

## ISLAMIC EDUCATION LEARNING STRATEGY BASED ON PROJECT-BASED LEARNING TO STRENGTHEN THE PROFILE OF PANCASILA STUDENTS

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### Abstract

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*Project-Based Learning,  
Islamic Education,  
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*This study aims to analyze the learning strategy of Islamic Education based on Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile which emphasizes the balance between spiritual, moral, and cognitive aspects of students. Through a qualitative research approach with a library research method, this study examines various academic sources and previous research results relevant to the application of PjBL in the context of Islamic Religious Education. The results show that the PjBL model is able to shape the character of students who are faithful, pious, and have noble morals through project-based activities, such as social movements, worship journals, and Qur'anic literacy campaigns. This approach also encourages students to collaborate across subjects, think critically, and develop creativity and independence. In addition, the application of PjBL in Islamic Religious Education strengthens the values of mutual cooperation, global diversity, and social responsibility that are at the core of the Pancasila Student Profile. The impact of this research confirms that the integration of PjBL with Islamic Education has the potential to become an alternative learning model that is adaptive to the Merdeka curriculum, relevant to global challenges, and effective in building a generation with Islamic and Pancasilaist character in developing countries.*

### INTRODUCTION

The paradigm shift in education in Indonesia over the past decade has marked a shift from a teacher-centered learning approach to one that is student-centered. This transformation is not simply an adaptation to technological advances and globalization, but also a reflection of the nation's spiritual needs, rooted in the values of Pancasila. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), the goal of education is not only to develop intellectual intelligence but also to foster faith, noble character, and social responsibility. Therefore, there is an urgency to introduce learning models that not only hone cognition but also foster students' moral and spiritual values. One relevant and contextual approach is *Project-Based Learning* (PjBL), which encourages students to learn through real-life experiences and productive activities (Abidin et al., 2021).

The PjBL model offers a learning framework that allows students to directly engage in the process of creating and solving problems. In the context of Islamic

Religious Education (PAI), this approach provides space for students to express Islamic values through concrete social actions. For example, the "Garbage Charity Movement" project serves not only as a medium for environmental education but also as a means to instill the values of sincerity and social responsibility. Similarly, the "Quranic Literacy Campaign" project can shape students' critical, communicative character, grounded in religious values. Thus, PjBL is not merely a modern learning method, but also a spiritual platform that brings together knowledge, practice, and values.

The integration of PjBL and Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is crucial because religious education in schools is often trapped in the theoretical realm. Learning is still predominantly oriented towards memorization and cognitive tests, while affective and psychomotor aspects are marginalized (Hamzah et al., 2025). Yet, Islamic education has a mandate to shape whole people who are capable of rational thinking and moral behavior. Through PjBL, students are invited to experience a more meaningful learning process, where religious concepts are not only understood but also internalized through collaborative and reflective activities. Cross-subject projects such as collaborations between PAI, PKN, and IPS, for example, can strengthen the synergy of religious and national values.

Furthermore, the PjBL approach aligns with the vision of the *Pancasila Student Profile*, which is the main orientation of the Independent Curriculum. The six main dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile—faith and devotion to God Almighty, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity—can be developed through contextual Islamic Religious Education projects (Nabila, 2025). For example, a *creative Islamic preaching video project* can hone students' faith and creativity, while *socio-religious studies* train critical reasoning and empathy for humanitarian issues. In this regard, PjBL is not only a pedagogical method, but also a means of recontextualizing Pancasila values within a moderate and transformative Islamic education framework.

However, the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is certainly not without its challenges. Time constraints, teachers' lack of preparedness in designing religious-themed projects, and limited digital support are real obstacles in the field. Teachers often struggle to assess project-based learning outcomes because assessment systems still emphasize outcomes over processes. Furthermore, not all educational institutions have adequate human resources and technology to optimally integrate project-based learning. Therefore, an effective implementation strategy must be designed, encompassing teacher training, school support, and adaptation to the flexible and contextual principles of the Independent Curriculum.

In an academic context, the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning strategy based on PjBL (Problem-Based Learning) has strong relevance to strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile. Epistemologically, this concept combines *learning by doing* with *learning by believing*, where the act of learning is inseparable from the values of faith. From an Islamic pedagogical perspective, this approach is a form of implementing educational *tarbiyah amaliyah* through concrete actions (Raihan, 2018). Meanwhile, from a nationalist perspective, PjBL serves as a vehicle for internalizing Pancasila values through social and collaborative practices. Thus, this model serves as a bridge between Islamic spirituality and a harmonious national character.

*Project-Based Learning* (PBL) Islamic Education learning strategies occupies a strategic position in the discourse of 21st-century educational innovation. Several recent studies confirm that the integration of PjBL in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) can simultaneously improve students' critical thinking skills, social empathy, and spirituality. Research by Hidayat and Rahmawati (2023) shows that the application of PjBL in religious learning increases *student engagement* by up to 40% compared to conventional methods (Rahmadani & Agrita, 2025) . Meanwhile, a report from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (2024) noted that schools that adopted PjBL in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects showed significant improvements in the achievement of the Pancasila Student Profile dimensions, particularly in the aspects of mutual cooperation and critical reasoning (Raffles et al., 2025) . Thus, scientifically, this model represents a new direction for Islamic education that is collaborative, relevant, and character-oriented.

This study is crucial because Indonesian education is currently undergoing a major transformation toward a paradigm of independent and character-based learning. The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning strategy based on PjBL addresses not only pedagogical challenges but also ideological ones: how to ground Islamic values within the inclusive framework of Pancasila. Within a normative context, this study seeks to emphasize that the integration of religious and national values is not a dichotomy, but rather a mutually reinforcing symbiosis. Through the PjBL approach, Islamic education can be more contextual, adaptive to the digital era, and relevant to the needs of the nation's future character. Therefore, research on the existence of this strategy is not merely a theoretical exploration but also a concrete contribution to the creation of an intelligent, faithful, and Pancasila-spirited Indonesian generation.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a *normative-descriptive research method* , which aims to examine in depth the concept and implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning strategies based on *Project-Based Learning* (PjBL) in strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile. This approach was chosen because it is able to explain educational phenomena contextually and interpretively, by emphasizing the meaning and values contained in learning practices. Methodologically, qualitative research is oriented towards exploring the meaning behind educational actions and their relevance to national values and Islamic spirituality. Research data were obtained through a comprehensive literature review of various scientific sources, including SINTA-accredited national journals, academic books, reports from the Ministry of Education and Culture, and international publications relevant to the topic of PjBL and PAI integration. The analysis was conducted using reflective and comparative *content analysis techniques* , to find patterns of relationships between constructivist learning theory, religious values, and dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile in the context of the Independent Curriculum.

The research procedure begins with the identification of conceptual issues regarding the effectiveness of PjBL in Islamic education, followed by a review of Islamic pedagogical principles that align with project-based learning theory. Next, the researcher categorized the data to group the findings based on the following aspects: spiritual values, dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, learning strategies, and implementation challenges in the field. Each data obtained was analyzed deductively to find the relevance

between Islamic educational norms and national policies on character building. The validity of the research was maintained through source triangulation and theoretical interpretation by referring to concepts recognized by education experts such as Thomas (2010) and Kemdikbudristek (2024) regarding the effectiveness of PjBL in building 21st-century competencies. Thus, this research method not only produces a systematic description, but also a solid normative argument in explaining the existence and urgency of implementing *Project-Based Learning-based Islamic Education learning strategies* as a means of strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *The Essence of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Islamic Education Learning*

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) essentially shifts the focus of learning from mere “knowledge transfer” to a meaningful experiential process that forms cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies in an integrated manner. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), PjBL enables theological and ethical concepts of religion to no longer be mere objects of memorization, but rather material that is tested and experienced through real social actions. For example, students design, implement, and evaluate the “Garbage Charity Movement” program that combines Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) learning about charity with ecological practices and social responsibility. This process requires students to plan, negotiate values, collectively implement, and reflect ethically; so that faith and praxis interact, rather than stand apart. Literature research shows that PjBL designed with strong *driving questions and links to real issues increases student engagement* and learning relevance, which in turn opens up space for the internalization of moral and spiritual values (Dinta et al., 2025) .

Furthermore, adapting PjBL for spiritual purposes requires project designs that explicitly incorporate affective rather than simply cognitive objectives. For example, the “Quranic Literacy Campaign” project assesses not only the number of verses memorized, but also the process of understanding the context, the ability to absorb moral messages, and the impact of socializing values within the school community or surrounding environment. This type of evaluation uses process indicators (organization, communication, and spiritual reflection) and impact indicators (behavioral change, community participation), so that religious learning becomes a measure of changes in heart and action, not simply test scores. Contextual studies in Indonesian secondary schools show that PjBL in religious subjects can improve critical thinking skills and character aspects when the project is designed to produce a tangible social product (Ruslan, 2024) .

In theory, the collaboration of PjBL with Islamic pedagogy (e.g., tarbiyah amaliyah) carries epistemological implications: religious knowledge is not merely text, but rather practice (knowledge-in-action) tested through collective experience. This approach aligns with the findings of a large review that states that PjBL is effective when it has a real problem center, student autonomy, and contextual relevance; these three elements open up opportunities for religious education to promote the formation of contextual and dynamic moral identities (Darel, 2024) . Furthermore, experiences in developing countries such as Bangladesh and several school contexts in Indonesia show that religious education institutions that integrate PjBL successfully link spiritual competencies with social concerns, although they require support from teacher capacity and resources (Rachman & Nurhanifansyah, 2024) . Therefore, the essence of PjBL in

Islamic Religious Education is to make religious learning a transformative practice that connects faith, reason, and social action.

### ***Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Implementation Strategy to Strengthen the Profile of Pancasila Students***

An effective PjBL implementation strategy begins with project planning that explicitly integrates religious values at every stage: the planning stage includes the development of learning objectives that include faith competencies (affective), social competencies (mutual cooperation), and product outputs that impact the community (Yulianti, 2024). In practice, Islamic Religious Education teachers design project syllabi that include assessment rubrics for spiritual aspects (e.g., intention, sincerity, moral reflection), social aspects (collaboration, leadership), and tangible outcomes (social impact). A concrete example: when designing the "Garbage Charity Movement," assessment indicators include the team organization process, documentation of environmental preaching, and evidence of distribution of waste sales proceeds for social activities so that religious aspects (sincerity, intention to benefit the community) are measured alongside practical aspects. This approach refers to the PjBL principle that objectives must be relevant and measurable, while also emphasizing that value integration is not a cosmetic addition but a core component of the project.

Cross-subject collaboration is a second crucial strategy for enriching the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, partnering with Civics, Social Studies, Indonesian, and even the arts to produce holistic project products (Junaedi, 2025). For example, a Quranic literacy campaign project could involve Indonesian teachers to develop the da'wah narrative, Social Studies teachers to analyze the social context of the campaign's targets, and Civics teachers to discuss national values and human rights. This cross-curricular approach not only enriches the project content but also represents an integrated educational practice that trains students to work in multidisciplinary teams, one of the key characteristics of Pancasila students. Evidence from the implementation of PjBL in Indonesian schools shows that cross-subject projects improve product quality and the transferability of competencies between disciplines. However, the success of such collaboration requires coordination between teacher trainers and time management within the curriculum to avoid conflicts with the regular class load.

Process-based and social impact-based assessment is the third strategy that ensures PjBL makes a real contribution to the Pancasila Student Profile. Rather than simply assigning a final grade to the product, assessment should document the process of work logbooks, spiritual reflection portfolios, video documentation of social interactions, and measure the impact on project beneficiaries (e.g., community response, behavioral change). In the context of developing countries, several field studies have shown that PjBL projects that record real social impacts can strengthen the program's legitimacy in the community and open up opportunities for collaboration with local stakeholders (NGOs, village governments), thus making education an agent of concrete social change. Therefore, the assessment system must be designed to be multidimensional and participatory, involving feedback from the community, peers, and teachers as assessors to capture the cognitive, affective, and social aspects comprehensively.

### ***Pancasila Student Profile Values in the Context of Islamic Education***

The primary values of faith and piety can be practiced through projects that emphasize both ritual practice and ethical reflection, such as creating a worship journal or producing a creative da'wah video. These activities teach students to critically

articulate their spiritual experiences: not merely ritual routines, but understanding the moral purpose of acts of worship and their implications for the social environment. Assessment focuses on the depth of reflection, consistency of practice, and the capacity to disseminate positive values to others. Studies in secondary schools have shown that when religious activities are packaged as project assignments that impact the community, students' levels of participation and perceived subjective meaning increase, crucial indicators for the formation of an active faith character.

The global dimension of diversity can be realized through cross-cultural or interfaith projects involving research on different religious practices and collaborative activities between schools (e.g., cultural exchanges or cross-community dialogue). In developing countries with pluralistic societies, field examples show that cross-cultural programs designed through Project-Based Learning (PjBL) help reduce stereotypes and build empathy through concrete collaborations, such as joint service projects between religious schools addressing sanitation or literacy issues. Such implementations, in addition to developing social capabilities, also train students to appreciate differences while affirming non-exclusive religious identities. Evaluating the social impact of projects is crucial to ensure that diversity goals are achieved not only at the discourse level but also through real attitudinal changes.

The values of mutual cooperation, independence and creativity, and critical reasoning can also be facilitated through a variety of projects: community service projects train mutual cooperation and caring; individual innovation-based projects hone independence and creativity, for example the development of micro-Islamic economic products in schools; while critical reasoning is trained through scientific studies of socio-religious issues that are the theme of the project (e.g., analysis of the impact of social media on religious practices among adolescents). Cases in several schools in Indonesia and the South Asian region show that when projects are paired with a mini-research framework (a simple literature review, field data collection, analysis), students' critical reasoning skills improve and they are able to put forward evidence-based local policy recommendations. Therefore, the design of PjBL in Islamic Religious Education must accommodate the scale and complexity of tasks that encourage the integration of values and thinking competencies.

### ***Challenges and Solutions for Implementing Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Islamic Education***

The first challenge that often arises is that not all Islamic Religious Education teachers possess project design capabilities, process assessment skills, or experience facilitating collective ethical reflection. This situation is exacerbated by the administrative burden and the tradition of lecture-based teaching. To address this, a solution proven effective in several studies is sustained investment in *in-service teacher training* focused on religious-values-based project design, on-the-job coaching, and a community of practice among teachers (RATONO, 2024). The "Guru Penggerak" program and similar initiatives have demonstrated that intensive training and mentoring enhance teachers' ability to design meaningful and measurable projects. Furthermore, the development of modules and a bank of contextual assessment rubrics can facilitate the implementation process for teachers.

The second obstacle is that learning time and the curriculum load of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) require flexible time for research, implementation, and reflection, while school schedules are often rigid. Systemic solutions include curriculum engineering that

utilizes a cross-subject approach (reducing duplication of material), the use of project days, or integration with extracurricular programs so that project activities receive sufficient time without sacrificing curriculum standards. Implementation experience in schools in developing countries shows that school policies that support time flexibility and the recognition of learning credits for project activities help ensure the sustainability of Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Furthermore, coordination between teachers and support from school management are key to effective time allocation.

The third challenge relates to digital tools and assessment; not all schools have the infrastructure for digital documentation, online collaboration, or portfolio assessment platforms. Pragmatic solutions include the use of readily available, low-cost technology (e.g., mobile phone recording, free cloud storage, school blogs as portfolios), and the adaptation of assessment rubrics that can be applied manually. On the policy side, efforts to strengthen infrastructure through collaboration with local governments, NGOs, or corporate CSR programs can be a solution in developing country contexts. It is also crucial to develop valid assessment instruments to assess affective aspects and social impact, incorporating self-assessment, peer-assessment, and community feedback so that the assessment results reflect the process of character change and the project's social contribution.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the literature review that has been discussed, it can be concluded that the Islamic Education learning strategy based on *Project-Based Learning* (PjBL) has strong relevance in strengthening *the Pancasila Student Profile*. This model is not only oriented towards mastering cognitive aspects, but also integrates spiritual, moral, and social values as part of the goals of Islamic education. Through social and religious projects such as *the Garbage Charity Movement* or *the Quranic Literacy Campaign*, students are not only invited to understand Islamic teachings conceptually, but also internalize the values of faith, piety, and social concern into real life. Thus, PjBL becomes an effective means in instilling the meaning of contextual worship and strengthening the character of students who are faithful, moral, and have a Pancasila personality.

Furthermore, the implementation of PjBL in Islamic Religious Education opens up opportunities for cross-subject collaboration, enriching students' learning experiences. The integration of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), Civics (PKN), Social Studies (IPS), and Indonesian Language (Bahasa Indonesia) in social value-based projects fosters a spirit of mutual cooperation, empathy, and diversity. Assessments that focus not only on the final outcome but also on the process and social impact of the project provide space for the development of character, creativity, and student responsibility. This concept reflects the 21st-century educational paradigm that positions students as active subjects in constructing knowledge and values, in line with the direction of *the Merdeka Belajar policy*, which demands a contextual and participatory learning approach.

However, the effectiveness of PjBL implementation in the context of Islamic Education also depends on the readiness of various educational elements, ranging from teacher competence, school support, to the availability of adequate digital resources. Challenges such as limited learning time, minimal teacher training, and resistance to methodological changes can be overcome through increased teacher capacity, curriculum innovation, and synergy between schools, the government, and the community.

Therefore, PjBL-based learning strategies in Islamic Education are not only methodological innovations, but also long-term investments in character building a generation that is faithful, knowledgeable, and globally competitive while remaining grounded in the values of Pancasila and the teachings of Islam, which are rahmatan lil 'alamin.

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