ISSN : 2503-5282 (Cetak)
2598-0971 (Online)

ATTHULAB:
Islamic Religion Teaching & Learning Journal
Vol. 11 No. 01 (2026)
http://journal.uinsgd.ac.id./index.php/atthulab/

The Effectiveness of Integrating Gamification and Project-Based Learning to Enhance Student Engagement and Value Internalization in High School Islamic Education

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Abstract: Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesian senior high schools faces persistent challenges of low student engagement and superficial value internalization, largely resulting from conventional teaching methods that rely on dogmatic delivery and rote memorization. This study aims to evaluate the pedagogical effectiveness of integrating gamification and project-based learning in enhancing student engagement and facilitating authentic value internalization within high school PAI. A qualitative single case study design was employed at a senior high school in Bandung, involving 34 students selected through purposive intensity sampling. Data were gathered through the triangulation of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation, then analyzed using interactive thematic analysis. The findings reveal that gamification significantly reduced academic anxiety and increased emotional engagement, creating a psychologically safe classroom climate. This affective readiness was subsequently leveraged by project-based learning, where direct engagement in authentic social projects triggered deep social empathy and spontaneous behavioral commitments that extended beyond academic requirements. The synergy of these methods produced a qualitatively distinct learning experience that facilitated organic value internalization without external pressure. This study contributes to Islamic education scholarship by offering a student-centered pedagogical model that integrates emotional engagement with concrete character actualization, challenging the dominance of conventional rote learning and providing actionable implications for PAI curriculum redesign and teacher professional development.

Keywords: Gamification; Holistic Pedagogy; Islamic Religious Education; Project-Based Learning; Value Internalization

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/ 10.15575/10.15575/atthulab.v11i2.53875
Received: 01, 2026. Accepted: 03, 2026. Published: 04,2026.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) within the Indonesian senior high school educational system holds a critical mandate not merely for knowledge transfer, but for profound character and value transformation (Ainissyifa et al., 2024; Gunawan et al., 2023; Jusubaidi et al., 2024). Ideally, PAI serves as a comprehensive value system designed to equip students with the ethical framework necessary to navigate and filter contemporary modern challenges. However, a significant pedagogical gap exists between *Das Sollen* (the ideal objective) and *Das Sein* (the classroom reality). PAI is frequently confronted with conventional teaching practices that predominantly rely on dogmatic delivery (Hamami & Nuryana, 2022), rigid rote memorization, and monotonous learning methods (Amaly et al., 2023; Karwadi et al., 2025). Such methods were historically accepted due to the homogeneity of societal understanding and strong obedience to scholars at that time (Aziz et al., 2025; Baiza, 2022), but they are critically insufficient today.

The core problem arising from this methodological stagnation is the alarming rate of low student engagement and superficial value internalization in PAI classrooms. This superficiality is severely exacerbated by the modern era's information overload, which directly impacts public digital literacy (Shahrzadi et al., 2024). Particularly among the younger generation, excessive exposure to information in a short time erodes attention spans and encourages superficial consumption (Layinah et al., 2025; Pang et al., 2025). Consequently, students experience cognitive and psychological overload, causing PAI to be perceived as irrelevant background noise rather than a guiding life principle.

To dismantle these psychological barriers, pedagogical interventions must transition from passive delivery to active affective engagement. Gamification has emerged as a promising pedagogical innovation that seeks to increase student engagement through game elements (Ahma & Kadriu, 2025; Shtayyat & Gawanmeh, 2025), functioning as an essential affective catalyst (Alexiou & Schippers, 2018). It effectively reduces academic anxiety (Hawthorne et al., 2025) and facilitates the first stages of Krathwohl's affective taxonomy, from receiving to valuing (Ukgoda, 2025), by encouraging students to participate and react to the material (Raje & Tamilselvi, 2024). Furthermore, this gamified format helps reduce cognitive load and increase content retention through dual associations between game elements and verbal concepts (James et al., 2025). However, its optimal achievement often halts at the level of basic value appreciation, as it lacks the contextual mechanism required to internalize these values into persistent character traits and master basic Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies (Aliyah et al., 2024; Taylor et al., 2017).

Therefore, Project-Based Learning (PJBL) is required as a complementary approach to facilitate value actualization. PJBL focuses on authentic experiences through real projects (Evenddy et al., 2023) and inherently requires students to apply values in beneficial social activities (Ma & Wu, 2025), translating them into responsible real actions. This confrontation with real-world social conditions acts as a disorienting dilemma that shakes basic beliefs (Feng et al., 2025) and triggers transformative learning (Eschenbacher & Fleming, 2020). When students struggle to solve community problems, cognitive-affective alignment occurs (Avry et al., 2020), forcing them to independently reorganize value priorities (Rombout et al., 2021) and reconstruct their mindset (Rombout et al., 2022). Supporting this dynamic, pedagogical literature confirms that PJBL demonstrates how value internalization requires authentic

contextualization as a testing ground to transform knowledge into living beliefs (Guo et al., 2020). The synergy between gamification and PJBL ultimately answers the demand for taxonomic balance and represents a tangible manifestation of holistic learning (Zhang et al., 2023).

Previous studies have extensively, yet independently, explored the efficacy of these methods. Almulla (2020) demonstrated PJBL's capability in enhancing engagement through authenticity and collaboration, while Ihsan et al. (2025) confirmed that systematic instructional design models in PAI can strengthen 21st-century competencies and student engagement. Similarly, Sari et al. (2023) confirmed PJBL's impact on creative thinking skills. Conversely, studies by Bitrián et al. (2021) and Sailer & Homner (2020) confirmed gamification's positive impacts on user engagement, motivation, and cognitive outcomes. However, a critical evaluation reveals that these prior studies maintain a highly fragmented perspective, stopping at cognitive, creative, or general engagement achievements without linking them to deeper religious value internalization. Even when technical integrations exist such as the My Gamify framework in computing courses they operate strictly within the realm of technical skills and academic performativity (Ishaq et al., 2025). The literature lacks a unified, synergistic pedagogical ecosystem specifically designed to process emotional dynamics, alleviate religious learning anxiety, and drive authentic value internalization simultaneously within Islamic education.

This study explicitly advances the State of the Art in Islamic education scholarship by introducing a novel, holistic pedagogical model that synergizes gamification and PJBL. The novelty lies in empirically mapping the operational mechanism between the two approaches, strategically positioning gamification as a psychological bridge to dismantle affective barriers, directly followed by PJBL as the macroscopic vehicle to convert that emotional readiness into spontaneous, real-world behavioral commitments. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the pedagogical effectiveness of integrating gamification and project-based learning to enhance student engagement and value internalization in Indonesian high school Islamic education. Specifically, this research pursues three objectives. First, to examine how gamification functions in altering the dynamics of students' emotional engagement and reducing academic anxiety in PAI learning. Second, to explore how PJBL facilitates the internalization of Islamic values through authentic social experiences. Third, to analyze how the synergy between gamification and PJBL operates to create a holistic and transformative PAI learning model.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a single case study design to evaluate the integration of gamification and Project-Based Learning (PJBL) in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). A case study design was selected because it enables researchers to investigate complex phenomena within their real-life context, capturing the depth and nuance of bounded systems that cannot be separated from their natural settings (Yin, 2018). This design aligns with the research objective to deeply explore students' subjective emotional dynamics and the complex process of value internalization within a bounded, real-time learning cycle. The research locus was a public senior high school in Bandung City, conducted from April to June 2025. This specific site was selected contextually as it represents a typical urban educational setting where students are highly exposed to digital information overload, providing an ideal testing ground for digital-pedagogical innovations in Islamic education.

The participants comprised 34 students within a single classroom setting. They were selected using a purposive intensity sampling technique, which deliberately targets information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of interest with particular intensity (Patton, 2015). Out of five classes taught by the researcher during the academic period, this specific class was chosen because it demonstrated the most profound transformational response and perspective changes. Therefore, it served as an information-rich ideal case to investigate the maximum pedagogical potential of the gamification and PJBL synergy, rather than functioning as a statistical representation of the population.

The learning intervention was implemented progressively over a four-week period. To avoid excessive pedagogical narration, the intervention can be summarized into two simultaneous operational layers. The first layer utilized gamification through Padlet and Blooket platforms as a micro-support structure at the beginning and end of sessions to build psychological safety, mitigate academic anxiety, and stimulate competitive engagement. The second layer employed PJBL as the macro vehicle, challenging students to plan and execute real authentic social actions for community beneficiaries to actualize the religious values discussed in class.

Data were collected using three triangulated techniques to ensure the credibility of the subjective experiences (Valencia, 2022). First, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with three key informants intentionally chosen for the significant variance in their pedagogical perspectives. Second, a focus group discussion (FGD) involving six students from two different project groups was held to capture peer dynamics and socially constructed understandings. While the number of informants is selective, it was theoretically justified to prioritize qualitative depth and meaning-making over statistical breadth (Creswell, 2009). Third, participant observation yielded ten comprehensive field notes documenting nonverbal behaviors and real-time classroom interactions across both intervention phases.

Data analysis was performed systematically using the interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which comprises three concurrent flows of activity, namely data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Initially, raw transcripts and field notes underwent a rigorous data condensation process where irrelevant narrative elements were filtered, and significant statements were highlighted. Subsequently, the data were displayed through iterative thematic codification, which operationally distilled the qualitative data into six cohesive themes covering gamification impacts, PJBL experiences, integration synergy, implementation challenges, student preferences, and classroom climate. Finally, conclusions were continuously drawn and verified against the raw data to ensure strict interpretive alignment.

Furthermore, to ensure research transparency and protect human subjects, rigorous ethical considerations were observed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participating students and their guardians prior to the learning intervention and data collection. The participants were explicitly briefed regarding the voluntary nature of their involvement and their absolute right to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any academic penalty. To guarantee confidentiality and anonymity, all participant identities were masked using coding systems in all transcripts and publications. Finally, data trustworthiness was established through methodological triangulation across the three data sources, member checking with key participants to validate interpretive accuracy, maintaining a rigorous audit trail of code

evolution, and continuous researcher self-reflection to mitigate practitioner bias (Kocaman, 2024).

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The triangulation analysis derived from three in-depth interviews, six group interview participants, and ten field notes, conducted through an iterative qualitative codification process, yielded six major themes. This section presents the empirical data systematically across the thematic structure before proceeding to the theoretical discussion.

Thematic Overview of Learning Integration

The initial qualitative codification process identified key dimensions that consistently emerged across all data sources. Table 1 synthesizes these findings by displaying the main dimensions, representative student statements, and the frequency of their occurrences across the personal interviews (PI) and focus group discussions (FGD).

Table 1. Synthesis of Key Findings and Triangulation Frequency

Theme	Main Dimension	Representative Finding	Frequency
T1. Gamification	Emotional Engagement	The fun of playing makes the material easy to remember	3 PI + 5 FGD
T1. Gamification	Anxiety Reduction	Initial fear decreases, comfort increases	2 PI + 4 FGD
T1. Gamification	Material Retention	Material is ingrained through experiential association	3 PI + 6 FGD
T2. PJBL	Social Empathy	Moved by seeing the condition of the beneficiaries	3 PI + 5 FGD
T2. PJBL	Behavioral Commitment	Motivated to share continuously	2 PI + 4 FGD
T3. Integration	Balance of Enjoyable + Meaningful	Comfortable yet material is still absorbed	3 PI + 6 FGD
T3. Integration	Internalization Without Pressure	Material enters automatically without coercion	2 PI + 5 FGD
T4. Challenges	Emotional Barriers	Initial shyness overcome via peer support	2 PI + 3 FGD
T5. Preferences	Student Preference	Preference over traditional methods	3 PI + 6 FGD
T6. Classroom Climate	Climate Foundation	Safe atmosphere is crucial	3 PI + 6 FGD

As shown in Table 1, Theme 3 (Integration) achieved the highest overall frequency, indicating that the students predominantly experienced the learning not as two separate methods, but as a unified pedagogical event. Theme 6 (Classroom Climate) and Theme 5 (Student Preferences) also demonstrated consistently high frequencies across data sources. Meanwhile, Theme 4 (Challenges) appeared with a notable but lower frequency, revealing the authentic barriers encountered during implementation.

Gamification Data

A more detailed examination of the gamification phase reveals four main dimensions that consistently dominated the student experience. Table 2 presents these dimensions alongside their triangulated evidence across the three data sources.

Table 2. Gamification Implementation Dimensions

Dimension	Code	PI	FGD	Field Notes	Evidence
Emotional Engagement	GM-1	3	5	Laughter & smiling	Shared fun, material easily remembered
Anxiety Reduction	GM-3	2	4	Relaxed posture	Initially afraid, now comfortable learning
Material Retention	GM-5	3	6	Accurate recall	Material sticks via game-content link
Group Cohesion	GM-4	2	3	Group unity	Class is unified and cohesive

Prior to the intervention, interview data revealed that students viewed PAI as a rigid, memorization-heavy subject, leading to passive compliance rather than active engagement. Following the introduction of game mechanics through Padlet and Blooket, field notes recorded a drastic transformation. The classroom atmosphere became characterized by spontaneous laughter, relaxed postures, and highly active participation. As one student explicitly noted, "Initial fear decreases, comfort increases," while another stated that learning PAI became "more fun and not boring." A third student articulated, "The material sticks more in the head because we remember the correct answer to a question from the game played." Field observations further confirmed that no student attempted shortcut strategies to win games, suggesting that the competitive engagement was balanced with genuine content curiosity.

Project-Based Learning Data

The PjBL phase centered on the theme "Competing in Goodness and Work Ethic," which required students to design and execute real-world social actions. Table 3 summarizes the key dimensions that emerged during this phase.

Table 3. Dimensions of Project-Based Learning Implementation

Dimension	Code	PI	FGD	Field Notes	Evidence
Social Empathy	PJ-1	3	5	Tears visible	Moved by seeing the condition of beneficiaries
Emotional Breakthrough	PJ-2	3	5	Emotional response	Deep emotional response during sharing
Behavioral Commitment	PJ-4	2	4	Spontaneous action	Desire to continue sharing in the future
Value Significance	PJ-5	2	3	Unforgettable	An unforgettable experience

When interacting with marginalized communities, such as visiting orphanages or assisting local residents in need, field observations recorded moments of meaningful silence, visible tears, and deep emotional resonance. One student stated, "When giving the donation, we were moved and sad seeing their condition. We also became

motivated to continue sharing." Another student reported that the project "will never be repeated with such like-minded people," highlighting the uniqueness and lasting impression of the experience. The FGD data reinforced these individual accounts, with students collectively describing how they "directly felt the impact of the material by going into the field."

Implementation Challenges Data

Despite the positive trajectory, the data also revealed genuine implementation barriers. Students reported emotional resistance during the initial stages of the social project. As one student vividly expressed, "The hardest thing was when we wanted to distribute [the aid], I felt shy there, nervous to talk to people." A student group leader noted difficulties regarding workload management, stating, "For task distribution, we tried to figure out how everyone could work without feeling burdened." Technical barriers related to wifi connectivity and device availability were also mentioned during the FGD. However, field notes consistently documented that students overcame these challenges through peer support and the teacher's consistent, non-judgmental presence.

Student Preferences and Classroom Climate Data

All three interview respondents explicitly ranked the integrated gamification-PJBL method as their most preferred approach compared to other PAI teachers' methods. One student described her ideal learning state as "relaxed, but the material still arrives, not sleepy, fun, not stressful, and no sudden tests." Another stated a preference because the method "fits Gen Z like us." Regarding classroom climate, students consistently identified a safe and comfortable atmosphere as the primary factor enabling their engagement. Field notes corroborated this, documenting visible safety indicators such as equal speaking distribution among students, absence of mockery, and a consistently supportive teacher tone throughout all sessions.

DISCUSSION

Having presented the empirical data across the six themes, this section interprets the findings through relevant pedagogical theories and situates them within the broader scholarly conversation on Islamic education.

Gamification as an Affective Bridge for Emotional Readiness

The empirical data forcefully confirms that gamification in PAI operates fundamentally beyond a mere recreational or ice-breaking function. Rather, it acts as a critical affective catalyst. This phenomenon effectively operationalizes the Broaden-and-Build theory proposed by Fredrickson and Joiner (2018). According to this framework, positive emotions such as joy and interest are not merely end-states but active mechanisms that expand a student's cognitive and behavioral repertoire. By significantly reducing academic anxiety (GM-3), gamification dismantles the psychological barriers, often referred to as the affective filter, that traditionally block student engagement. In this newly created safe space, students are no longer utilizing their mental energy to manage performative anxiety or fear of giving incorrect answers regarding sacred subjects.

Once these affective barriers collapse, students' working memory capacity is fully liberated. This optimal mental state is subsequently capitalized upon by the visual-interactive format of the gamification tools, leading directly to enhanced

material retention (GM-5). This finding is theoretically anchored in the dual coding principle and the cognitive theory of multimedia learning (Mayer, 2024). The game elements, such as progressing avatars, point systems, and competitive leaderboards, provide strong, engaging visual stimuli, while the PAI questions themselves serve as the necessary verbal stimuli. Unlike static lecture methods that frequently trigger cognitive overload and disengagement among modern, digitally native students (Pang et al., 2025), gamification distributes the processing load efficiently across dual sensory channels (Lawson et al., 2021). Consequently, gamification successfully constructs the essential psychological readiness, paving the way for students to engage deeply and authentically with complex Islamic values.

Project-Based Learning as a Transformative Value Experience

While gamification effectively prepares the mental soil and ensures cognitive readiness, PjBL serves as the substantive, macro-level vehicle for planting the roots of character internalization. The data captured during the PjBL phase empirically illustrates the profound transition from cognitive understanding (knowing what is right) to affective realization (feeling the moral weight of what is right). Through PjBL, students were actively challenged to manifest their classroom knowledge of Islamic values into concrete acts of social care (Zhang et al., 2023). A fundamental psychological shift occurred from passive, observational sympathy to active, participatory empathy (Hazani, 2024).

This profound shift is theoretically driven by the mechanism of cognitive dissonance (Cooper, 2019). The visual confrontation with stark field realities that sharply contradicted the students' own privileged, comfortable classroom environments created a state of productive psychological discomfort. This friction between ideal textual values and grounded social reality forced the collapse of adolescent apathy, replacing it with an authentic human connection. The expression of being "moved and sad" signifies a breakthrough in fulfilling the social awareness competency within the broader Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) framework (Napolitano et al., 2021). Furthermore, the explicit declaration of being "motivated to continue sharing" (PJ-4) demonstrates that PjBL successfully triggers transformative learning (Eschenbacher & Fleming, 2020). The learning experience forcefully moved beyond the boundaries of a situational, graded school assignment and evolved into a settled, persistent character disposition. Ultimately, this proves that the deep internalization of PAI values cannot occur optimally within the sterile isolation of a classroom. It strictly requires authentic, messy social realities to serve as a contextual testing ground for moral reification (Rombout et al., 2021).

The Synergistic Mechanism and Fulfilling Psychological Needs

The transformative behavioral outcomes observed at the final stage of the learning cycle, where students transition from active game players to empathetic social actors, are not isolated or accidental phenomena. Rather, they are the direct result of a meticulously structured pedagogical continuum. The qualitative data reveals a mutually reinforcing, linear pattern where gamification acts as the psychological preparation phase, and PjBL acts as the substantial acquisition and contextualization phase. The integration creates an ecosystem that students explicitly described as "comfortable yet material still sticks" and "fun yet meaningful." This highly specific, positive psychological state provides robust empirical evidence for the successful

application of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) in the context of religious education (Ryan & Deci, 2018).

According to SDT, optimal, self-sustaining intrinsic motivation is only achieved when three fundamental human needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness, are simultaneously met within the learning environment (Ntoumanis et al., 2021; Yuerong et al., 2024). In this integrated PAI model, the pedagogical roles are strategically distributed across the intervention phases to ensure holistic fulfillment. Autonomy is powerfully accommodated during the initial gamification phase through the use of anonymous digital platforms such as Padlet, granting students the full authority to engage without the paralyzing fear of social judgment. Competence is continuously fulfilled via the instant feedback mechanisms inherent in the game-based formative assessments such as Blooket, where the sensation of accumulating points validates their cognitive mastery in real-time. Relatedness is intensely nurtured during the PjBL phase, where true connectedness matures through intense group collaboration to solve field logistics, culminating in the emotionally charged social encounters with beneficiaries in the community.

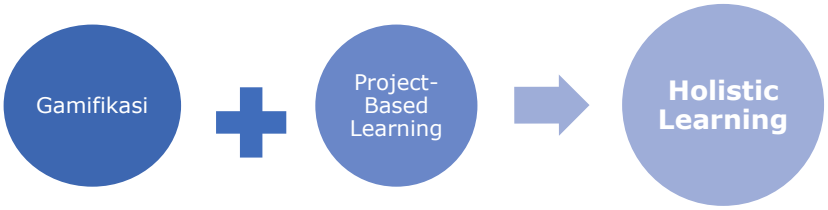

Figure 1. Synergy Of Gamification And Pjbl

As conceptualized in Figure 1, this synergy builds a sustainable, unbroken motivational flow. Gamification functions efficiently to shatter initial psychological resistance and generate a surge of positive motivational momentum. Crucially, this momentum is not left to dissipate. Instead, it is strategically captured and converted by the PjBL framework into a meaningful, concrete goal orientation. This relay mechanism successfully mitigates the "post-game motivation drop" that typically plagues standalone, superficial gamification interventions. By systematically addressing all three psychological needs, this integration effectively actualizes the ultimate, holistic goal of PAI, which is cultivating the *insan kamil* (the perfect human) who is simultaneously cognitively intelligent, emotionally mature, and socially responsible in addressing contemporary challenges (Asmawi & Tarlam, 2023; Zuhdi, 2023).

Mitigating Implementation Challenges through Relational Pedagogy

Despite its proven transformative potential, the implementation of this integrative pedagogical model encountered complex, deeply human obstacles. The emotional barriers reported by students (PK-1) and the friction of group workload distribution (PK-2) represent genuine pedagogical challenges. From a theoretical perspective, the anxiety experienced during the transition from classroom to field

represents a sharp elevation in the affective filter (Krashen, 1984), where the fear of social judgment severely obstructs a student's ability to translate their internalized values into spontaneous action. The concern about workload fairness implicitly reflects an intuitive awareness of social loafing, the documented psychological tendency for individuals to exert less effort in collective settings compared to individual tasks (Puccini & Newell, 2025).

However, empirical observations revealed that these challenges were effectively mitigated through layered support mechanisms. The primary mitigation force was the cohesive peer support that had been carefully cultivated during the initial gamification phase. The emotional bonds formed during low-stakes classroom competitions naturally transformed into vital social capital in the field, allowing students to convert individual fear into collective courage.

Most importantly, the success of this mitigation ultimately rested upon a deeply supportive classroom climate (Theme 6). The students' acknowledgment of a "safe atmosphere" served as the absolute prerequisite for overcoming field anxieties. This finding profoundly affirms the critical role of relational pedagogy and the ethic of care within educational interventions (Bergmark, 2020; Hadid et al., 2025). The data dictates that pedagogical effectiveness relies not solely on the structural sophistication of combining gamification and PjBL, but entirely on authentic, caring relationships between teachers and students (Aspelin et al., 2021). The teacher's humanistic competence in building trust, validating student identities, and providing a non-judgmental presence acts as the *sine qua non* that allows these structural interventions to succeed (Niemi, 2021). Consequently, this study provides an urgent implication for PAI teacher professional development. The focus of future training programs must decisively shift from purely administrative and technical mastery towards the robust strengthening of humanistic pedagogical competencies (Sihombing et al., 2024). Educators must be systematically trained as empathetic facilitators who are capable of bridging the profound gap between sacred religious texts and the complex emotional landscapes of modern students (Sultana, 2022).

CONCLUSION

This study set out to evaluate the pedagogical effectiveness of integrating gamification and project-based learning in enhancing student engagement and facilitating value internalization in high school Islamic Religious Education. The findings provide substantive answers to the three research objectives.

Regarding the first objective, this study found that gamification functions as a powerful affective catalyst that fundamentally alters the emotional dynamics of PAI learning. By introducing game mechanics through platforms like Padlet and Blooket, gamification significantly reduced academic anxiety, increased spontaneous participation, and created a psychologically safe classroom climate. Students who previously feared PAI reported feeling comfortable and engaged, and their material retention improved substantially through game-content association.

Regarding the second objective, project-based learning was found to facilitate deep internalization of Islamic values through authentic social experiences. Direct engagement with community beneficiaries triggered genuine social empathy, emotional breakthroughs, and spontaneous behavioral commitments that extended beyond academic requirements. Students independently expressed a sustained desire

to continue charitable actions, demonstrating that the values discussed in class had been internalized as personal convictions rather than remaining abstract knowledge.

Regarding the third objective, the synergy between gamification and PJBL was found to produce a qualitatively distinct and holistic learning experience that neither method could achieve independently. Gamification established the motivational momentum and psychological readiness, while PJBL channeled that energy into meaningful, concrete actions. This pedagogical continuum successfully fulfilled the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness as outlined in Self-Determination Theory, resulting in organic value internalization without external pressure.

The primary scholarly contribution of this research lies in offering an adaptive, student-centered pedagogical framework that challenges conventional rote learning while fulfilling the transformative goals of character education, such as the Pancasila Student Profile. Crucially, however, this study underscores that methodological sophistication alone is insufficient. The ultimate success of this pedagogical integration remains deeply contingent upon a psychologically safe classroom climate and authentic, humanist teacher-student relationships. Practically, educators are recommended to employ low-stakes gamification platforms to mitigate early learning resistance, followed by designing community-based projects that align with students' social maturity. For future research, it is highly suggested to investigate the longitudinal impacts of this integration across diverse cultural settings and varied educational levels to further validate its sustainable pedagogical efficacy.

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