



Students' Perception in Implementing Problem-Based Learning (PBL) toward Concept Understanding

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze student perceptions of the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method in learning Religious Education. This study used a descriptive method with a qualitative approach, involving 80 students at Muhammadiyah Mataram University. Data were collected through a Likert scale questionnaire consisting of 50 statements, then analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe students' perceptions of the implementation of PBL. The results showed that the majority of students responded positively to this method, stating that PBL improved their understanding of religious concepts, connected religious values with daily life, and encouraged active involvement in learning. In addition, PBL is also proven to improve critical thinking skills, cooperation in group discussions, and provide a more meaningful learning experience. However, some challenges are still faced, such as limited relevant references, lack of supporting facilities, and the need for additional guidance from lecturers so that this method can be applied optimally. In addition, students emphasized the importance of real case studies in PBL to increase the relevance of learning. Therefore, support from educational institutions is needed in providing learning resources, improving learning facilities, and more structured teaching strategies. Future research is suggested to explore more flexible and effective PBL implementation strategies, as well as comparing the effectiveness of PBL with other learning methods in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the contribution of PBL in learning Religious Education.

Keywords: Problem-Based Learning (PBL); Religion Education; Students' Perceptions; Qualitative Research

Introduction

In this modern era, educators face various challenges, including curriculum demands that require learners to master a lot of material in a limited time. The mastery-oriented learning approach is often ineffective because it does not provide real experience that is relevant for students in solving everyday problems. In this case, the teacher not only acts as a conveyor of knowledge, but is also responsible for developing the potential of students so that they have critical thinking

skills and applications that are useful in real life (Heru et al., 2019).

The rapid and complex development of the times has encouraged the creation of various innovative learning models designed to improve learner competencies (Simorangkir et al., 2025). For example, the independent curriculum emphasizes the active involvement of learners in understanding the material with the teacher's role as a facilitator (Nisa et al., 2023). However, the obstacle in choosing the right learning model, especially in the subject of Islamic Religious Education, is still a challenge. The lack of innovation in

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teaching methods causes students to feel bored and less motivated (Widiatna, 2025). Conventional approaches dominated by teachers, as well as the lack of problem-solving practices, often make learning monotonous and less relevant to real life (Rafliyanto & Fahrudin Mukhlis, 2023).

To overcome these problems, the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model is a relevant alternative. PBL is an innovative learning approach that focuses the learning process on students by emphasizing problem identification, information analysis, and solution evaluation.

Problem-based learning (PBL) is an increasingly common approach in education, including in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). PBL is considered an effective method to increase student engagement, develop critical thinking skills, and instill religious values that can be applied in everyday life.

PBL involves five main stages: problem orientation, student organization, guided investigation, presentation of results, and evaluation (Qadri et al., 2024; Ridiyah, 2023). This approach is proven to increase students' activity, enthusiasm, and understanding by connecting the subject matter with real-life problems. Research by Kistian (2019) showed an increase in learning mastery from 47% to 89% after the implementation of PBL. PBL implementation was also observed to improve critical thinking skills and make PAI more contextual and fun (Afrilianto et al., 2023).

Several studies have proven that PBL is effective in improving learning outcomes and various student skills. Rasyidi (2024) argues that PBL allows students to explore real problems that contain moral and spiritual dimensions. This not only improves their understanding of religious concepts, but also encourages the development of critical thinking skills, cooperation, and self-reflection. This finding is in line with the statement of Prayogi et al. (2019) which emphasizes that PBL is able to create more meaningful learning, foster curiosity, and prepare students to face real-life challenges.

In a study by Babullah et al. (2024) highlighted significant improvements in students' ability to identify, analyze, and solve problems through a structured and directed PBL approach. Ali et al. (2024) study also showed that PBL increased students' active participation in the learning process, their ability to apply Fikih concepts, as well as learning motivation. Furthermore, Tarigan & Astuti (2024) reported an increase in the average learning score from 72% to 80% after the implementation of PBL, indicating its effectiveness in fostering deeper understanding and participation among students.

PBL also proved effective in developing students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Research

by Erviani (2024) confirmed that PBL has an important role in improving these three aspects in PAI learning. The main advantage of PBL is its ability to adapt learning strategies to the characteristics of each material, thus allowing students to gain a deeper understanding and be able to apply religious values in everyday life.

However, PBL implementation also faces challenges. In a study by Qadri et al. (2024) highlighted limited time and learning facilities as potential barriers. In addition, Ulya et al. (2024) added that differences in student abilities also need to be addressed for PBL to be optimally implemented. Furthermore, research by Fitrisia & Nurmadiyah (2024) also suggests that students may experience difficulties in time management and independent information seeking, as well as limited access to technology and resources.

Although various previous studies have shown that Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is effective in increasing students' engagement, understanding, and critical thinking skills in learning Religious Education, there is still a gap in research related to how students perceive the implementation of PBL in the real context of learning. Some studies focus more on the effectiveness of PBL in improving learning outcomes in general, but not many have explored in depth how students, as learners, perceive, experience, and interpret the application of PBL, especially in Religious Education subjects. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' perceptions of the implementation of PBL in order to understand the challenges, opportunities and impacts in shaping their understanding of religious values.

Method

This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach involving 80 students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Mataram. The author collected data by distributing a Likert-scale questionnaire consisting of 50 questions. The data obtained were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely by describing the results of the questionnaire in the form of a narrative describing the respondents' answers to the focus of study in this study. The results of this analysis aim to obtain detailed and comprehensive conclusions regarding student perceptions of the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in religious education learning (Suraiya, 2022).

Result and Discussion

This section presents the results of the analysis of questionnaires that have been distributed to 80 students regarding their perceptions of the implementation of

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in learning Religious Education. The questionnaire instrument consists of 10 main aspects, each of which includes 5 questions, namely: (1) Understanding of Religious Education Material, (2) Active Learning Activities, (3) Problem Solving, (4) Collaboration and Interaction, (5) Relevance and Contextualization, (6) Skills and Self-Development, (7) Support from Lecturers, (8) PBL Structure and Implementation, (9) Student Satisfaction, and (10) Challenges and Suggestions for Improvement. Students as respondents were asked to provide responses based

on a Likert scale with five categories, namely 5 for strongly agree (SA), 4 for agree (A), 3 for neutral (N), 2 for disagree (D), and 1 for strongly disagree (SD). The research results can be seen as follows.

Understanding of Religious Education Materials

The following table presents the research results regarding students' perceptions of the application of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in improving their understanding of Religious Education materials.

Table 1. Student Perceptions of PBL in Understanding Religious Education Material

Understanding of Religious Education Materials	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
The PBL method helps me understand the basic concepts of Religious Education better.	5.4	-	8.9	55.4	30.4
PBL makes it easier for me to connect religious values with everyday life.	5.3	-	8.8	52.6	33.3
Group discussions in PBL improved my understanding of religious topics.	5.3	-	7	47.4	40.4
PBL helped me understand how religious values are applied in Society.	5.3	-	7	54.4	33.3
Religious Education material becomes more interesting and easy to understand through PBL.	3.5	-	12.3	50.9	33.3

Table 1 shows the positive perception of students in implementing Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in learning Religious Education. This can be seen from the answers of the majority of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that PBL helped them understand the basic concepts of Religious Education as much as 85.8%, connect religious values with daily life 85.9%, improve understanding through group discussions 87.8%, understand the application of religious values in society 87.7%, and make the material more interesting and easy to understand 84.2%. The percentage of respondents who were neutral was relatively small, ranging from 7%

to 12.3%, while those who strongly disagreed were below 5.4%. This suggests that PBL is not only relevant in supporting conceptual understanding, but also successfully connects learning to real-life contexts, making it an effective approach in Religious Education.

Active Learning Activity

To understand how Problem-Based Learning (PBL) contributes to encouraging students' active learning activities, the following table presents data on students' perceptions of PBL implementation in a more interactive and participatory learning process.

Table 2. Students' Perception of PBL in Active Learning Activities

Active Learning Activity	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
PBL encourages me to be more active in the Religious Education learning process.	3.5	-	15.8	49.1	31.6
I feel more directly involved in the learning process with the PBL method.	3.5	-	17.5	54.4	24.6
PBL encourages me to look for additional learning resources related to Religious Education.	3.5	-	14	50.9	31.6
I feel more free to express my opinion in the PBL learning process.	3.5	-	17.5	50.9	28.1
PBL makes me more critical of issues related to Religious Education.	3.5	1.8	8.8	52.6	33.3

Table 2 also shows students' positive perceptions of PBL in learning activities. This can be seen from the majority of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed on each related statement. In the statement that PBL encourages students to be more active in the learning process of Religious Education, 80.7% of respondents felt this way, with only 3.5% strongly disagreeing and 15.8% being neutral. In terms of direct involvement in the learning process with the PBL

method, 79% felt more involved, although there were 17.5% who were neutral and 3.5% who strongly disagreed. Furthermore, regarding the encouragement to seek additional learning resources, 82.5% stated this, with a neutral response of 14%. On the aspect of freedom of expression in PBL learning, 79% felt this freedom, while 17.5% were neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreed. Finally, on the statement that PBL makes students more critical of issues related to Religious Education, 85.9%

felt this way, with a neutral response of 8.8% and a small percentage to disagree 1.8% and strongly disagree 3.5%. This data overall reflects that the PBL method succeeded in encouraging students' active learning activities, both in terms of participation, involvement, searching for additional sources, freedom of opinion, and critical thinking.

Problem Solving

Table 3. Students' Perception of PBL on Problem Solving

Problem Solving	SD %	D	N %	A %	SA %
The PBL method trained me to identify problems related to Religious Education.	3.5	-	14	54.4	28.1
PBL motivates me to find solutions to religious problems that I encounter.	3.5	-	19.3	45.6	31.6
I feel more skilled in solving problems related to religious topics.	3.5	-	8.8	61.4	26.3
The PBL method challenges my ability to think critically in solving religious problems.	3.5	-	12.3	54.4	29.8
I can develop innovative solutions through group discussions in PBL.	3.5	-	15.8	52.6	28.1

Table 3 above shows that students' perceptions of problem-solving skills developed through the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method are positive. The majority of respondents agreed and strongly agreed on each statement submitted. On the statement related to the ability to identify problems in Religious Education, 82.5% of respondents felt PBL trained them in this regard, with only 3.5% strongly disagreeing and 14% being neutral. In terms of motivation to find solutions to religious problems, 77.2% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed, while 19.3% were neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreed. For skills in solving problems related to religious topics, 87.7% felt more skilled through PBL, with 8.8% neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreeing. In terms of critical thinking skills in solving religious problems, 84.2% of students felt PBL challenged their thinking skills, with 12.3% neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreeing. Finally, regarding the

To measure the extent to which Problem-Based Learning (PBL) assists students in developing problem-solving skills, the following table presents data on student perceptions of the effectiveness of PBL in identifying, analyzing, and solving problems related to Religious Education.

development of innovative solutions through group discussions, 80.7% of respondents felt this benefit, with 15.8% neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreeing. Overall, this data illustrates that PBL effectively enhances students' skills in problem solving, critical thinking and developing innovative solutions, all of which are highly relevant in the context of Religious Education learning.

Encouraging Collaboration and Interaction

This sub-chapter explains how the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method plays a role in encouraging collaboration and interaction between students during the learning process. The data displayed in the following table provides an overview of student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of PBL in building group cooperation, improving communication skills, and respecting diversity of opinions in group discussions.

Table 4. Students' Perception of PBL in Encouraging Collaboration and Interaction

Collaboration and Interaction	SD%	D %	N %	A %	SA %
PBL encourages good cooperation in group discussions.	3.5	-	10.5	57.9	28.1
I feel that I can learn more through interaction with my friends in the group.	3.5	-	7	54.4	35.1
PBL teaches the importance of effective communication in solving problems.	3.5	-	10.5	57.9	28.1
PBL helps me appreciate different opinions in the team.	3.5	1.8	8.9	57.1	28.6
I feel every team member has an important role in the success of the group during PBL.	3.5	-	10.5	56.1	29.8

Table 4 above shows students' positive perceptions of the collaboration and interaction aspects developed through the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method. The majority of respondents agreed and strongly agreed with each statement presented. On the statement that PBL encourages good cooperation in discussion groups, 86% of respondents agreed, with 10.5% being neutral and only 3.5% strongly disagreeing. In terms of learning

through interaction with group mates, 89.5% of respondents felt that they benefited, while 7% were neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreed. Regarding the importance of effective communication in solving problems, 86% of respondents stated that PBL teaches this, with 10.5% being neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreeing. On the aspect of respecting differences of opinion within the team, 85.7% of respondents stated

that PBL helped them respect differences, with 8.9% neutral and only 1.8% disagreeing. Finally, on the statement that each team member has an important role in the success of the group, 85.9% of respondents agreed, while 10.5% were neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This data shows that the PBL method effectively encourages collaboration, interaction and communication among team members, and fosters a sense of mutual respect and responsibility in the learning group.

Table 5. Students' Perception of PBL in Relevance and Contextualization Aspects

Relevance and Contextualization	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
PBL makes learning Religious Education more relevant to real life.	3.5	-	10.5	56.1	29.8
The problems discussed in PBL reflect important issues facing the people.	3.6	-	14.3	53.6	28.6
PBL helps me understand how religious teachings can be a solution to social problems.	3.5	-	8.8	54.4	33.3
The learning process through PBL taught me to think contextually about religious values.	3.5	-	12.3	59.6	24.6
The topics covered in PBL make me better understand the role of religion in society.	3.6	-	14.3	50	32.1

Table 5 shows student perceptions of the relevance and contextualization of Religious Education learning through the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method. Most respondents showed a positive attitude, with the majority agreeing and strongly agreeing to each statement. On the statement that PBL makes Religious Education learning more relevant to real life, 85.9% of respondents agreed, with 10.5% being neutral and only 3.5% strongly disagreeing. Regarding the problems discussed in PBL reflecting important issues faced by people, 82.2% of respondents agreed, while 14.3% were neutral and 3.6% strongly disagreed. In terms of understanding religious teachings as a solution to social problems, 87.7% of respondents found it helpful, with 8.8% neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreeing. On the statement that PBL teaches students to think contextually about religious values, 84.2% agreed, while 12.3% were neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreed. Finally, related to the topics discussed in PBL make students

Relevance and Contextualization

This sub-chapter discusses how the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method is able to increase the relevance of Religious Education learning to real life and help students understand the context of religious teachings in solving various social problems. The following table presents data on students' perceptions regarding the extent to which PBL makes learning more meaningful and contextualized according to their needs.

better understand the role of religion in society, 82.1% agreed, with 14.3% neutral and 3.6% strongly disagreed. This data shows that PBL succeeds in increasing the relevance of Religious Education learning to real life, helping students think contextually, and understanding the role of religion as a solution to social issues and community problems.

Improving Skills and Self-Development

This section discusses the contribution of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method in helping students develop various skills, such as critical thinking, analytical, time management, and presentation skills. In addition, PBL is also considered to increase students' confidence and creativity in completing tasks. Data related to students' perceptions of the influence of PBL on the development of skills and themselves are presented in the Table 6.

Table 6. Students' Perception of PBL in Improving Skills and Self-Development

Improving Skills and Self-Development	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
PBL improved my skills in critical and analytical thinking.	5.3	-	17.5	49.1	28.1
I felt more confident to express my opinion during PBL.	3.5	-	15.8	40.4	40.4
The PBL method helped me manage my time better.	3.5	-	24.6	36.8	35.1
PBL helped me develop presentation skills.	3.5	-	17.5	54.4	24.6
I feel the PBL method increased my creativity in completing tasks.	3.5	-	21.1	47.4	28.1

Table 6 above shows students' perceptions of the effect of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method on their skills and self-development are positive. The majority of respondents showed a positive attitude with more stating strongly agree than other categories. On the

statement that PBL improves critical and analytical thinking skills, 77.2% of respondents agreed, with 17.5% being neutral and 5.3% strongly disagreeing. In terms of confidence to express opinions during PBL, 80.8% of students agreed, 15.8% were neutral, and only 3.5%

strongly disagreed. Regarding time management, 71.9% agreed, although there were 24.6% of respondents who were neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreed. In the aspect of developing presentation skills, 79% of students felt helped, while 17.5% were neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreed. Finally, in terms of increasing creativity in completing tasks, 75.5% of respondents agreed, with 21.1% being neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreeing. This data shows that PBL makes a significant contribution to the development of students' critical, analytical, presentation, creativity and confidence skills, although there are some respondents who are still neutral about some aspects such as time management.

Table 7. Lecturer Support in Supporting the Implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Lecturer Support	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
Lecturers provide clear directions regarding the learning process using PBL.	3.5	-	14	56.1	26.3
Feedback from lecturers helps me understand my weaknesses and strengths in learning.	3.5	-	17.5	45.6	33.3
Lecturers motivate students to be actively involved in PBL discussions.	3.6	1.8	8.9	48.2	37.5
Lecturers' guidance makes PBL learning more effective.	3.5	-	12.3	52.6	31.6
Lecturers are open to students' questions and input during the PBL process.	3.6	-	10.7	57.1	28.6

Table 7 shows students' perceptions of the support provided by lecturers in learning using the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method. Overall, the majority of respondents showed a positive view. This can be seen from the statement that lecturers provide clear directions related to the PBL process, 82.4% of students agreed, while 14% were neutral and only 3.5% strongly disagreed. In terms of lecturer feedback that helps students understand their weaknesses and strengths, 78.9% of respondents agreed, with 17.5% neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreeing. On the aspect of lecturers' motivation for students' active involvement in discussions, 85.7% agreed, with 8.9% neutral, 1.8% disagreed, and 3.6% strongly disagreed. Regarding lecturer guidance that makes PBL learning more effective, 84.2% of students agreed, while 12.3% were neutral and 3.5% strongly disagreed. Finally, on the statement that lecturers are open to questions and input during the PBL process, 85.7% of respondents felt that

Supporting the Implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

This sub-chapter discusses the importance of lecturer support in supporting the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method. Lecturer support includes providing clear directions, constructive feedback, motivation to actively participate, and openness to questions and input from students. Data regarding students' perceptions of the role of lecturers in supporting the implementation of PBL are presented in the Table 7.

lecturers were open, with 10.7% neutral and 3.6% strongly disagreeing. This data shows that lecturer support, whether through direction, feedback, motivation, guidance, or openness to input, plays an important role in the successful implementation of the PBL method, although there are still a small number of respondents who are neutral or less satisfied.

Structure and Implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

This sub-chapter examines how the structure and implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method, including the clarity of directions from lecturers, appropriate timing, and the relevance of the tasks given to students. The following table shows students' perceptions of the influence of PBL structure and implementation on their learning process.

Table 8. Student Perceptions of the Structure and Implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Structure and Implementation of PBL	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
The instructions given by lecturers for PBL tasks are clear and structured.	1.8	-	12.3	59.6	26.3
The time given to solve problems in PBL is sufficient.	1.8	-	17.5	54.4	26.3
The tasks in PBL feel relevant to my needs as a student.	1.8	-	15.8	49.1	33.3
The division of tasks in the group went well during the PBL process.	1.8	-	15.8	54.4	28.1
Evaluation of PBL results is fair and transparent.	1.8	-	16.1	44.6	37.5

Table 8 shows students' perceptions of the structure and implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method in learning. Most respondents gave

positive responses, with a high proportion in the agree and strongly agree categories. In the statement regarding the clarity and structure of instructions given

by lecturers, 85.9% of students agreed, while 12.3% chose neutral and 1.8% strongly disagreed. In terms of the adequacy of time given to complete PBL tasks, 80.7% agreed, with 17.5% being neutral and 1.8% strongly disagreeing. The relevance of PBL tasks to student needs was positively assessed by 82.4% of respondents, while 15.8% were neutral and 1.8% strongly disagreed. For the division of tasks in groups, 82.5% of students felt that the division of tasks was effective, with 15.8% neutral and 1.8% strongly disagreeing. Meanwhile, in the statement about the fairness and transparency of the evaluation of PBL results, 82.1% of students agreed, 16.1% chose neutral, and 1.8% strongly disagreed. These results show

Table 9. Student satisfaction of PBL

Student satisfaction	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
I feel satisfied with the learning outcomes using the PBL method.	3.6	1.8	14.3	51.8	28.6
PBL makes me more eager to learn Religious Education.	1.8	-	14	47.4	36.8
I feel that PBL provides a more meaningful learning experience.	1.8	-	8.8	54.4	35.1
I would recommend the PBL method to other students.	1.8	-	12.3	54.4	31.6
PBL made me like learning Religious Education more.	1.8	-	9.1	56.4	32.7

Table 9 illustrates the level of student satisfaction with the use of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method in learning Religious Education. The majority of students have a positive perception, this can be seen from the dominance of responses in the agree and strongly agree categories. In the statement that students are satisfied with the learning outcomes using PBL, 80.4% of respondents agreed, while 14.3% were neutral, and only 5.4% disagreed. Regarding the statement that PBL increases the spirit of learning, 84.2% agreed, 14% were neutral, and only 1.8% strongly disagreed. In terms of a more meaningful learning experience, 89.5% of students agreed, with 8.8% being neutral and only 1.8% strongly disagreeing. For the statement that students would recommend the PBL method to others, 86% agreed, 12.3% were neutral, and 1.8% strongly disagreed. Finally, 89.1% of respondents felt that PBL made them like learning Religious Education more, with

that students generally assess the structure and implementation of PBL has been implemented well, although there are still a small number of respondents who are neutral or disagree.

Student satisfaction of Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

This section discusses the level of student satisfaction with the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method in learning. The following table presents data describing students' perceptions of the extent to which they are satisfied with the learning experience using PBL.

9.1% neutral, and only 1.8% strongly disagreeing. Based on this data, it can be concluded that students are generally satisfied with the implementation of PBL in learning Religious Education, both in terms of results, enthusiasm for learning, meaningful experiences, and the potential to recommend it to other students.

Students' Challenges and Suggestions on Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

This section discusses the challenges faced by students as well as recommendations for improvement in the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method. The table below presents students' views on the difficulties they experienced during the PBL learning process, as well as their suggestions to improve the effectiveness of the method in the future.

Table 10. Students' Challenges and Suggestions on PBL

Challenges and Suggestions	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
PBL demands a lot of time and effort, but the results are satisfactory.	1.8	-	22.8	45.6	29.8
I found it difficult to find references to solve problems in PBL.	5.3	10.5	21.1	33.3	29.8
Additional guidance from lecturers is needed so that PBL can run more smoothly.	1.8	-	15.8	47.4	35.1
I wish there were more real case studies relevant to the topic of Religious Education.	1.8	-	10.5	50.9	36.8
I feel that PBL would be more effective if supported by more adequate learning facilities.	1.8	-	15.8	43.9	38.6

Based on Table 10, students' perceptions of challenges and suggestions for improvement in the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method show that 75.4% of students stated that although PBL demands a lot of time and effort, the results

obtained are satisfactory, while 22.8% were neutral. However, 63.1% of students also expressed difficulty in finding references to solve problems in PBL, which indicates the need for more adequate learning resources. In addition, 82.5% of students agreed that additional

guidance from lecturers was needed to make PBL implementation smoother, and 87.7% expressed the importance of real case studies relevant to Religious Education topics. Students also highlighted the importance of better learning facilities, with 82.5% agreeing that facility support would enhance the effectiveness of PBL. Overall, these data suggest that while PBL was rated as providing satisfactory and relevant outcomes, some key challenges related to referencing, lecturer guidance, case studies and learning facilities still need to be improved to support more optimal implementation of PBL.

Discussion

Based on the research results, the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in learning Religious Education received a very positive response from students. The majority of respondents stated that PBL helped them understand the basic concepts of Religious Education. This finding is in line with Rasyidi (2024), which shows that PBL allows the exploration of religious issues in the moral and spiritual dimensions, thus deepening religious understanding and connecting religious values with everyday life. In addition, Rodiyah (2023) also supports these findings by showing that PBL increases students' activity, enthusiasm, and understanding through linking the material to real-life problems. PBL is also considered to make the material more interesting and easy to understand, as explained by Erviani (2024), who highlighted the advantages of PBL in adjusting learning strategies to the characteristics of the material so as to enable deeper understanding and application. This suggests that PBL not only supports conceptual understanding, but also connects learning to real-life contexts, making it a relevant approach in Religious Education (Sutrisno & Nasucha, 2022; Rizki, 2025).

Student learning activities with the application of PBL also increased. Most students felt more actively involved in learning, encouraged to look for additional learning resources, and more free to express opinions. In addition, students reported increased critical thinking skills on Religious Education issues. These results are in line with Rasyidi (2024), which showed that PBL increased students' active participation and critical thinking skills. Research by Kistian (2019) also revealed that PBL makes learning more contextual and improves mastery of the material. In addition, Ali et al. (2024) found that PBL encourages active participation as well as the application of learned concepts in real life.

The implementation of PBL also contributes significantly to improving students' skills in solving problems, thinking critically, and designing innovative solutions in learning Religious Education. Research by

Afrilanto et al. (2023) supported these findings by stating that the implementation of PBL can improve critical thinking skills and make Religious Education learning more contextual and fun. Most students recognized that PBL helped them identify problems, find solutions to religious issues, and improve analytical and problem-solving skills. Group discussions in PBL also play a role in encouraging students to develop more creative solutions. This finding is in line with the research of Babullah et al. (2024), which highlighted significant improvements in students' ability to identify, analyze and solve problems through a structured and directed PBL approach.

In addition, this study shows that PBL plays a role in improving student collaboration and interaction in learning Religious Education. Most students stated that PBL encourages effective group cooperation and strengthens communication skills in solving problems. PBL also helps students appreciate different opinions and understand the importance of each member's role in the success of the group. This is in line with the findings of Ali et al. (2024), who revealed that PBL increases active participation and the ability to work together in group-based learning. This finding is also supported by Tarigan & Astuti (2024), which shows that PBL not only improves academic understanding but also builds interpersonal skills that are essential in social and professional interactions.

Furthermore, the results of this study show that the application of PBL contributes to increasing the relevance and contextualization of Religious Education learning. Most students felt that PBL helped them relate the material learned to their daily lives and understand the role of religion in dealing with various social problems. In addition, PBL encourages students to think contextually about religious values, making it easier to apply in social life. This finding is in line with Kistian (2019), which found that PBL increases conceptual understanding and the connection of teaching materials to the real world. Afrilanto et al. (2023) also supported these results by showing that PBL makes learning more meaningful and contextual, so that students are better able to connect religious teachings with actual issues in society.

Students also reported improved skills in time management, presentation, and creativity in completing tasks. This is supported by the findings of Prayogi et al. (2019), who emphasized that PBL creates more meaningful learning and fosters students' curiosity, thus improving their creativity and presentation skills.

Lecturer support in learning with the PBL method is also very necessary. The majority of respondents felt that lecturers provided clear directions, helpful feedback, and motivation to actively participate in

discussions. Lecturers are also considered to provide effective guidance and are open to students' questions and input. This finding is in line with the research of Heru et al. (2019), which states that the role of lecturers is not only as a conveyor of knowledge, but also as a facilitator who develops students' potential to have critical thinking skills and applicability in real life. Rodiyah (2023) also supports these findings by suggesting that lecturers need to follow PBL procedures or stages systematically to ensure the effectiveness of its implementation.

In terms of the structure and implementation of PBL, students considered that the instructions from the lecturer were clear and structured, the time given was adequate, and the tasks given were relevant to their needs. In addition, the division of tasks in groups was considered effective, and the evaluation of PBL results was considered fair and transparent. Student satisfaction with the PBL method was also high, with the majority of students feeling that this method not only improved their understanding of the material, but also fostered their enthusiasm for learning and created a more meaningful learning experience. Most respondents also felt that PBL made them like learning Religious Education more and were willing to recommend it to other students (Kolibu & Steoanus, 2025).

However, although students rated PBL as an effective and relevant method, there are some challenges that need to be addressed. One of the main obstacles is limited references and facilities, which emphasizes the need to provide more adequate learning resources and infrastructure. This is also supported by the research of Qadri et al. (2024), who stated that the success of PBL depends on the availability of adequate resources and facilities. In addition, students consider that additional guidance from lecturers is needed so that they can better understand and solve problems in PBL. This finding is reinforced by the research of Ulya et al. (2024), which recommends the need for training for educators to manage PBL well and adapt it to the needs of students. Thus, although PBL provides significant benefits, optimization of its supporting factors is still needed to ensure more effective and sustainable implementation.

Conclusion

The results showed that the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method in learning Religious Education received a positive response from students. PBL proved to be able to improve their understanding of religious concepts and help connect religious values with daily life. In addition, this method encourages students to be more active in learning, develop critical thinking skills, and improve their ability

to collaborate in group discussions. Students also feel that PBL provides a more meaningful learning experience and fosters their motivation in studying Religious Education. However, some challenges are still faced in implementing PBL. Students experience difficulties in accessing relevant references, limited supporting facilities, and the need for additional guidance from lecturers so that PBL can be implemented more effectively. In addition, the importance of real case studies that are appropriate to the context of Religious Education is also a concern to make learning more applicable and interesting. Therefore, educational institutions need to provide support in providing learning resources, improving learning facilities, and designing more structured teaching strategies to optimize the application of PBL in Religious Education learning. For the future research is recommended to examine more effective PBL implementation strategies, including approaches that are more flexible and in accordance with student needs and subject characteristics. In addition, further research could explore the long-term impact of PBL on the development of critical thinking skills, communication, and the application of religious values in students' lives. Comparative research between PBL and other learning methods could also be conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of various approaches in learning Religious Education.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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