

Active Learning Management in Islamic Education: Implementation of Pjbl, PBL, and Inquiry to Improve the Quality of Learning and Internalize Islamic Values

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ABSTRAK

This study examines the management of active learning in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) through the integrated implementation of three learning models: Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Problem-Based Learning (PBL), and Inquiry Learning. Using a conceptual-analytical approach to library research, this study identifies a significant research gap in the literature: the absence of an active learning management framework that integrates all three models at once along with the dimension of holistic internalization of Islamic values. The results of the study show that: (1) systematic PAI active learning management including planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of active models; (2) PjBL, PBL, and Inquiry each make a unique contribution to the development of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies according to the goals of Islamic education; (3) the internalization of Islamic values takes place through three successive stages: cognitive understanding, affective appreciation, and psychomotor practice; and (4) portfolio-based authentic evaluation, observation, and reflection are the most appropriate instruments to measure the success of PAI active learning as a whole. This study recommends integrating an Islamic value-based active learning management framework into the curriculum, teacher training, and Islamic education policy in Indonesia.

Keywords: active learning management, Project-Based Learning, Problem-Based Learning, Inquiry, internalization of Islamic values, Islamic Religious Education



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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic education basically contains a dual mission that complements each other: on the one hand it functions as a vehicle for the transmission of knowledge and spiritual values, and on the other hand it is tasked with shaping the character of students in accordance with the values of the Qur'an and al-Sunnah (UNESCO, 2017, p. 12). These two missions cannot be separated, because failure in either of them will result in inequality in the overall educational output. However, in practice, the implementation of Islamic education in formal Indonesian institutions ranging from Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), to Madrasah Aliyah (MA) and Islamic-based schools still faces fundamental challenges that have not been completely solved. Azyumardi Azra noted that one of the chronic problems in Indonesian Islamic education is the tendency to learn that is verbalistic and memorized alone, without a deep contextual understanding (Azra, 2012, p. 47). This pattern results in students being able to recite religious texts fluently, but fail to internalize the meaning and values contained in them into daily life. In other words, there is a serious gap between the cognitive dimension and the affective-psychomotor dimension in the PAI learning process. M. Amin Abdullah said that the paradigm of Islamic education which is still trapped in the traditional model where teachers are the only source of scientific authority needs to be revised immediately in the face of the demands of the times (Abdullah, 2006, pp. 23–24). Students from the digital generation who are used to accelerating information and critical thinking need a learning model that provides space for exploration, collaboration, and independent construction of

meaning. The incompatibility between conventional learning methods and the characteristics of today's learners is one of the factors in the decline in the quality of PAI learning.

Based on the above problem identification and research gap, this study aims to: (1) examine the concept of active learning management in the context of Islamic Education comprehensively; (2) analyze the implementation of PjBL, PBL, and Inquiry as an integrated active learning model in PAI; (3) identify the mechanism of internalizing Islamic values through the application of these active learning models; (4) formulate an authentic and holistic evaluation management strategy; and (5) provide conceptual contributions in the form of an active learning management framework based on Islamic values that can be used as a practical reference for educators and Islamic education policy makers in Indonesia.

2. DISCUSSION

The theoretical foundation of active learning has been laid by John Dewey who affirmed that learning happens through direct experience (Dewey, 1938, p. 19). This principle was then elaborated by various modern education experts, and gave birth to a number of active learning models that are now widely known, including *Project-Based Learning* (PjBL), *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL), and *Inquiry Learning*. Nastasi and Clements prove that the active involvement of students in the learning process results in *higher-order thinking* skills that go far beyond what can be achieved through passive learning (Nastasi & Clements, 1992, p. 215). This finding is corroborated by Trianto who states that innovative learning models based on constructivism have been proven to significantly improve not only cognitive learning outcomes, but also students' attitudes and skills (Trianto, 2014, p. 22). Wina Sanjaya explained that active learning essentially requires teachers to transform from a role as *a transmitter of knowledge* to *a facilitator of learning* (Sanjaya, 2006, p. 214). In the context of PAI, this transformation has a deeper meaning: PAI teachers are not just teaching the laws of fiqh or memorizing verses, but guiding students to find the relevance of Islamic values in the context of their real lives.

Recent studies further strengthen this argument. Firdaus, Jamal, and Arifin proved through field research in secondary schools that the implementation of PjBL in PAI learning significantly improves student learning outcomes compared to conventional methods (Firdaus et al., 2023, pp. 241–254). Rachman and Nurhanifansyah added that the integration of PjBL in PAI has a positive impact on three aspects at once: increasing learning motivation, strengthening cooperation between students, and internalizing Islamic values that are deeper and more durable (Rachman & Nurhanifansyah, 2024, pp. 23–34). William Bender defines PjBL as a learning strategy in which students work on authentic projects that are personally and academically meaningful over a period of time (Bender, 2012, p. 7). Howard Barrows and Tamblyn define PBL as learning centered on real, unstructured problems, which is used as a stimulus to encourage learners to learn independently and collaboratively (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980, pp. 1–5). Meanwhile, Jerome Bruner emphasized that inquiry learning that emphasizes the process of discovery and investigation is able to arouse the intrinsic motivation of students because they are involved in the process of scientific thinking (Bruner, 1961, p. 23).

Although the literature on active learning and Islamic education has developed substantially, there is a significant *research gap* in the study of integrated active learning management, especially those that combine PjBL, PBL, and Inquiry simultaneously in a cohesive PAI learning management framework. First, most of the existing research examines active learning models in part. Setiawan examines PjBL at Al-Azhar Islamic High School independently without associating it with other models (Setiawan, 2024, pp. 58–62). Similarly, Nurhayati and Wijaya examined the application of inquiry methods in PAI in isolation (Nurhayati & Wijaya, 2023, pp. 139–140). Very few studies have integrated all three models in one systematic learning management framework and evaluated their effectiveness holistically. Haidar Putra Daulay noted that the study of learning management in Islamic education is still fragmented and does not yet have an applicable integrative model (Daulay, 2014, p. 35).

Second, the study of the internalization of Islamic values in the context of active learning is still very limited. Dzulkifli et al. examined the evaluation of the PBL process on qurbani and aqiqah materials, but the focus of the study was limited to the cognitive dimension alone (Dzulkifli et al., 2022, p. 57). Zaini et al. discuss the internalization of the value of religious education from the perspective of Islamic education management in general, without specifically linking it to active learning models (Zaini et al., 2022, pp. 82–94). Syaiful Sagala reminded that learning evaluation that is only oriented to the cognitive aspect ignores the essence of Islamic education with a holistic dimension (Sagala, 2011, p. 88). Third, the management aspect in the implementation of active learning including planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising has not been studied specifically in the context of PAI learning. Wibowo noted that the management of improving the quality of Islamic education still requires a more operational and measurable model (Wibowo, 2023, pp. 32–36). Kartika et al. studied PAI learning management for the formation of religious character, but have not explicitly integrated active learning models into its management framework (Kartika et al., 2023, pp. 917–932). Oemar

Hamalik emphasized that without good management, the implementation of a sophisticated learning model will not result in sustainable change (Hamalik, 2004, pp. 170–172).

Fourth, there has been no comprehensive study that connects active learning management (PjBL, PBL, Inquiry) with efforts to internalize Islamic values in a conceptual framework that can be used as a practical guide for PAI teachers in Indonesia. This gap becomes an academic void that needs to be filled immediately through conceptual-analytical research based on critical and comprehensive literature review.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a conceptual-analytical *type of library research*. The research data is sourced from books, scientific journals, proceedings, government regulations, and authoritative documents relevant to the theme of active learning management and Islamic education. Criteria for inclusion of sources: (1) books by academics in the field of Islamic education and pedagogy that are recognized; (2) peer-reviewed scientific journal articles, with priority on SINTA and Scopus indexed journals; (3) journal articles published in the range of 2020–2025 for contemporary reference; and (4) applicable government regulations. The data collection technique was carried out through a systematic literature search using the following keywords: *active learning management, Project-Based Learning, Problem-Based Learning, inquiry learning, Islamic education, value internalization, and PAI learning quality*. Data analysis is carried out through content *analysis techniques* supported by critical interpretation and conceptual synthesis. The validity of the study is maintained through triangulation of sources (more than one reference per concept) and logical connections between parts of the study. The analytical framework refers to the four management functions according to Terry planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising which are then contextualized with Islamic pedagogical principles. Bararah emphasized that learning planning is a critical element that determines the overall direction of the PAI learning process and distinguishes between systematic and spontaneous learning (Bararah, 2022, p. 412).

4. RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Active Learning Management in Islamic Education

Active learning management in Islamic education is a systematic and planned process in managing all learning components from planning, organizing, implementing, to evaluation by using learning models that place students as active subjects in the construction of knowledge and values. Hmelo-Silver defines active learning as a series of activities that engage learners in the process of high-level thinking, problem-solving, and critical reflection (Hmelo-Silver, 2004, pp. 235–266). From an Islamic perspective, active learning management is in line with the command of Allah SWT to always *be tafakkur* (meditate), *tadabbur* (deep understanding), and *tafaqquh* (to deepen religious knowledge). Ali Wafa et al. in their latest study emphasized that the transformation of PAI learning from a memorization paradigm to the internalization of values requires a fundamental change in the way teachers manage the learning ecosystem, not only a change in teaching techniques, but a paradigm shift in what learning is in an Islamic context (Wafa et al., 2025, pp. 103–116). Wibowo emphasized that effective Islamic learning quality management requires the integration of national academic standards with Islamic pedagogical values centered on character *building* (Wibowo, 2023). This means that active learning management in PAI is not only a matter of teaching techniques, but a matter of how to manage the entire learning ecosystem so that every student activity is worth worship and forms an Islamic personality.

Active Learning Planning

Planning is the foundation of the entire learning management process. Ramayulis stated that good PAI learning planning must refer to four principles: (1) the relevance of the suitability of the material to the needs of students; (2) continuity between materials; (3) flexibility of adaptability to classroom conditions; and (4) optimal use of time and resources efficiency (Ramayulis, 2005, p. 234). These four principles must be a reference in preparing an active learning-based Learning Implementation Plan (RPP). Firmansyah et al. explained that PjBL planning in PAI must specifically pay attention to: (1) the suitability of the project with the learning outcomes (CP) of PAI in the Independent Curriculum; (2) the relevance of the project to the socio-cultural context of the students; (3) organic integration of Islamic values into each phase of the project; and (4) the availability of realistic resources (Firmansyah et al., 2024, pp. 109–126). In the context of the Independent Curriculum that is currently in effect in madrasas based on the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 3211 of 2022, PAI learning planning must also be in line with the profile of Pancasila students with the dimension of *rahmatan lil-'alamin*.

Implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in PAI

PjBL is a learning model that organizes learning around complex task projects that involve investigation, design, and creation of real products or presentations. Setiawan proved through his field research at Al-Azhar Islamic High School that the implementation of PjBL in PAI effectively improves students' critical thinking

skills and creativity, as well as strengthening their Islamic identity through contextual projects (Setiawan, 2024). The stages of implementing PjBL in PAI include: (1) determining basic questions for teachers to ask essential questions that are meaningful in Islam; (2) project planning of students together with teachers formulating work steps; (3) preparation of a realistic timeline schedule; (4) the implementation and monitoring of teachers monitoring the progress of the project periodically; (5) testing the results of product presentations and discussions; and (6) evaluation of the experience of reflection on the learning process and outcomes. Mulyasa emphasized that in PjBL, evaluation is not only carried out at the end of the project but also during the process (*process evaluation*) (Mulyasa, 2005, p. 55). Suaidi et al. proved in their research on PjBL in the religious moderation course that projects designed by explicitly integrating Islamic values result in a deeper internalization of values than projects that only focus on academic products (Suaidi et al., 2024). These findings confirm the importance of intentionality in the design of PjBL for PAI: Islamic values should be an integral part of every phase of the project, not just an additional ornament at the beginning or end of the activity.

Implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in PAI

PBL puts real problems as the starting point for learning. Novan Ardy Wiyani explained that in PBL, PAI teachers play the role of tutors who guide students through the problem-solving cycle, not as instructors who provide direct answers (Wiyani, 2013, p. 67). Learners are encouraged to identify what they know, what they don't know, and how they will acquire the knowledge necessary to solve the problem. In the context of PAI, issues that can be used as a stimulus for PBL include: (1) digital ethics issues from an Islamic perspective (cyberbullying, hoaxes, data privacy); (2) socio-social problems that require solutions based on Islamic values (poverty, environment, discrimination); (3) contemporary moral dilemmas that require the collective *ijtihad* of students. Dzulkifli et al. found that the evaluation of the PBL process that is carried out in an ongoing manner, not only at the end of learning, is able to capture the development of students' understanding more accurately and comprehensively (Dzulkifli et al., 2022). The stages of PBL in PAI include: (1) problem orientation; (2) learning organization; (3) independent investigation and student groups collect information from various sources, including the postulates of *naqli* and *aqli*; (4) the development and presentation of artifacts; and (5) analysis and evaluation of the problem-solving process. Hmelo-Silver emphasized that in each stage of PBL, the right teacher facilitation determines the depth of learning achieved by students (Hmelo-Silver, 2004).

Implementation of Inquiry Learning in PAI

Inquiry learning emphasizes the process of discovery and investigation carried out by students. Ahmad D. Marimba emphasized that the spirit of scientific inquiry is actually inherent in the Islamic scientific tradition, a tradition that gave birth to great scholars such as Ibn Sina and Al-Khawarizmi who were not satisfied with existing knowledge, but continued to seek the truth (Marimba, 1980, p. 76). Nasution proves in his research that the application of the inquiry model in PAI learning in the era of Independent Learning effectively improves students' ability to analyze religious problems critically and independently (Nasution, 2025, pp. 137–143). Nurhayati and Wijaya added that the inquiry strategy in PAI not only improves critical thinking skills, but also develops students' communication skills in conveying evidence-based arguments systematically (Nurhayati & Wijaya, 2023). Abdul Mujib and Jusuf Mudzakir explain that inquiry in Islamic education can be developed through the approach of *tafakkur* (deep reflection), *tasyawur* (deliberation), and *istidlal* (reasoning-based reasoning) (Mujib & Mudzakir, 2006, p. 193). These three approaches provide an Islamic epistemological foundation for the practice of inquiry in PAI classrooms, so that the process of discovering knowledge is not only academic but also spiritually valuable.

Internalizing Islamic Values Through Active Learning

Internalization of values is the process of appreciating and practicing values consistently until they become part of an individual's personality. Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007 emphasizes that the purpose of Islamic religious education is to form students into human beings who have faith, piety, and noble character (Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007, Article 2). This noble goal cannot be achieved through the mere verbal transmission of values, but requires a process of appreciation through meaningful learning experiences. Ali Wafa et al. emphasized in their latest study that the internalization of values is not enough through mastery of theory, but must be realized through real experience, habituation, and example (Wafa et al., 2025). Said Agil Husin Al Munawar identified five main values that need to be internalized through Islamic education: (1) the value of *monotheism*; (2) *moral values*; (3) the value of *ukhuwah*; (4) the value of justice; and (5) the value of *rahmah* (Al Munawar, 2005, p. 7). These five values can be integrated into various PjBL, PBL, and Inquiry activities through careful learning design. The mechanism of internalizing values through active learning takes place in three stages: (1) the stage of cognitive understanding of students understanding values conceptually through postulate studies and discussions; (2) the stage of affective appreciation of students feels the relevance of these values through direct experience in projects or problem solving; and (3) the stage of psychomotor practice of students actualizing values in real behavior. Ismail SM emphasized that the PAIKEM strategy is essentially an instrument to accelerate the three stages of internalization of these values (Ismail, 2008, p. 37).

Learning Evaluation Management

The evaluation of active learning in PAI must be authentic, holistic, and continuous. Zaini et al. emphasized from the perspective of Islamic education management that a good evaluation system must be able to measure the development of students' religious values qualitatively, not just measure material mastery quantitatively (Zaini et al., 2022). Relevant evaluation instruments include: (1) project assessment for PjBL; (2) a portfolio of students that documents the learning process and reflection of values; (3) behavior observation rubric; (4) evidence-based presentation; and (5) a journal of religious reflection.

Wibowo emphasized that effective management of Islamic education quality evaluation requires a combination of formative evaluation (during the process) and summative evaluation (at the end), with a greater proportion on formative evaluation to capture the dynamics of value internalization (Wibowo, 2023). Assessment in active learning PAI needs to combine three domains in a balanced manner: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. An evaluation imbalance that is too inclined to the cognitive aspect alone will result in students who are good at talking about Islamic values but fail to internalize them.

Contribution to the Quality of PAI Learning

The implementation of systematic active learning management makes a real contribution to improving the quality of PAI learning in several dimensions. First, the cognitive dimension: students who learn through PjBL, PBL, and Inquiry are shown to have a deeper and more durable understanding than those who learn through conventional methods. Rachman and Nurhanifansyah proved that the integration of PjBL in PAI increases students' critical thinking skills measurably (Rachman & Nurhanifansyah, 2024).

Second, the affective dimension: the collaborative process in PjBL and PBL naturally trains the values of *ukhuwah*, shared responsibility (*mas'uliyah*), and respect for differences. Third, the spiritual dimension: when learning is designed by intentionally integrating the value dimension, learners not only gain religious knowledge but also experience authentic spiritual growth. Fourth, the managerial dimension: the systematic use of a management framework ensures that the implementation of active learning is not sporadic, but planned, organized, and measurable in its success.

Challenges and Strengthening Strategies

The implementation of active learning management in PAI is inseparable from various challenges. The first challenge is cultural resistance: the tradition of PAI learning dominated by the talaqqi model has long been firmly entrenched, so the shift towards active learning has often met with resistance from various parties. Kartika et al. noted that one of the main obstacles to character-based PAI learning management is the lack of systemic support from school principals and institutional policies that are still oriented towards exam results (Kartika et al., 2023). The second challenge is resource limitations: PjBL and PBL require adequate learning materials and tools. The third challenge is the administrative burden of teachers: good active learning design requires much more intensive planning than conventional learning. Strengthening strategies that can be pursued include: (1) intensive training for PAI teachers in designing active learning; (2) the formation of a professional *learning community*; (3) policy support from the head of madrasah/school; (4) the involvement of parents and the community in the PjBL project that has a social impact; and (5) the development of an evaluation system that recognizes the active learning process, not just exam results.

5. CONCLUSION

Active learning management in Islamic education that integrates PjBL, PBL, and Inquiry is the appropriate and urgent response to the challenges of PAI learning quality in Indonesia. This study concludes five main points. First, the concept of active learning management in PAI is not just the adoption of modern pedagogical techniques, but is the actualization of the spirit of Islamic science that always encourages *tafakkur*, *tadabbur*, and *tafaqquh* active thinking processes that are the main characteristics of classical Islamic intellectualism. Second, the implementation of PjBL, PBL, and Inquiry in PAI must be managed systematically through management functions (planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating) so that they are not sporadic. Each model has its own unique strengths: PjBL excels at developing creativity and collaboration; PBL excels in building value-based problem-solving capabilities; and Inquiry excels in arousing curiosity and independent thinking. Third, the internalization of Islamic values through active learning takes place through three mutually reinforcing stages: cognitive understanding, affective appreciation, and psychomotor practice. The success of this internalization is highly dependent on the ability of PAI teachers to design learning experiences that intentionally and organically integrate Islamic values into every learning activity. Fourth, the evaluation of PAI active learning must be authentic and holistically assess the three domains in a balanced manner and use various instruments that are able to capture the dimensions of the process, not just the dimensions of the final product.

Fifth, despite the challenges in their implementation, they can be overcome through comprehensive strengthening strategies: teacher training, professional learning communities, institutional policy support, and community engagement. With good active learning management, Islamic education can fulfill its great mission:

to produce a generation of Muslims who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also spiritually mature, and morally noble a generation of *rahmatan lil-'alamin* in the midst of the complexities of the modern world.

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