in the learning process and achievement of students.

Steps to Optimize Islamic Religious Education Learning Through *the Problem Based Learning* (PBL) Method in Class VII Putri Pesantren Modern Daarul Muttaqien 2 Tangerang

The steps taken to optimize PAI learning with the PBL method in grade VII of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School are as follows:

a) Student orientation on the problem

At the beginning of *the problem-based learning* process, the teacher communicates the learning objectives clearly, builds a positive attitude towards learning, and describes something that is expected to be done by the students. The problems or questions given do not have an absolute "right" or "wrong" answer and some problems have many solutions. As long as students will be encouraged to ask questions, seek information independently, and teachers provide assistance.

b) Organizing students to learn

Teachers develop collaboration skills between students and help them to investigate problems together. In addition, teachers help students.

c) Guiding individual and group investigations

Assist in research independently or in groups. Teachers assist students in carrying out investigations both individually and in groups.

d) Presenting results

This submission includes a final report containing the problem situation, problem solving goals, and alternative solutions that have been formulated. Santriwati presented the results of problem-solving solutions.

e) Analyze and evaluate the problem-solving process.

Analysis and evaluation of the problem-solving process. The teacher guides the students to analyze and evaluate the thinking process of the students in carrying out a problem and the intellectual abilities used. During the analysis and explanation phase of learning, learners will be encouraged to express their ideas openly and freely.

The above PBL steps are in line with Arends' opinion (Ramadhani [10]). These five steps have been proven successful in increasing the active participation of students during learning activities. The author can conclude that by applying these steps, students not only understand Islamic religious education materials, but are also trained to think critically, work together, and make decisions independently. Therefore, the PBL method has a positive impact on improving the quality of learning in grade VII for the girls of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School Tangerang.

Supporting Factors and Inhibiting Factors for Optimizing Islamic Religious Education Learning Through *the Problem Based Learning* (PBL) Method in Class VII of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School Tangerang

The optimization of PAI teachers' learning using the PBL method in grade VII for the girls of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School in Tangerang is driven by several supporting factors, including:

- The professional competence of PAI teachers, PAI teachers who apply PBL have good pedagogic and professional skills. In the girls' class VII at the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School in Tangerang, PAI teachers showed good professional skills in designing learning with a problem-based approach. This can be seen from the material that raises issues related to daily life. Teachers not only deliver material, but also provide opportunities for discussion and encourage students to find solutions.
- The availability of sufficient learning time, the availability of adequate time to study is one of the important factors that support the successful implementation of *the problem-based learning* method. In grade VII of girls at the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School in Tangerang, the learning duration for PAI subjects is sufficient to support the implementation of PBL. The learning plan that has been adjusted to the needs of the pesantren provides an opportunity for teachers to use methods that focus on thinking and problem solving. In addition, more regular and disciplined study habits in Islamic boarding schools support students to use their time more efficiently, including for group discussions and assignments.
- A supportive pesantren environment, an atmosphere of pesantren that prioritizes Islamic values, independence, and togetherness strongly supports the implementation of PBL. Pesantren as a religious social environment and create a conducive space for collaborative learning. The social conditions in Islamic boarding schools that are full of interaction between individuals provide wide opportunities for learning through social interaction. In line with Vygotsky's theory of social learning, which emphasizes the importance of interaction between students in the learning process. (Hidayat [11])

The inhibiting factors are:

a) Variety of academic abilities

One of the inhibiting factors of the PBL method is the difference in academic ability. In grade VII of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School in Tangerang, the abilities of the students are very diverse, ranging from those who have good critical thinking skills to those who need help in understanding basic concepts [12]. This is a big challenge for teachers, because the PBL method requires students to be actively involved, think critically, and work both independently and in groups. Students

who have low abilities often find it difficult to follow the complicated PBL learning process.

b) Lack of availability of learning facilities

The lack of availability of learning facilities in grade VII for girls of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School in Tangerang is a factor inhibiting the PBL method. The PBL method requires sufficient learning facilities, such as a space for discussion that facilitates cooperation, access to information sources (books, internet, digital media), and visual aids. The limitations of these facilities are often an obstacle in their implementation.

c) Lack of special training for teachers in the PBL method.

One of the inhibiting factors in the implementation of *the problem-based learning method* in grade VII for girls of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School in Tangerang, is the lack of specific training or support for teachers regarding this approach. Many teachers still do not fully understand the concepts, steps, and position of teachers in the PBL process. Specialized training is very important because the role of teachers in PBL is far different from conventional teaching methods. In PBL, teachers do not only provide material, but act as facilitators who help students in finding problems, finding information, analyzing solutions, and reflecting on learning outcomes [13].

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research on "Optimizing PAI Learning Through the Problem Based Learning Method in Class VII of the Daarul Muttaqien 2 Modern Islamic Boarding School Tangerang". Therefore, it can be concluded as follows: 1) Optimization of PAI learning through the problem based learning (PBL) method in grade VII girls showed effective results. PAI teachers have succeeded in creating a more active, collaborative, and contextual learning environment. The use of the PBL method helps students in understanding religious material with an approach that focuses on solving problems that are relevant to their daily lives, so that the learning process feels more meaningful and interesting. 2) Steps to optimize learning through PBL carried out by PAI teachers, namely, orienting students to problems, organizing students to learn, guiding individual and group investigations, presenting results and finally analyzing or evaluating the problem-solving process. 3) Supporting factors for optimizing learning through PBL include competent teachers, support for an Islamic boarding school environment that is conducive to active learning, and the availability of sufficient learning time. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors are the variation in academic ability, the lack of availability of learning facilities and the lack of special training for teachers in the PBL method.

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