❑   154

Project-Based Learning as a Catalyst for Enhanced Student Achievement in Social Studies at Islamic Junior High School

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	Purpose of the study: This study aims to examine and analyze the effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning in improving students' academic achievement in social studies subjects in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang, Probolinggo Regency, as well as explore how Project-Based Learning can be integrated with Islamic values in the educational environment. **Methodology:** This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand how Project-Based Learning can provide students' learning experiences and their academic outcomes. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with teachers and students, classroom observations, as well as document analysis of projects produced by students. Data were analysed using thematic analysis techniques. The results of the data analysis were compiled in the form of a comprehensive research report with descriptive and interpretative narratives. **Main Findings:** The results showed that the implementation of Project-Based Learning significantly improved students' engagement and their understanding of social studies materials. Teachers reported that Project-Based Learning helped students develop critical, collaborative, and creative skills, and increased their learning motivation. Students involved in the project showed better ability in analysing and applying social studies concepts in real contexts. Observations showed that the classroom atmosphere became more interactive and dynamic, with students actively participating in discussions and project presentations. **Novelty/Originality of this study:** This research offers novelty by integrating the application of Project-Based Learning in the context of a junior high school in a remote area, namely Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang, Probolinggo Regency. The findings make a novel contribution by showing how Project-Based Learning can be adapted and applied effectively in a different and less accessible educational context.

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1.   INTRODUCTION

In modern education, active and participatory learning approaches are increasingly recognized as key to achieving better learning outcomes. One prominent approach is Project-Based Learning, which has shown great potential in improving student engagement and achievement across various disciplines, including Social Studies. Project-Based Learning encourages students to engage in real projects relevant to their lives, allowing them to develop critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills [1],[2]. Social studies, as a subject that

studies the social, cultural, and historical aspects of society, is very relevant to the Project-Based Learning approach. Through Project-Based Learning , students not only learn theory, but also apply their knowledge in projects that require research, analysis, and presentation [3]. This is in line with the goal of social studies education which is not only to provide factual knowledge, but also to build social and civics skills needed in community life [4].

In the last ten years, many studies have examined the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in various educational contexts. According to Hmelo-Silver et al. [5], Project-Based Learning has been shown to increase student engagement and deep understanding of the subject matter. In addition, research by Ravitz [6] showed that students who learn through Project-Based Learning have better collaboration and communication skills compared to students who learn through traditional methods. However, although there is a lot of evidence about the benefits of Project-Based Learning , its application in social studies learning still faces various challenges. One of the main challenges is teachers' readiness to design and implement effective projects. According to Grant [7], many teachers feel less confident in implementing Project-Based Learning due to lack of adequate training and resources. In addition, the time required to plan and implement projects is often perceived as a barrier [8].

Research by Tamim and Grant [9] shows that administrative support and availability of resources are crucial for successful implementation of Project-Based Learning . In this context, the role of principals and other educational leaders is crucial to provide a supportive environment for teachers and students. In addition, the integration of technology in Project-Based Learning can help overcome some of the barriers, as expressed by Boss and Krauss [2]. In addition to these factors, parent and community involvement is also an important aspect in the success of Project-Based Learning. Studies by Krajcik and Blumenfeld [10] show that community involvement can provide a real context that enriches students' learning experience. Thus, collaboration between schools and local communities can strengthen the relevance of projects and increase student motivation.

Despite these challenges, empirical evidence suggests that Project-Based Learning has great potential to improve student learning outcomes in social studies. According to research by Mergendoller et al. [11], students who engaged in Project-Based Learning showed significant improvements in their social knowledge and skills. In addition, research by Barron et al. [12] showed that Project-Based Learning can increase students' self-confidence and their ability to work independently. Project-Based Learning can also help students develop a deeper understanding of complex social and historical issues. For example, research by Boaler [13] shows that students who learn through Project-Based Learning are better able to relate academic concepts to their real-life experiences. This is particularly important in social studies learning, where contextual understanding is crucial. However, to achieve optimal results, it is important for schools and teachers to develop an appropriate curriculum that supports the implementation of Project-Based Learning . According to research by Larmer et al. [2], the success of Project-Based Learning relies heavily on careful planning and consistent implementation. In addition, it is important to involve students in the project planning process so that they feel ownership of the project and are motivated to actively participate.

Finally, research by Halvorsen et al. [14] shows that continuous evaluation and reflection are key to improving the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning . By evaluating and reflecting on the project process and outcomes, teachers and students can identify strengths and weaknesses and make necessary improvements for future projects. Project-Based Learning is also in line with the experiential learning theory proposed by Kolb [15]. According to Kolb, learning is a process in which knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Project-Based Learning provides opportunities for students to engage in direct experience and reflection, which is then used to develop a deeper understanding of academic concepts. This experiential learning helps students connect theory with practice, thus increasing the relevance and application of the knowledge gained.

Another theory that supports Project-Based Learning is the situational theory of Lave and Wenger [16], which emphasizes the importance of social and cultural context in learning. According to this theory, learning occurs through participation in communities of practice where students engage in meaningful and relevant activities. In the context of Project-Based Learning , students work in groups to complete projects that reflect real-world situations, thus allowing them to learn in an authentic environment. This collaboration not only enhances conceptual understanding but also develops important social and communication skills. In addition, the self-determination theory developed by Deci and Ryan [17] is also relevant to Project-Based Learning. This theory identifies three basic psychological needs that influence student motivation: autonomy, competence and relatedness. Project-Based Learning allows students to have more control over their learning process (autonomy), challenges them to develop and apply new skills (competence), and cooperates with their peers in a supportive environment (connectedness). The combination of these factors can increase students' intrinsic motivation to learn.

In the context of social studies learning, Project-Based Learning provides opportunities for students to apply their theoretical knowledge in projects that are relevant to their social and cultural lives. For example, projects that involve analyzing social issues, researching local history, or developing solutions to community

problems can provide meaningful and contextualized learning experiences. According to research by Beckett and Miller [18], the application of Project-Based Learning in social studies not only improves students' understanding of the subject matter but also helps them develop critical thinking and analytical skills essential for future academic and professional success.

Although various studies have revealed that Project-Based Learning has great potential to improve student engagement and academic achievement across various disciplines, there is still a gap in the application of this method in the context of social education in Islamic junior secondary schools. Most previous research has focused on the implementation of Project-Based Learning in mainstream schools and in subjects such as science and technology, so there has not been much empirical evidence highlighting how Project-Based Learning can specifically influence students' understanding of social materials that are often abstract and conceptual in nature. In addition, there has been little attention to how Project-Based Learning can be adapted to the distinctive Islamic values and culture in these schools and its impact on students' character building and understanding of Islamic values. These gaps indicate the need for further research to explore the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in improving student achievement in social subjects in Islamic junior secondary schools, as well as understanding the factors that may support or hinder the implementation of Project-Based Learning in a religious educational environment.

The urgency of this research arises from the pressing need to improve the quality of social learning in Islamic junior secondary schools, where the challenges students face in understanding complex social concepts often result in low academic achievement. Given the importance of social subjects in shaping students' historical, cultural and Islamic values insights, innovative learning methods such as Project-Based Learning are urgently needed to replace conventional approaches that tend to be passive and lack student engagement. Project-Based Learning , with its focus on experiential learning and active engagement, has great potential to not only improve academic understanding but also develop critical, collaborative and reflective skills essential in students' social and religious lives. Moreover, in the context of Islamic education, there is an urgent need to examine how Project-Based Learning can be integrated with Islamic values so that social education can be more relevant and meaningful to students. By examining the application of Project-Based Learning in social studies at an Islamic junior high school, this study seeks to answer these challenges and make a significant contribution to improving the quality of education in a religious environment, while offering a more effective learning model that suits the needs of today's students.

The novelty of this research lies in its in-depth exploration of the application of the Project-Based Learning method in the context of social education in Islamic junior high schools, an area that has not been widely explored before. This research not only assesses the impact of Project-Based Learning on students' academic achievement, but also examines how Project-Based Learning can be adapted to the distinctive Islamic values and culture, thus creating a more holistic learning model that is relevant to the needs of students in these schools. In addition, this study offers new insights into the integration of modern learning methods with Islamic character education, making a significant contribution in filling the gap of existing literature and paving the way for innovation in educational practices in religious settings.

The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning method in improving students' academic achievement in social studies subjects in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang, Probolinggo Regency, as well as explore how Project-Based Learning can be integrated with Islamic values in the educational environment. This study also aims to identify the factors that support and hinder the implementation of Project-Based Learning in Islamic schools, with the hope of providing practical recommendations for teachers and school administrators in designing and implementing learning strategies that are more effective, relevant, and in accordance with the needs and characteristics of students in faith-based schools.

2. RESEARCH METHOD
2.1. Research Design and Types

This research design uses a qualitative approach with a case study design that aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the application of the Project-Based Learning method in the context of social education in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang, Probolinggo Regency. As a approach of qualitative research, this case study focuses on one or several classes in the subject school, where Project-Based Learning is applied as the main learning method. The research will observe and analyze the learning process, student interactions, as well as academic outcomes in social studies comprehensively over a certain period. Data will be collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis such as project assignments and student achievement tests. This design allows the researcher to explore in detail how Project-Based Learning is implemented and its impact on social studies learning in a specific context bound by the Islamic school environment, resulting in rich and contextualized findings. Thus, this study not only identified the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in improving academic achievement, but also how this method can

be adapted to the Islamic values inherent in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang, Probolinggo Regency, making it relevant and meaningful to students.

2.2. Informants and Data Collection Instruments

The research informants in this study were 8 teachers and 22 students in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang who were directly involved in the social studies learning process using the Project-Based Learning method. The teachers who became informants were those who had experience teaching social studies subjects and had or would implement Project-Based Learning in their classrooms. Students who became informants were students from the class selected as the research subject, with an age range appropriate for the junior high school level. The selection of informants was purposive, considering their direct involvement in learning using Project-Based Learning , as well as the diversity of students' academic and social backgrounds to gain a more comprehensive perspective. In addition, school management and curriculum coordinators were also included as informants to gain a broader view of the policy and implementation of Project-Based Learning in the context of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang.

Table 1. Data and Instruments Collecting Data

Sample Students Interview Guidelines	Sample Teachers Interview Guidelines	Sample Vice Principal for Curriculum Interview Guidelines	Sample School Principal Interview Guidelines
How has Project-Based Learning affected the way you understand the social studies material taught?	What are the main challenges you face in implementing Project-Based Learning ?	Has the school provided specialized training or resources for teachers to support the implementation of Project-Based Learning ? Explain.	What is your vision of the implementation of Project-Based Learning in this school, especially in relation to social education and student character building?
Do you think Project-Based Learning makes social studies lessons more interesting? Why?	How does Project-Based Learning affect students' engagement and motivation to learn in social studies?	What challenges does the school face in implementing Project-Based Learning broadly?	How does Project-Based Learning help achieve educational goals in this school, especially in integrating Islamic values?
How was your experience in working together with friends on the Project-Based Learning project?	Do you think Project-Based Learning is effective in improving students' understanding of social studies materials? Give concrete examples.	How do you assess the success of Project-Based Learning implementation in developing students' critical and collaborative skills?	What are the main challenges faced by the school in implementing Project-Based Learning , and how do you overcome them?
Do you feel Project-Based Learning helped you in connecting social concepts with daily life or with Islamic values? Give examples.	How do you integrate Islamic values in the projects given to students?	How are Islamic values considered in the planning and implementation of Project-Based Learning in this school?	What kind of support does the school provide to teachers to develop and implement Project-Based Learning in their classrooms?
How much did Project-Based Learning affect your academic results in social studies?	How do students' learning outcomes compare before and after the implementation of Project-Based Learning ?	What are the school's future plans in developing Project-Based Learning methods for other subjects or more broadly?	What are your strategic plans to expand the use of Project-Based Learning in the future, both in social studies and other subjects?

The data collection instruments used in this study include several methods to ensure the depth and accuracy of the data obtained. Direct classroom observation will be used to record in detail how project-based learning is implemented, the interaction between teachers and students, and the group dynamics during the learning process. In-depth interviews with teachers, students, and school management will be conducted to explore their perceptions, experiences, and challenges they face in implementing Project-Based Learning , as well as how this method impacts learning and understanding of Islamic values. In addition, document analysis,

such as student project assignments, lesson plans, and student evaluation results, will be used to assess the concrete impact of Project-Based Learning on academic achievement and understanding of social concepts. The combination of these various instruments allows the researcher to gain a holistic and in-depth picture of the effectiveness and relevance of Project-Based Learning in social education in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang.

2.3. Data Analysis Technique

After data is collected from various sources through observation, interviews, and document analysis, the next step in this research is to conduct data analysis techniques that aim to identify patterns and meanings contained in the data. Data analysis will be conducted in stages with a thematic analysis approach, where data from interviews and observations will be organized and categorized based on themes relevant to the research, such as the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning student engagement, implementation challenges, and integration with Islamic values. Raw data from interview transcripts and observation notes will be read repeatedly to gain in-depth understanding, then a coding process will be carried out to identify key themes. Each emerging theme will be further analyzed to understand how different aspects of Project-Based Learning affect students' academic achievement and social learning in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang context.

2.4. Data Validity Technique

Once the main themes are identified, data analysis will continue by relating the findings to relevant theories and literature. Triangulation techniques will be used to ensure the validity of the data, by comparing information obtained from different data sources (teachers, students and documents) as well as from different data collection methods (observation, interviews and document analysis). Comparative analysis will be conducted to evaluate the differences, if any, between classes that implemented Project-Based Learning and those that used conventional learning methods, as well as to understand the specific context that influenced the implementation of Project-Based Learning in Islamic schools. The results of this analysis will yield deep insights into how Project-Based Learning affects social learning and how this technique can be adapted to meet the educational needs of faith-based school settings. These findings will be summarized in the form of a comprehensive narrative, supported by direct quotes from informants and concrete examples from the analyzed documents, to provide a clear picture of the impact and implications of Project-Based Learning in the context of this study.

3.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Project-Based Learning can be considered an ideal implementation of the Independent Curriculum because this method allows students to explore social studies material in depth and contextually. The emphasis on projects and practical experiences supports the achievement of the core competencies and basic competencies set out in the Independent Curriculum, such as critical and creative thinking skills [19]. Thus, Project-Based Learning not only conveys content but also forms the skills and attitudes expected in this new curriculum. The Independent Curriculum emphasizes the importance of curriculum adaptation according to local contexts and student needs [20]. Project-Based Learning, with its ability to customize projects based on local contexts such as at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang, can meet this need. For example, projects relevant to local social or cultural issues can help students understand social studies material in a more meaningful and applicable way, in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum.

One of the main focuses of the Independent Curriculum is to increase student engagement in the learning process [21]. Project-Based Learning, which involves students in project activities that require collaboration and problem solving, has the potential to increase students' learning motivation and active participation. By giving students an active role in designing and implementing projects, Project-Based Learning is aligned with the Independent Curriculum's goal of creating a more interactive and motivating learning experience. The Independent Curriculum encourages the use of authentic and holistic assessment, which includes both process and end-product assessment [22]. Project-Based Learning provides a framework for this authentic assessment, by evaluating not only the end result of the project but also the students' learning process, collaboration skills and problem-solving. This provides a more complete picture of student achievement and their abilities in a more real-world context.

The Independent Curriculum focuses on developing 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration skills [23]. Project-Based Learning intrinsically supports the development of these skills through activities that require students to think creatively, work together in groups, and apply their knowledge in real situations. The implementation of Project-Based Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zinul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang, as an example from the local context, may face challenges such as limited resources and support from the school [24].

Independent Curriculum recognizes these challenges and encourages locally-based solutions to overcome barriers. With adequate support and training, Project-Based Learning can be adapted and implemented effectively despite challenges in the local context. Research on Project-Based Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zinul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang shows that this method can improve student learning outcomes in social studies subjects [25]. Within the framework of the Independent Curriculum, this improvement reflects the successful implementation of a learning approach that emphasizes project-based learning and student competency development. Thus, Project-Based Learning contributes to the achievement of educational objectives in the Independent Curriculum and improves the quality of education in schools that implement it.

3.1. Result

The results of the research on the application of Project-Based Learning in Social Studies lessons at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zinul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang revealed some important findings that provide deep insights into the effectiveness of this method. First, the research showed that Project-Based Learning significantly increased students' engagement in social studies learning. Students who engaged in Project-Based Learning showed higher enthusiasm and active participation compared to conventional learning methods. Classroom observations revealed that students interacted more, discussed and collaborated in groups while working on the project, which contributed to their improved understanding of social materials.

The results showed an increase in students' academic achievement in social studies after the implementation of Project-Based Learning. Analysis of test data showed that students who followed the Project-Based Learning method obtained higher scores and demonstrated a deeper understanding of social concepts compared to students who used traditional learning methods. Project-Based Learning facilitates more in-depth and applicable learning, allowing students to relate the subject matter to the real-life context and practical situations they face. Tthis study found that Project-Based Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang helps students in integrating and understanding Islamic values in social learning. The projects designed in the context of Project-Based Learning do not only focus on academic material but also link social concepts with Islamic values. This helps students internalize and apply Islamic values in the social context, such as social responsibility, justice and cooperation, which are important in their character building.

The research identified several challenges in the implementation of Project-Based Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang. One of the main challenges is limited resources and training support for teachers. Teachers often need additional training to design and manage effective Project-Based Learning projects, as well as support from school management in terms of time and teaching materials. These limitations can hinder the optimal implementation of Project-Based Learning and affect the effectiveness of this method in improving student learning outcomes. This study also found that the integration of Islamic values in Project-Based Learning projects requires special adjustments to be relevant to students' needs and characteristics. The projects designed should reflect Islamic values and consider students' cultural and religious aspects, so that learning becomes more meaningful and appropriate to the context of faith-based education. This research emphasizes the importance of designing Project-Based Learning that not only meet academic standards but also align with Islamic principles.

The research findings show that the integration of Islamic values in the application of Project-Based Learning in learning Social Studies in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang has a significant positive impact in understanding and applying social materials. Project-Based Learning designed by integrating Islamic values allow students to see the relevance between social concepts and their religious principles. For example, in projects involving case studies on social justice or community responsibility, students can apply values such as justice, empathy and responsibility taught in Islamic teachings. This not only deepens their academic understanding of social issues but also reinforces the application of Islamic values in a social context, making them more meaningful and relevant in their daily lives.

Furthermore, the integration of Islamic values in Project-Based Learning also helps students in developing character and social skills that are aligned with religious teachings. Projects involving cooperation, group discussions, and reflection-based assessment not only teach collaborative and critical thinking skills but also promote values such as mutual respect, honesty, and sincerity. Students involved in these projects learn how to apply Islamic principles in their daily actions, strengthening the link between their academic learning and religious character development. These findings suggest that the application of Project-Based Learning integrated with Islamic values can create a more holistic and relevant learning experience, linking social subject matter with the moral and spiritual context that is important for students in Islamic schools.

Students' involvement in learning with the Project-Based Learning model at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang Probolinggo Regency showed significant improvement in various aspects. Students who previously tended to be passive in the conventional teaching and learning process, showed a change in attitude to be more proactive and enthusiastic in following each stage of the project. Through Project-Based Learning, students are given the opportunity to take an active role in determining project topics, designing research steps, and compiling reports on the results of their research. This triggered greater curiosity and interest

in social studies, as students saw first-hand how the material they were learning was applied in real life. This increased engagement also had a positive impact on students' attendance and participation in class, indicating that Project-Based Learning was able to change the classroom dynamics to be more interactive and fun.

The research findings show that Project-Based Learning significantly improves students' understanding of social studies materials. By directly engaging in projects that require in-depth exploration, students can connect theory with real practice. For example, in the project on Probolinggo's local history and culture, students had to gather information through various sources, including interviews and direct observation, which deepened their understanding of the material studied. Test results showed a significant increase in material comprehension scores after the implementation of Project-Based Learning compared to conventional learning methods.

Project-Based Learning also contributes to the development of students' critical and analytical thinking skills. During the project process, students are encouraged to analyze information, identify problems and find creative solutions. At Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4, students showed an increased ability to think critically and analytically as they evaluated different sources of information and constructed logical arguments. These skills are important not only in academic contexts, but also in everyday life where the ability to analyze and solve problems is needed.

The results also indicated significant improvement in collaboration and communication skills among students. Project-Based Learning requires students to work in groups, which requires good cooperation and effective communication. At Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4, students learn to listen to their peers' opinions, share ideas, and work together to achieve project goals. Project presentations also provide opportunities for students to develop public speaking skills and convey their ideas clearly and persuasively.

Project-Based Learning is proven to increase students' motivation and engagement in social studies learning. Students involved in the project feel more interested and motivated to learn as they see the direct relevance between the material being learned and its practical application. At Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4, teachers reported that students showed greater enthusiasm and active participation in class activities during the project. This shows that Project-Based Learning is able to make learning more interesting and meaningful for students.

The implementation of Project-Based Learning also encourages the improvement of students' collaborative and social skills. In the projects undertaken, students have to work in small groups, which requires them to communicate, discuss and make decisions together. At Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4, group dynamics are an important focus, with the teacher acting as a mediator to ensure that each group member contributes fairly and effectively. Students learn to listen to their peers' opinions, give and receive constructive criticism, and respect differences of opinion. This ability to work in teams is not only essential to the success of the project, but is also a valuable life skill. Students who are familiar with teamwork through Project-Based Learning show better ability to collaborate, both inside and outside the academic environment.

One of the most prominent outcomes of implementing Project-Based Learning is the development of critical and creative thinking skills. Students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 were challenged to identify problems, formulate hypotheses and seek innovative solutions throughout the project. This process involves various stages, from initial research, data analysis, to the preparation of a final report and presentation. Engagement in projects that demand real problem solving allows students to think beyond traditional boundaries and discover new approaches to learning. As a result, students become more skilled at analyzing information, evaluating sources, and developing creative ideas. Teachers report that students who engage in Project-Based Learning show better ability to critique subject matter and come up with innovative solutions in their assignments. One of the main benefits of Project-Based Learning is the enhancement of students' ability to learn independently and take responsibility for their own learning. Students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 are encouraged to organize their schedules, search for information, and complete project tasks independently or in groups. This helps them develop time management skills and personal responsibility. Students who are familiar with project-based learning tend to be better prepared for future academic and non-academic challenges.

In general, the implementation of Project-Based Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 showed a positive impact on students' academic outcomes. Students' average scores in social studies increased after the implementation of Project-Based Learning. Teachers reported that students were better able to understand complex concepts and apply them in various contexts. In addition, students also showed improvement in writing and presentation skills, which was reflected in the quality of their project reports and presentations. Research also shows that the implementation of Project-Based Learning has a positive impact on students' academic outcomes and learning motivation. Students who engaged in project-based learning showed significant improvement in their final test and assessment scores. At Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4, teachers noted an increase in students' conceptual understanding of the social studies material taught, which was reflected in their ability to explain and apply the concepts in a real context. In addition, Project-Based Learning also increased students' intrinsic motivation to learn. Students involved in the project reported that they felt more interested and motivated to delve deeper into the material studied due to its clear relevance and practical

application. This increased motivation also contributed to greater commitment to the learning process and higher academic achievement.

Despite the positive results, this study also identified some challenges faced in implementing Project-Based Learning. One of the main challenges is time management, as projects often require more time than traditional learning methods. In addition, the variation in students' abilities is also a challenge, with some students requiring more guidance than others. At Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4, teachers try to overcome these challenges by providing additional guidance and differentiation support. The role of the teacher as a facilitator is crucial in the success of Project-Based Learning. Teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 play an active role in guiding students through the project process, providing constructive feedback, and helping students overcome difficulties they encounter. The teacher also serves as a source of additional information and liaison with external sources. The role of an effective facilitator helps to ensure that the project runs smoothly and students gain maximum benefit from their learning experience.

Overall, this research confirms that Project-Based Learning is an effective and efficient learning approach to improve student learning outcomes at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang Probolinggo Regency. Project-Based Learning not only improves understanding of academic material, but also develops important skills such as collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity. Although there are challenges in its implementation, such as time management and variations in student abilities, the benefits gained from Project-Based Learning are far greater. Recommendations for the implementation of Project-Based Learning include further training for teachers, provision of adequate resources, and increased support from the school and parents. Thus, Project-Based Learning can be implemented more effectively, not only in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 but also in other schools, to improve the quality of education and better prepare students to face future challenges.

The generalization of the findings of this study shows that the application of Project-Based Learning in learning Social Studies in Islamic junior high schools can significantly improve academic achievement, student engagement, and understanding of religious values. The findings are relevant not only for the Islamic junior high school context, but can also be applied to other schools with similar educational backgrounds. Project-Based Learning, which emphasizes project-based learning and active student engagement, is proven to be effective in deepening the understanding of social concepts and improving critical thinking and collaborative skills. By customizing Project-Based Learning projects to be relevant to local religious and cultural values, other schools can also reap the same benefits in improving the quality of learning and students' character development.

Beyond the specific context of Islamic schools, the findings also offer valuable insights for social education in general. This research shows that the integration of local religious or cultural values in Project-Based Learning can increase the relevance and meaning of learning for students. Therefore, this approach can be applied more broadly across a range of educational contexts with appropriate adjustments in both faith-based and general education systems. The findings support the idea that project-based learning that is personalized and relevant to students' social and cultural contexts can create more effective and meaningful learning experiences. As such, the generalizability of these findings highlights the potential of Project-Based Learning as an adaptive and beneficial learning strategy across a range of educational environments.

3.2. Discussion

The Project Based Learning model emphasizes project-based learning that allows students to learn through real-world problem solving, team collaboration, and application of knowledge in a practical context. This analysis will include the impact of Project-Based Learning on students' academic achievement, skill development, as well as other factors that influence learning outcomes. To analyze and discuss the student learning outcomes of the Project-Based Learning Model in Social Studies learning, it is important to consider the various aspects that influence the effectiveness of this approach in the modern educational context. Project-Based Learning emphasizes student-centered learning, where they are actively engaged in solving real-world problems through collaborative projects. This analysis will cover the impact of Project-Based Learning on academic achievement, skill development, as well as factors that influence student learning outcomes.

First of all, student learning outcomes in Project-Based Learning are often measured by increased academic achievement in social studies materials. Studies show that Project-Based Learning can improve students' understanding of concepts and application of knowledge in real contexts [26]. In this study, students not only learn facts or theories, but they also experience how to apply their knowledge to solve concrete problems in the projects they work on. As a result, students can develop a deeper and more relevant understanding of the social studies topics they learn. In addition, Project-Based Learning has been shown to improve students' critical and creative thinking skills. Through projects designed to challenge and solve problems, students are exposed to opportunities to develop their analytical abilities [1]. They learn to question information, construct arguments based on evidence, and seek innovative solutions. These skills are not only relevant in academic contexts but also essential for success in the real world where critical thinking is required to address complex challenges.

Project-Based Learning also promotes the development of collaboration and teamwork skills. Students learn to work together in teams to design, manage and execute their projects [27]. The ability to communicate effectively, respect different opinions, and share responsibilities are key aspects of collaboration in Project-Based Learning . This not only prepares students for the collaborative world of work but also broadens their social skills in general. However, there are several factors that need to be considered in evaluating student learning outcomes from Project-Based Learning . One of them is the need for proper and fair assessment of student-generated projects. Evaluation should include not only the final product but also the learning process that occurs throughout the project [28]. Clear and transparent evaluation criteria help to objectively measure student achievement and provide useful feedback for further development.

Besides evaluation, another supporting factor is the support from the teacher as the facilitator of Project-Based Learning. The teacher's role in providing direction, guidance and support during the project-based learning process is crucial [29]. Trained teachers can help students overcome the challenges they face in the project and ensure that the learning that takes place remains focused on the desired learning objectives. In the context of learning outcomes, it is also worth noting that Project-Based Learning can help develop positive attitudes towards learning and students' intrinsic motivation. When students see the relevance of the subject matter to the real world through the projects they work on, they tend to be more motivated to learn and actively participate in the learning process [30]. This motivation is important for maintaining long-term interest in learning and promoting lifelong learning.

However, there are also challenges that need to be overcome in implementing Project-Based Learning. One of them is effective time management to plan and complete projects within the set time limit [31]. Lack of time or inappropriate scheduling can hinder students' progress in satisfactorily completing projects. In addition, Project-Based Learning requires adequate resources, including technology and access to relevant reading materials, to support project-based learning [32]. Limited infrastructure can be an obstacle in providing an optimal learning experience for students. Overall, Project-Based Learning offers a potential approach to improve student learning outcomes in social studies by integrating knowledge, skills and attitudes in a real-world context. Through well-designed projects, students can develop the deep understanding, critical and collaborative skills needed for future success. However, successful implementation requires strong support from all relevant parties, as well as adjustments to challenges that may arise during the learning process.

Effective implementation of Project-Based Learning can also increase students' intrinsic motivation towards learning. When students see the relevance of the subject matter to the real world through the projects they work on, they tend to be more motivated to learn and actively participate in the learning process [30]. Interesting and challenging projects can also increase students' engagement in learning, as they feel they have more control over their own learning. Nevertheless, there are a number of challenges that need to be addressed in the implementation of Project-Based Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang. One of them is effective time management in planning, implementing and evaluating projects. Lack of time or inappropriate scheduling can hinder students' progress in completing projects satisfactorily. Support from the school, teachers, and parents is also important to create a favourable environment for Project-Based Learning . Proper evaluation is also a crucial aspect of Project-Based Learning. Assessment should include not only the final product but also the learning process that occurs throughout the project. Clear and transparent evaluation criteria help to objectively measure student achievement and provide useful feedback for further development [33]. In addition, research by Wang and Zhang [34] emphasized the importance of tailoring Project-Based Learning projects to local cultural and religious contexts to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of learning, which is in line with the findings of this study that projects integrated with Islamic values strengthen students' understanding of social materials. These recent findings support the argument that Project-Based Learning tailored to specific contexts, including religious values, can significantly improve learning outcomes and student character development.

The short-term and long-term impacts of implementing Project-Based Learning in social studies learning in Islamic junior secondary schools are evident in the results of this study. In the short term, Project-Based Learning significantly increased student engagement and motivation, which is in line with the findings of a recent study by Martin and Paredes [35], which showed that Project-Based Learning can immediately increase student engagement and understanding of the material through more interactive and applicable activities. The study indicated that students engaged in Project-Based Learning showed rapid improvements in academic achievement and social skills. In the long term, the impact of Project-Based Learning extends to the continued development of critical and collaborative thinking skills, as well as the application of moral and ethical values in the context of everyday life. This is supported by a study by Kim and Lee [36], who found that Project-Based Learning not only impacts short-term academic outcomes but also facilitates the development of social and character skills that are important for students' long-term success. With the integration of Islamic values, Project-Based Learning also assists students in forming character and ethics consistent with their religious principles, as outlined in a study by Ahmed and Khan [23], who highlighted the importance of tailoring learning methods to religious contexts to support sustainable character development. These findings suggest that the implementation

of Project-Based Learning in a faith-based education environment can yield sustainable benefits, both in academic aspects and character development, supporting students' readiness to face future challenges.

The limitations of this study include several aspects that affect the generalizability and implementation of the findings. One of the main limitations is the relatively small sample size limited to one Islamic junior secondary school, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader educational context. Research by Hsu and Wang [37] shows that small sample sizes often limit the ability to broadly infer research results, especially in contexts that have high variability such as faith-based education. In addition, methodological limitations, such as the lack of a control group and reliance on qualitative data that may be affected by subjective bias, are also challenges. Research by Patel et al. [38] emphasized the importance of using mixed methods and more robust experimental designs to address potential biases and improve the validity of the results. Another limitation is the lack of long-term evaluation of the impact of Project-Based Learning on students' academic outcomes and character development beyond the study period. As stated by Martin and Paredes [35], research that requires a longer period of time to evaluate the long-term impact of educational interventions is critical to understanding the sustained effects of learning methods. This finding underscores the need for further research with a more comprehensive methodological design and longer observation period to evaluate the impact of Project-Based Learning more thoroughly.

The findings of this study on the application of Project-Based Learning in learning Social Studies in Islamic junior high schools can be strengthened by the results of recent studies that show the positive impact of Project-Based Learning in the educational context. Research by Liu et al. [39] revealed that Project-Based Learning effectively increases student engagement and concept understanding in various subjects, including social studies, by providing more contextual and relevant learning experiences. These findings support research results showing that Project-Based Learning makes social studies learning more engaging and interactive, which contributes to improved academic outcomes and student motivation. Liu et al. also highlighted that Project-Based Learning -based projects allow students to better understand and apply the material in a real-life context, which aligns with the results of this study showing an increase in students' understanding of social concepts and Islamic values.

Another study by Zhang and Chen [40] confirmed that the integration of cultural and religious values in Project-Based Learning can deepen students' understanding and increase the relevance of learning. They found that linking projects with local or religious values not only increased student engagement but also strengthened character and ethical development. This finding reinforces the research results that the integration of Islamic values in Project-Based Learning makes social studies materials more meaningful and applicable, helping students link social concepts with their religious values. In addition, research by Carter et al. [41] showed that challenges in implementing Project-Based Learning , such as limited resources and teacher training support, are key factors affecting the effectiveness of this method. These findings are in line with the results of the study that identified the need for additional support for teachers and customization of the method in order for it to be implemented effectively in faith-based education contexts. This recent research supports that Project-Based Learning , when properly adapted and supported with adequate resources, can provide significant benefits in students' social learning and character development.

Generalizations from this study indicate that the implementation of Project-Based in social studies learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 is not only effective in improving student engagement and academic achievement in the short term, but also provides a sustainable positive impact on character development and understanding of religious values. Project-Based Learning, which links the subject matter to Islamic values, is proven to deepen students' understanding of social concepts and help them apply religious principles in relevant social contexts. Previous research reinforces these findings by showing that the integration of local or religious values in learning projects significantly increases student engagement and character development. Although there are challenges in implementing Project-Based Learning, such as limited resources and training support, these findings underscore the importance of tailoring learning methods to cultural and religious contexts to achieve optimal results. Therefore, Project-Based Learning, when implemented with adequate planning and support, has great potential to improve learning quality and character development in various educational settings.

4.   CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang, Probolinggo Regency, it can be concluded that the application of the Project-Based Learning learning model has a significant positive impact on the achievement of student learning outcomes in Social Studies subjects. Through Project-Based Learning , students not only gain a deeper understanding of the material studied, but also develop critical thinking, collaboration and problem-solving skills that are essential for academic success and everyday life. Students who engage in real and relevant projects show increased motivation to learn, engagement in the learning process, and the ability to apply their knowledge in a broader context. In addition, the results of this

study also show that Project-Based Learning can help overcome some of the challenges in social studies learning, such as lack of student engagement and difficulty in understanding abstract concepts. By engaging students in projects that require research, analysis and presentation, Project-Based Learning provides a more contextualised and meaningful learning experience. The implementation of Project-Based Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 Boto Lumbang successfully creates a more dynamic and interactive learning environment, which not only improves academic outcomes but also builds students' social and emotional skills. Therefore, Project-Based Learning can be considered as an effective catalyst in improving the achievement of student learning outcomes in social studies.

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zainul Hasan 4 implement Project-Based Learning by paying attention to the integration of Islamic values in the project design to increase students' engagement, understanding of the material, and character development. Schools should provide comprehensive training for teachers to support them in designing and implementing effective projects, as well as provide adequate resources to support Project-Based Learning implementation. In addition, it is important to conduct periodic evaluations to ensure that Project-Based Learning projects remain relevant and in line with learning objectives and religious values. With this approach, Project-Based Learning can maximize the academic benefits and character development of students, and improve the quality of education in a faith-based school environment.

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