

An Islamic Perspective on Project-Based Learning in Islamic Religious Education

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Abstract:

Amid globalization and evolving educational paradigms, innovative learning models integrating Islamic values are increasingly essential, particularly in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). This study aims to: (1) examine Project-Based Learning (PjBL) characteristics from an Islamic perspective, (2) analyze PjBL syntax regarding Islamic education principles, and (3) formulate implementation strategies in PAI. Employing a qualitative library research method, the study analyzes books, scientific articles, journals, and previous research. Results indicate that PjBL aligns closely with Islamic educational values by engaging students actively, encouraging collaboration, fostering deliberation, promoting responsibility (*amanah*), and producing beneficial work as good deeds. These elements reflect the Islamic tradition's balance among knowledge mastery, practical application, and spiritual formation. Furthermore, every PjBL syntax stage—from planning and execution to evaluation—mirrors Islamic educational principles. Applying PjBL enhances academic achievement while strengthening character, social attitudes, and spiritual values, offering an effective, meaningful, and relevant alternative for modern education's challenges. These findings provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers developing innovative, value-based PAI curricula.

Keywords: Islamic perspective; Islamic religious education; project-based learning

INTRODUCTION

Amid the dynamics of globalization and educational transformation, the need to develop innovative, context-specific learning methods to support student competency development has emerged. One approach gaining increasing attention is Project-Based Learning (PjBL), in which students learn by completing real-world problem-based projects. In Islamic Religious Education (PAI), the ideal of education is characterized by the expectation of integrating Islamic values—such as ethics, spirituality, and the spirit of *rahmatan lil alamin*—into every teaching process. The integration of Islamic values such as ethics, spirituality, and the spirit of *rahmatan lil alamin* into every teaching process can be optimized through the implementation of PjBL. This model not only improves academic understanding but also shapes students' character and behavior in accordance with Islamic teachings, making education more contextual, meaningful, and relevant to the challenges of modern life (Sistriyanti et al., 2025). Several previous studies have examined the application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in the context of religious education. For example, previous research by Budiono, Sanusi, Ghafur, and Ardianto (2024) reviewed the application of the Project-Based Learning Method (MPBP) in Islamic religious education. The results of this study indicate that MPBP can increase student learning motivation and facilitate a more active and contextual learning experience by directly involving students in real-life projects related

to everyday life and relevant to Islamic concepts and values. MPBP enables students to understand and apply religious teaching concepts and values directly in problem-solving, group collaboration, and the development of social and leadership skills, thus optimally internalizing Islamic values—such as ethics, spirituality, and social sensitivity (Budiono et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Mohammad Kurjum, Mughnillabib Muhammad, and Ali Hasan Siswanto (2023) evaluated in detail the effect of implementing the Project-Based Learning (PJBL) model on student learning outcomes in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education at SMK BP Subulul Huda Kembangawit. This quantitative research used pretest-post-test, observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation to measure variations in learning outcomes and teacher pedagogical competencies. The results showed that the PJBL method is an appropriate and significant strategy for Islamic Religious Education and Character Education materials, as evidenced by the significant increase in student learning outcomes following its implementation. In addition to improving academic achievement, PJBL also encourages the development of affective and psychomotor aspects through an active, collaborative, and contextual learning process. However, this study also noted several challenges, including limited student motivation and readiness when faced with difficult projects. In general, this study confirms that PJBL not only strengthens cognitive outcomes, but also fosters character, Islamic values, and 21st-century skills in students (Kurjum et al., 2023).

In addition, based on research conducted by Fika Hidayati (2023) entitled "Implementation of the Project Based Learning Model in Islamic Religious Education Learning at SMK Ma'arif Bukateja Purbalingga", it is known that the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PJBL) model is able to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process of Islamic Religious Education which previously tended to be teacher-centered to be more interactive and student-centered. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, which are then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The results of this study indicate that the implementation of PJBL is carried out through three main stages, namely preliminary activities (including opening with greetings, reading the Qur'an, prayer, and linking materials), core activities (starting from determining essential questions, designing and implementing projects in groups, monitoring project progress, to assessing results), and closing activities (prayer, motivation, and reflection). Through these stages, Islamic values such as cooperation, honesty, discipline, responsibility, and spirituality can be effectively integrated into learning activities, so that students not only understand the material cognitively but are also able to internalize religious values in their daily lives (Lestari et al., 2023).

Although these studies provide an overview of the potential and constraints of implementing PJBL, there is still a gap in studies that in-depth integrate Islamic perspectives as a philosophical and ethical foundation in the use of this method. The novelty of this research lies in the effort to align the ideals of Islamic values with the factual reality of PJBL implementation in Islamic Education, thereby producing a learning model that not only improves academic learning outcomes, but also strengthens the formation of character and spirituality of students. Thus, the objectives of this study are (1) to analyze the Islamic perspective on the characteristics of the Project-Based Learning (PJBL) learning model, (2) to examine the syntax of the PJBL model from an Islamic perspective, and (3) to formulate a strategy for implementing PJBL in Islamic Religious Education. This research is expected to have theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the study's results will enrich the discourse on pedagogical innovation in the Islamic educational tradition and contribute to the development of an integrative learning framework. Meanwhile, practically, the findings produced can be used as a basis for educators and policymakers in designing and implementing an Islamic Religious Education curriculum that is more adaptive to the dynamics of developments over time and relevant to Islamic values.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Project-Based Learning (PJBL) is an innovative, student-centered learning model that emphasizes active student involvement in completing projects related to real-world problems. This model was developed based on constructivism theory, which views knowledge as being constructed by students through experience, social interaction, and reflection on their learning activities. In PJBL, students not only receive information from teachers but also play an active role in seeking, processing, and applying knowledge to produce meaningful products or solutions. According to Hosnan (2014), Project-Based Learning is a

learning model that uses projects as the core of learning activities. Through these projects, students are given the opportunity to conduct investigations, solve problems, make decisions, and produce real-world work. PjBL emphasizes contextual learning so that students can connect subject matter to everyday life. This approach is also considered effective in developing critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration, communication, and problem-solving abilities that are highly needed in the 21st century (Nurhamidah & Nurachadijat, 2023).

Several studies have shown that the implementation of PjBL can significantly improve student learning outcomes. Sastradiharja and Febriani (2023) explain that this model provides opportunities for students to learn independently while working collaboratively in groups, thereby increasing their motivation and engagement in the learning process. Furthermore, Alwafi (2023) found that PjBL can create a more active and enjoyable learning atmosphere because students are directly involved in various activities that require exploration and creativity. In the context of modern education, PjBL is considered a relevant approach to addressing the challenges of globalization and technological development. Learning is no longer oriented solely on mastery of material, but rather on students' ability to apply knowledge in real life. Therefore, PjBL has become a model that is widely recommended in various educational fields, including Islamic Religious Education (PAI) (Tanto et al., 2025).

Islamic Religious Education is an educational process aimed at developing students' understanding, appreciation, and application of Islamic teachings in their daily lives. Islamic Religious Education emphasizes not only cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor aspects related to the development of students' morals, character, and spirituality. According to Al-Attas (1999), the primary goal of Islamic education is to shape civilized individuals (*insan adabi*) through the instillation of knowledge and values derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Therefore, the success of Islamic education is measured not only by academic achievement but also by the quality of students' personalities and morals. However, Islamic Religious Education often faces various challenges. One of these is the dominance of teacher-centered learning methods. In practice, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning still relies heavily on lectures and memorization, leading to a passive learning environment for students. As a result, religious values are often understood only at the level of knowledge without being followed by real appreciation and practice in daily life (Arsyad et al., 2020).

Social change, technological developments, and the demands of 21st-century competencies demand innovation in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. Teachers need to develop learning strategies that integrate knowledge, skills, and character in a balanced manner. In this context, Project-Based Learning is an alternative that can be used to improve the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning. Islam strongly emphasizes the importance of learning activities that involve reason, experience, and reflection. The Qur'an repeatedly encourages humans to think, observe, and learn from various phenomena in the universe. Words such as *tafakkur*, *tadabbur*, *ta'aqqul*, and *tazakkur* indicate that the learning process in Islam is not passive, but rather requires the active involvement of students. Aini et al. (2024) explain that Islamic education essentially encourages contextual and applicable learning. Knowledge is not only studied for knowledge, but also to be practiced and provide benefits for life. Therefore, a learning model that provides opportunities for students to experience, explore, and practice knowledge has a strong alignment with the principles of Islamic education (Manan, 2025).

The principle of active learning is also reflected in the educational methods used by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). On various occasions, the Prophet Muhammad not only conveyed Islamic teachings verbally but also involved his companions in direct practice. This method enabled his companions to understand Islamic teachings more deeply because they learned through real-life experiences. This approach bears similarities to the basic principles of Project-Based Learning, which places direct experience as the primary means of learning. Several studies have shown that the characteristics of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) align with Islamic values. One of the main characteristics of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is experiential learning. In Islam, experience is an important means of acquiring knowledge and wisdom. Many verses of the Quran encourage humans to travel, observe nature, and learn from life. Furthermore, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) emphasizes collaboration and cooperation within groups. These values align with the concepts of *ta'awun* (mutual assistance) and *shura* (deliberation) in Islam. Allah SWT commands Muslims to help one another in goodness and piety, as mentioned in the Qur'an. Al-Maidah verse 2. Through project activities, students learn to work together, respect differences of opinion, and be responsible for the tasks given (Hariyanto, 2024).

Another characteristic that aligns with Islamic teachings is its orientation toward utility. In Project-Based Learning (PjBL), projects undertaken by students generally result in products or solutions that have utility. This aligns with the concept of good deeds, one of the primary goals of Islamic education. The knowledge learned must be able to benefit both individuals and society. Thus, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) not only helps students understand religious concepts but also trains them to implement Islamic values in real life. Studies of the history of Islamic education show that the practice of experiential and project-based learning is not new in the Islamic tradition. Hakim and Anra (2015) explain that the classical Islamic education system integrates theoretical learning with real-world practice. The learning process is carried out not only through reading scriptures but also through discussion, observation, research, and various other productive activities. Great Islamic figures such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of holistic education. Education aims not only to develop intellectual abilities but also to shape character and practical skills. This concept has similarities with the objectives of PjBL which develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in an integrated manner (Amaliah et al., 2026).

In traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), students are often involved in various productive activities, such as agricultural management, entrepreneurship, social activities, and even scientific writing. These activities reflect learning oriented toward real-world experiences and practices. Therefore, the application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Islamic Religious Education can be seen as an effort to revive the spirit of classical Islamic education in a modern educational context. The Project-Based Learning model consists of several systematic stages: project orientation, planning, implementation, monitoring, presentation of results, and reflection. Each stage is related to the principles of Islamic education. The project orientation stage can be linked to the concept of intention (*niyyah*). In Islam, every activity must begin with a good intention to obtain blessings and be considered an act of worship. Therefore, teachers need to guide students to understand the project's objectives not only from an academic perspective but also from a spiritual perspective. The project planning stage reflects the concept of deliberation (*shura*). Students are invited to discuss the steps to be taken, divide tasks, and develop a strategy for project implementation. This process trains critical thinking skills while instilling democratic values and responsibility (Sa'adah & Hidayah, 2025).

During the project implementation phase, students are required to work honestly, with discipline, and responsibly. These values are part of the Islamic concept of trustworthiness. Project implementation can also serve as a means to cultivate work ethic and sincerity in pursuing knowledge. The monitoring phase positions the teacher as a *murabbi* (guide), providing direction and motivation to students. In Islamic educational tradition, teachers function not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as role models and character builders. The presentation phase provides students with the opportunity to share the knowledge and experiences gained during the project. This activity can be linked to the concepts of *da'wah* (preaching) and *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (forbidding evil), which encourage Muslims to spread goodness. Meanwhile, the reflection phase shares similarities with the concept of *muhasabah* (reflection). Students are encouraged to evaluate the learning process and outcomes to correct deficiencies and improve their quality in the future (Syahroni, 2025).

The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning can be carried out through various types of projects relevant to students' lives. For example, a cleanliness campaign project as an implementation of the concept of *thaharah* (cleanliness), a social activity management project as a form of implementing the value of Islamic brotherhood, or a project to create digital *da'wah* media that utilizes information technology. Research shows that the application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning can improve learning motivation, academic outcomes, social skills, and strengthen students' character. Through meaningful projects, students not only understand religious material theoretically but also gain direct experience in applying Islamic teachings. In addition, Project-Based Learning also supports the development of 21st-century skills including critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. These skills are crucial for preparing students to face the challenges of modern life without losing their Islamic identity (Fitriani Ulayya et al., 2025). Based on various literature reviews, it can be concluded that Project-Based Learning has a strong foundation for implementation in Islamic Religious Education. The characteristics, syntax, and objectives of PjBL align with the principles of Islamic education, which emphasize the integration of knowledge, practice, morality, and spirituality. Therefore, PjBL can be an effective learning model for developing innovative,

contextual Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning that is oriented toward developing knowledgeable, moral individuals who are able to benefit society.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a library research method. The selection of this method is based on the research objective, which focuses on examining and analyzing Islamic perspectives on the application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. Research data was obtained through searching, collecting, and reviewing various relevant literature sources, such as books, scientific journal articles, previous research results, and other academic documents related to the research theme. Through the library study, the researcher was able to identify key concepts, theoretical foundations, and expert views regarding PjBL and its suitability with Islamic educational values. Furthermore, the collected data was analyzed descriptively and analytically to gain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of PjBL in PAI learning. Thus, this study is expected to provide an in-depth overview of the relevance and contribution of the PjBL model in effectively achieving Islamic educational goals (Sistriyanti et al., 2025).

Data collection in this study was conducted through a literature study method, utilizing various written sources relevant to the research topic. These data sources include scientific books, journal articles, research reports, and the results of field research conducted by previous researchers. These various literature sources were used as a basis for obtaining information, concepts, theories, and findings that support the research discussion. The type of research applied was library research, which focuses on the study and analysis of data sourced from written documents without directly collecting data in the field. Through this approach, researchers can systematically examine various perspectives, theories, and previous research results to generate a comprehensive understanding of the problem being studied. Thus, literature study serves as the primary foundation for the analysis process and the preparation of research conclusions scientifically and objectively (Sholihah et al., 2025).

The data sources used in this study are secondary data obtained through various literature related to the focus of the study. This data includes books discussing Islamic education, learning theories, and the concept and application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Furthermore, this study also utilizes articles published in national and international scientific journals that review the implementation of PjBL in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. To enrich the analysis, the researcher also utilized various other scientific works such as academic articles, undergraduate theses, and previous research results relevant to the theme being studied. All of these sources were selected based on their suitability, credibility, and contribution to the research discussion. By utilizing this diverse literature, the researcher was able to obtain a strong theoretical foundation and comprehensive information to support the analysis process and the preparation of research conclusions systematically, objectively, and in-depth (As'ari et al., 2023).

The data collection technique in this study was carried out through a series of activities to search and collect various literature sources related to the research topic. These sources include books, scientific journals, academic articles, theses, and other scientific works relevant to the study of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). After the literature was collected, the researcher recorded information, concepts, theories, and research findings deemed important and in line with the focus of the study. The data obtained were then classified based on certain themes, particularly those related to the Islamic perspective on the application of PjBL in PAI. This classification process aims to facilitate data analysis and interpretation so that the relationship between the PjBL concept and Islamic educational values can be understood more systematically. This step ensures that the data used is more structured, accurate, and supports the optimal achievement of the research objectives (Sholihah et al., 2025).

The data analysis in this study used a qualitative descriptive approach aimed at understanding and interpreting the data in depth in accordance with the research focus. The analysis process begins with the data reduction stage, which involves selecting, simplifying, and sorting various pieces of information obtained from literature sources so that only data relevant to the research problem is used. Next, the selected data is presented systematically through the data display stage in the form of a thematic narrative description, making it easier for researchers to identify patterns, relationships, and meanings contained within. The next stage is verification or drawing conclusions, which is the process of re-examining the analyzed data to ensure the consistency and validity of the research findings. Based on the verification results, researchers then formulate conclusions that can answer the research problem formulation clearly

and comprehensively. With the stages of data reduction, data display, and verification, the analysis is carried out in a structured manner, resulting in findings that are systematic, objective, and scientifically accountable (Listiani, 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Islamic Perspectives based on the characteristics of the Project-Based Learning model

1. *Active and Contextual Learning in Islam*

Islam emphasizes the importance of learning that is not only theoretical but also applied (Aini et al., 2024). Many verses in the Quran encourage humans to observe nature, reflect on it, and learn from life's phenomena. This aligns with the principle of PjBL, which requires students to learn through real-life experiences and contextual problem-solving (Fadil et al., 2025). "*Afala tatafakkarun*" (*Will you not think?*) frequently appears in the Quran as a call to think and reflect on God's creation.

2. *The Prophet's Example as a PjBL Practice*

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) not only taught Islam verbally but also provided direct examples (*uswah hasanah*). In building the Medina community, he involved his companions in social, political, and economic projects—an educational approach based on involvement and direct experience (Irhamullah et al., 2025). Examples: The construction of the Prophet's Mosque (involving the entire community), the Treaty of Medina (a socio-political project to establish shared governance), and the Battle of the Trench (implementation of Salman Al-Farisi's ideas, digging a trench together).

3. *Charity Ethos and Implementation of Knowledge*

In Islam, knowledge must be put into practice. The Hadith states: "The best people are those who are most beneficial to others." (Narrated by Ahmad). PjBL encourages students not only to know, but also to act and contribute (Rohayati et al., 2015). This value is deeply Islamic because it encourages the application of knowledge for the public good (*maslahah*).

4. *The Habit of Deliberation and Collaboration*

PjBL emphasizes cooperation within groups. In Islam, deliberation and collaboration are important social values:

..... وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ

"And manage your affairs by consultation among yourselves" (QS. Asy-Syura: 38).

The interpretation of this verse emphasizes the importance of deliberation (*shura*) as a principle in decision-making among Muslims. This aligns with the principle that deliberation is not merely a discussion process, but rather a way to reach the best decision by involving diverse opinions from intelligent and wise individuals. Through deliberation, hearts become soft and the path to truth is opened, while simultaneously strengthening ties and cooperation within society (Abdullah, 2014).

5. *Process and Results in the Scales of Charity*

In Islam, the process (intention, effort) and the outcome (output) are equally important (Fauzan, 2022). This aligns with the essence of PjBL, which assesses students' work processes, creativity, and solutions, not just the final product.

6. *Classical Islamic Scientific Tradition*

Figures such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali advocated a holistic education, combining theory, practice, spirituality, and real-life work (Ramadhona et al., 2024). Even in traditional madrasas, students learn through real-life projects such as writing a book, developing agriculture, and so on. The classical Islamic scientific tradition places great emphasis on a comprehensive and integrated educational process. In this view, learning focuses not only on mastering theory and memorizing material but also emphasizes the application of knowledge in everyday life. The process of seeking knowledge is carried out through various methods, such as direct practice, scientific discussions, deliberations, textual studies, and real-life experiences gained within the educational environment. Islamic educational institutions such as mosques, madrasas, and Islamic boarding schools serve as centers for the development of knowledge, shaping not only intellectual intelligence but also the character, spirituality, and social skills of students. Intensive interaction between teachers and students allows for the continuous transfer of knowledge, values, and role models. Through this holistic approach, the

classical Islamic educational tradition seeks to produce individuals who have a balance between knowledge, morals, and the ability to apply knowledge in social life (Misbah, 1970).

The integration of theory, practice, and spirituality in the classical Islamic scientific tradition provides a strong foundation for the implementation of PjBL, which not only develops students' cognitive aspects but also their affective and psychomotor aspects in a balanced manner. Thus, PjBL can be considered a contemporary learning model that reflects the values of classical Islamic education, namely learning oriented towards direct experience, cooperation, and real contributions to society in accordance with Islamic principles (deliberation, good deeds, and beneficial knowledge)(Misbah, 1970).

Analysis of PjBL Syntax from an Islamic Perspective

The Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model consists of several systematic stages that guide students to learn actively through real-life projects. These stages include an introduction with an introduction to a challenging problem or question, project planning with teachers and peers, project implementation involving investigation and collaboration, monitoring and mentoring by teachers, presentation of project results as a form of accountability, and reflection and evaluation to improve the subsequent learning process. This syntax emphasizes student-centered learning with meaningful real-life experiences, thereby effectively improving critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills (Hosnan, 2014).

Based on the explanation above, researchers will examine each PjBL model syntax as follows,:

1. *Project Introduction and Orientation*

In Islam, learning begins with sincere intention and a clear understanding of the purpose, in accordance with the principle of niyyah in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW: "Indeed, every deed depends on its intention" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim). Teachers introduce projects by instilling the right learning intention and linking the project theme with Islamic values, so that students understand the benefits and purposes of learning that are not only worldly but also hereafter (Hidayat et al., 2023).

2. *Project Planning*

Planning is carried out through deliberation (shura), in accordance with QS. Asy-Shura: 38, which emphasizes the importance of deliberation in decision-making. Students are encouraged to collaborate in developing plans, dividing tasks fairly, and managing time with discipline, which are part of noble Islamic morals (Siregar et al., 2025).

3. *Student Project Implementation*

Carrying out projects responsibly and honestly (amanah), in accordance with Islamic teachings that prioritize integrity and hard work, is a form of worship, as it is undertaken with the intention of seeking knowledge and benefiting others (Firdaus & Aziz, 2026).

4. *Monitoring and Assistance*

Teachers as facilitators act like murabbi who guide and direct students to stay on the right path, provide advice and solutions according to the principles of tarbiyah in Islam, namely fostering and educating holistically (Nadlir et al., 2024).

5. *Presentation and Reporting of Results I*

Students present their work as a form of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (encouraging good and forbidding evil) through the dissemination of knowledge and benefits. Presentations also foster courage and honesty in conveying work results (Azizah & Widjajanti, 2019).

6. *Reflection and Evaluation*

Reflection is part of muhasabah (self-introspection), which is highly recommended in Islam for self-improvement and enhancing the quality of one's deeds. Evaluation with teachers and peers helps students understand their strengths and weaknesses, fostering humility and a spirit of improvement (Rasyid, 2016).

PjBL is highly effective in enhancing students' creativity, critical thinking skills, collaboration, and responsibility because they learn through direct experience and solving real-world problems (Zainuddin et al., 2023). In short, PjBL shifts the teacher's role from instructor to facilitator and positions students as the center of active, creative, and responsible learning, producing meaningful, tangible products.

PjBL implementation strategy in Islamic religious education.

The implementation of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is carried out through systematic stages and involves active student participation in completing projects relevant to religious material and daily life. PjBL implementation must proceed according to theoretical syntax, which includes project orientation, joint planning, collaborative implementation, teacher monitoring, and evaluation of project results. This process creates an active learning atmosphere, where students collaborate, exchange opinions, and think critically in completing their assignments, while simultaneously motivating student engagement and enthusiasm for learning (Alwafi, 2023).

The learning procedure consists of preliminary activities, core activities, and closing activities (Badelah, 2021). All three must be implemented, as they form a coherent and sequential whole to achieve the desired learning objectives. Combining the learning procedure with the steps of the PjBL learning model yields the following:

1. *Preliminary Activities (Project Planning and Preparation)*

The preliminary activity in the PjBL learning model is that the teacher begins learning by determining a fundamental question (driving question) that is relevant to the Islamic Religious Education material and students' lives to trigger curiosity and active involvement (Junita et al., 2023). Next, the teacher and students design the project collaboratively, including setting goals, selecting activities, identifying resources, and developing a structured project implementation schedule (Alwafi, 2023). This stage ensures that students understand the context and objectives of the learning and are ready to implement the project effectively.

2. *Core Activities (project implementation and mentoring)*

Students carry out projects in groups by investigating, discussing, and applying Islamic values in real-life contexts. The teacher acts as a facilitator, monitoring, providing guidance, and helping overcome obstacles throughout the process (Zainuddin et al., 2023). This activity fosters collaboration skills, creativity, and responsibility, while also internalizing Islamic values such as trustworthiness and hard work.

3. *Closing Activities (presentation, evaluation, reflection)*

Closing activities are activities carried out by teachers to conclude the teaching and learning process. This activity can include conveying conclusions from the material studied and providing directions or information regarding activities to be carried out in the next meeting (Devi & Rafsanjani, 2021). After the project is completed, students present their results to the class as a form of accountability and joint evaluation (Ersanto, 2021). Evaluation not only assesses the final product but also the process and students' social attitudes. The reflection stage is carried out to identify successes and obstacles, and to formulate improvements to future learning (Zainuddin et al., 2023). This reflection also strengthens the understanding and practice of Islamic values in everyday life.

The research results show that the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model is closely related to the principles of Islamic education, both in terms of characteristics, learning stages (syntax), and its implementation in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). This finding strengthens the view that modern learning innovations do not always conflict with Islamic values, and can even be a means to actualize Islamic teachings in a more contextual, participatory, and meaningful educational process. Regarding the characteristics of the Project-Based Learning model, the study found that the concept of active and contextual learning, which is the main characteristic of PjBL, is in line with the paradigm of Islamic education. Islam does not view the learning process as a passive activity oriented only to the transfer of knowledge, but rather as a process of developing the human mind, heart, and actions as a whole. The Qur'an repeatedly invites humans to think, reflect, observe nature, and learn from various life phenomena. Calls such as "afala tatafakkarun" show that critical thinking activities are an important part of the process of seeking knowledge in Islam. Therefore, learning that places students as active subjects as implemented in PjBL is in line with the goals of Islamic education which aims to produce knowledgeable people who are also able to implement their knowledge in real life (Sutiah, 2020).

This alignment is further evident when Project-Based Learning (PjBL) requires students to solve real-life problems through projects relevant to their daily lives. In Islamic education, the knowledge learned should not remain theoretical but must be realized in actions that benefit both individuals and society. Therefore, project-based learning becomes an effective medium for connecting knowledge, experience, and the concrete application of Islamic values. Research findings also indicate that the educational practices exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) share characteristics with the Project-Based

Learning (PjBL) approach. The Prophet not only taught Islamic concepts through lectures but also involved his companions in various practical social, economic, and political activities. The construction of the Prophet's Mosque, the Treaty of Medina, and the strategy of the Battle of the Trench are examples of activities that involve active community participation in achieving shared goals. These processes reflect learning through direct experience, collaboration, and problem-solving, which are at the heart of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model. Thus, the application of PjBL in Islamic Education learning is not actually a foreign concept in Islamic tradition, but rather a form of actualization of the educational method exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (Amaliah et al., 2026).

The research also revealed that the values of good deeds and the usefulness of knowledge are important aspects that connect PjBL with Islamic education. From an Islamic perspective, a person's success is not only measured by the amount of knowledge they possess, but also by the extent to which that knowledge benefits others. PjBL provides opportunities for students to produce products or works of value, so that learning is not solely oriented towards academic achievement. This is relevant to the Prophet's hadith which states that the best people are those who are most beneficial to others. Therefore, PjBL can be a means to instill awareness that knowledge must be realized in concrete actions that make a positive contribution to the surrounding environment. Another aspect discovered in the research is the importance of deliberation and collaboration in project implementation. This value has a very strong relevance to Islamic teachings. Deliberation is one of the basic principles in Muslim social life as emphasized in the Qur'an. In project implementation, students are required to work together, respect the opinions of others, share tasks, and solve problems collectively. These activities not only develop social and communication skills but also shape the character of tolerance, responsibility, and togetherness. Thus, PjBL not only develops students' cognitive abilities, but also forms social morals which is the main goal of Islamic education (Mardhatillah et al., 2025).

Research findings on classical Islamic scholarly traditions also provide a strong theoretical basis for the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Islamic educational figures such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of holistic education, namely education that integrates intellectual, spiritual, moral, and practical skills. The Islamic educational tradition during the classical period demonstrated that the learning process was not only carried out through textual study, but also through direct practice, scientific discussions, and productive activities that benefit society. Therefore, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) can be seen as a modern learning model that aligns with classical Islamic educational values because both emphasize a balance between theory and practice. Regarding the syntax aspect of the Project-Based Learning model, research shows that each stage in PjBL is relevant to the principles of Islamic education. The introductory and project orientation stages, for example, are closely related to the concept of intention (*niyyah*). In Islam, every activity undertaken must be based on the right intention to have the value of worship. Therefore, introducing projects at the beginning of learning not only serves to explain academic objectives, but can also be a means to instill a sincere intention to learn and an orientation towards seeking knowledge as a form of devotion to Allah SWT (Yusnita, 2025).

The project planning stage demonstrates the implementation of the principle of *shura*, or deliberation, in education. Student involvement in developing activity plans, determining strategies, and dividing tasks reflects a democratic and participatory decision-making process. In the context of Islamic education, deliberation not only aims to obtain the best decisions but also trains students to respect the opinions of others and develop humility. Therefore, the planning stage in PjBL has a very high educational value in developing Islamic character. During the project implementation stage, the values of trust and responsibility are very dominant aspects. Students are required to complete tasks according to their respective roles and maintain commitment to group goals. In Islam, trust is one of the main character traits that every individual must possess. When students carry out projects responsibly, they are not only completing academic tasks but also learning to apply Islamic values in real life (Nafisa et al., 2025).

The monitoring and mentoring phase carried out by teachers also holds significant significance from an Islamic educational perspective. Teachers serve not only as instructors but also as *murabbi* (leaders) who guide the intellectual, moral, and spiritual development of students. The teacher's role as a facilitator in PjBL aligns with the concept of *tarbiyah* (teaching and counseling) which emphasizes a comprehensive development process. Teachers provide guidance, motivation, and solutions to various obstacles faced by students during the learning process. Furthermore, the presentation phase of project results provides an opportunity for students to convey their work openly and responsibly. This activity can be linked to the

concepts of da'wah (preaching) and amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (forbidding good and forbidding evil), namely conveying goodness and sharing knowledge with others. Furthermore, presentations also cultivate courage, honesty, and communication skills, which are essential in social life (Judrah et al., 2024).

The reflection and evaluation phase is a crucial part of project-based learning. From an Islamic perspective, reflection can be understood as a form of muhasabah (self-reflection), or self-introspection. Through reflection, students are encouraged to evaluate their successes, mistakes, and experiences gained during the learning process. The habit of muhasabah (self-reflection) will help students develop humility, self-awareness, and a passion for continuous self-improvement. Therefore, evaluation in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) not only serves to measure learning outcomes but also serves as a means of sustainable character development. Regarding the implementation of PjBL in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, research results show that this model can create more active, creative, and meaningful learning. PAI learning has often been considered too oriented towards memorization and theoretical delivery. As a result, students understand religious concepts cognitively but have difficulty implementing them in their daily lives. The presence of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) provides an alternative solution by connecting religious material to real-life situations that are close to students' lives (Ervina et al., 2025).

Through projects relevant to Islamic values, students not only learn religious concepts but also practice them directly. This experience allows for a deeper internalization of values compared to conventional learning. In addition to improving academic understanding, Project-Based Learning also contributes to the development of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. These skills are essential to facing the challenges of modern life without abandoning Islamic identity and values. The results of this study indicate that Project-Based Learning is a learning model that is highly aligned with the principles of Islamic education. This alignment is evident in the learning characteristics, implementation stages, and its impact on student development. The implementation of Project-Based Learning in Islamic Religious Education not only has the potential to improve the quality of academic learning but also strengthens the formation of students' character, spirituality, and social skills (Syafei, 2025). Therefore, this model is worthy of development as an innovative learning approach that can address the needs of Islamic education in the modern era while remaining rooted in the values of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning has a significant positive impact on improving material understanding, active student involvement, and the formation of Islamic character and values. PjBL is able to connect religious concepts with real-life contexts, so that learning becomes more meaningful and contextual. In addition, this model encourages students to develop social skills such as cooperation, communication, and responsibility, which are very important in facing the challenges of globalization and educational transformation. This study confirms that from an Islamic perspective, the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) learning model is very much in line with Islamic values and principles contained in the treasury of turats as well as the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. PjBL not only emphasizes active, contextual, and collaborative learning, but also integrates fundamental spiritual, ethical, and social values in Islam, such as sincere intention (niyyah), deliberation (shura), amanah (honesty and responsibility), and good deeds.

The classical Islamic scientific tradition that prioritizes holistic education unites theory, practice, and spirituality into a strong foundation that strengthens the application of PjBL in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Thus, PjBL becomes an innovative pedagogical method that not only enriches students' cognitive aspects, but also supports character and spirituality formation in accordance with the spirit of rahmatan lil alamin. The purpose of this study is to analyze the Islamic perspective on the characteristics of the PjBL model, examine the syntax of PjBL from an Islamic perspective, and formulate a strategy for implementing PjBL in PAI, making an important contribution to enriching contemporary Islamic education discourse. This research is expected to be a theoretical and practical foundation for educators and policymakers in developing more adaptive, contextual, and meaningful learning models, in accordance with the demands of the times while rooted in noble Islamic values. With this approach, religious education can run effectively as a vehicle for the formation of noble individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also spiritually and socially rich.

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