



Efforts to Improve Social Science (IPS) Learning Outcomes through the Problem Based Learning (PBL) Learning Model in Grade VII D Students of SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan

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Abstract

This study addresses the low social studies learning outcomes of grade VII D students at SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan. The problem is evident from the number of students who have not met the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM), low student engagement during lessons, and a teaching approach that remains teacher-centered rather than student-centered. The research aims to examine the implementation of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model in improving social studies learning outcomes and to assess the extent of improvement after the model is applied. A qualitative approach was used, specifically Classroom Action Research (CAR), conducted over two cycles. Each cycle included four stages: planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection. The research subjects were 32 students of grade VII D at SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. Data were collected through observation, tests, interviews, and documentation. The findings show that applying the PBL model improved students' social studies learning outcomes, as reflected in the increasing completeness of learning outcomes across cycles, meeting the study's success indicators. These results suggest that PBL is an effective learning alternative for improving social studies outcomes among grade VII D students at SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan.

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1. Introduction

Education is a learning process encompassing the knowledge, skills, and habits passed down from one generation to the next through teaching, training, and research. It is also a process that helps students gain understanding, develop critical thinking skills, and enhance their potential and achievements.

Student learning outcomes are achievements achieved by students academically through exams and assignments, the activeness of asking and answering questions that support the acquisition of these learning outcomes. In academic circles, it often arises to think that the success of education is not determined by the student's grades stated on the report card or on the diploma, but the measure of success in the cognitive field can be known through the learning outcomes of a student [1]. Student learning outcomes refer to the abilities, knowledge, skills, and understanding gained by students as a result of the learning process. This includes the extent to which students achieve the Learning objectives set by the Specific curriculum or educational program.

A learning model is a Planning or a pattern that is used as a Guideline in planning learning in the classroom or learning in tutorials. The Learning Model refers to the Learning approach to be used, including teaching objectives, stages in learning activities, learning environment and classroom management [2].

Problem Based Learning is a learning model that presents contextual problems so as to stimulate students to learn in groups to solve problems from real-world problems and bind students to curiosity about learning, so that they have their own learning model. Meanwhile, the results of Rorimpandey's (2023) research model of problem-based learning utilize problems contextually so that it can provide opportunities for students to hone, develop, and improve their ability to solve problems and face problems in daily life [3].

The problem-based learning (PBL) learning model is considered to be able to increase students' motivation and curiosity because it involves them directly in finding solutions to real problems. Anies (2003) stated that PBL is a learning method that uses real problems as a context to train students to think critically and solve problems. This is in line with the opinion of Gallow (2003) who explains that PBL emphasizes on finding wise solutions based on certain knowledge and skills, not just right or wrong answers [4].

Several previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning model in improving learning outcomes. Research by Mu'aini (2018) showed that the implementation of Problem-Based Learning enhanced the quality of the learning process and student learning outcomes [5]. A study by Inayatul Aliyah and Ferani Mulianingsih (2019) also confirmed the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning model in improving students' Social Studies learning outcomes [6]. Furthermore, research by Sucipto (2022) indicated that implementing Problem-Based Learning improved students' critical thinking skills and academic achievement [7]. However, these studies differ from the present research, particularly regarding the subjects, locations, and learning contexts involved. This study specifically applies the Problem-Based Learning model to improve the Social Studies learning outcomes of Grade VII-D students at SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan. Therefore, this study aims to complement previous research by examining the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model within the context of Social Studies instruction at that school.

The results of observations and interviews with social studies teachers in grade VII D SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan show that students' social studies learning outcomes are still less than optimal. Of the 32 students, as many as 24 students (75%) have not reached the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) 75, while 8 students (25%) have reached the KKM. Learning is still dominated by teachers through lectures, questions and answers, and presentations so that students' activeness in critical thinking, discussion, and expressing opinions is still not optimal. This condition has an impact on student learning outcomes that are not optimal. Therefore, this study applies the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model as an effort to increase the activeness and learning outcomes of social studies students.

Based on the preceding explanation, this study is significant because students' Social Studies learning outcomes have not yet reached optimal mastery levels. The study aims to examine the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model to improve the Social Studies learning outcomes of Grade VII-D students at SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan and to assess the resulting improvement in student performance. Unlike previous studies, this research focuses on implementing PBL within the context of Social Studies instruction for Grade VII-D students at SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan, utilizing a classroom action research design conducted over two cycles. The

study's novelty lies in the application of PBL as an instructional improvement strategy addressing specific, real-world issues identified within the classroom. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of Social Studies instruction—specifically by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of PBL in enhancing student learning outcomes—and to serve as a reference for teachers in selecting appropriate and effective instructional models.

2. Method

This study uses Class Action (PTK). Classroom action research is carried out as an effort to improve the learning process while improving social studies student learning outcomes through the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model. The PTK model used refers to Kemmis and McTaggart which consists of four stages, namely planning, implementation of actions, observation, and reflection. The research was conducted in two cycles: Cycle I and Cycle II. Each cycle consisted of planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection stages.

In Cycle I, the researcher implemented the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model for the topic of Social Interaction. Students were presented with a problem, worked in groups, engaged in discussions, sought solutions, presented their findings, and completed an evaluation. Reflection results indicated that some students remained insufficiently active and required more intensive guidance. In Cycle II, the researcher implemented improvements based on the reflection from Cycle I by enhancing guidance, motivation, and classroom management. Instruction on the topic of "Getting to Know the Surrounding Environment" was carried out using the PBL model. The results showed an increase in student activity and learning outcomes, successfully meeting the established success indicators.

The research was carried out at SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan in the even semester of the 2025/2026 school year. The research subjects were all students of class VII D totaling 32 students. The data collection techniques in this study include observation, tests, interviews, and documentation. Observations are carried out to observe the activities of teachers and students during the learning process. Tests are used to measure student learning outcomes at the end of each cycle. Interviews were conducted with social studies teachers to obtain information about learning conditions before action, while documentation was used as research supporting data in the form of photos of activities, student grade lists, and other documents related to research. The research instruments used included teacher activity observation sheets, student activity observation sheets, interview guidelines, learning outcome test questions, and documentation.

3. Results

3.1. Application of Problem Based Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects

The application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model was carried out in grade VII D SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan in the Social Interaction subject. Learning with the problem-based learning model begins with the existence of a problem that can be raised by the teacher, then students deepen their knowledge about something they already know to solve the problem [8]. Before implementing the action, the researcher prepared a learning tool that included teaching modules, Student Worksheets (LKPD), learning media, observation instruments for teacher and student activities, and evaluation questions used to measure student learning outcomes. All learning tools are arranged in accordance with the syntax of the Problem Based Learning model so that the learning process takes place systematically [9].

The implementation of learning begins with an introductory activity, namely the teacher opens the learning by saying greetings, leading prayers, checking student attendance, and conveying learning objectives. The teacher then provides an insight by relating the Social Interaction material to events that students often encounter in their daily lives. Furthermore, the teacher presents a problem related to forms of social interaction as a trigger for students to be interested in learning.

In the core activity, teachers apply the syntax of the Problem Based Learning model. Teachers organize students into groups of several members in a heterogeneous manner [10]. Each group obtained an LKPD which contained problems related to Social Interaction materials. Students discuss to identify problems, seek information from various sources, analyze the causes of problems, and develop alternative solutions. During the discussion process, the teacher acts as a facilitator by guiding each group, providing direction if students have difficulties, and encouraging all group members to actively participate in discussion activities [11].

After the discussion is over, each group presents the results of its discussion in front of the class. Other groups were given the opportunity to ask questions, provide responses, and express opinions on the results of the presentation. The teacher then provides reinforcement to the students' answers, straightens out inappropriate concepts, and concludes the learning material with the students[12].

In the closing activity, the teacher provided an evaluation in the form of a learning outcome test to determine the level of students' understanding of the material that had been learned. The results of the evaluation in each cycle are used as a basis for reflection to improve the implementation of learning in the next cycle. Through the application of the Problem Based Learning model, students are expected to be more active in discussing, dare to express opinions, cooperate with group members, and be more enthusiastic in participating in learning than before the action was implemented[13].

3.2. Problem Based Learning (PBL) Learning Model Is Able to Improve Social Science (IPS) Learning Outcomes

The application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model shows an increase in social studies learning outcomes for students in grade VII D SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan in each cycle. This increase is not only seen from the results of the learning test, but also from the change in student activities during the learning process[14]. Students who tend to be passive at first begin to show activeness in participating in learning, such as participating in group discussions, asking questions, expressing opinions, and working together in solving given problems. This condition shows that the application of the Problem Based Learning model is able to create a more active and student-centered learning atmosphere[15].

Before the action was taken, the learning outcomes of social studies students were still relatively low. Based on the results of daily tests, out of 32 students, there are 24 students (75%) who have not reached the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 75, while only 8 students (25%) have reached the KKM. The low learning outcomes are influenced by the learning process that is still dominated by teachers so that students are less actively involved in learning activities. Students listen more to the teacher's explanations and memorize the material than to search and discover the concepts learned on their own.

After the Problem Based Learning model was applied in cycle I, student learning outcomes began to improve. At this stage, students begin to get used to working together in groups to solve problems contained in the Student Worksheet (LKPD) [16]. However, there are still some students who lack confidence in expressing opinions, have not actively asked questions, and still rely on friends to complete group assignments. Therefore, the indicators of research success have not been achieved, so reflection and improvement are carried out in cycle II. Indicators are used as a benchmark in stating that learning outcomes can be declared successful if they meet the provisions of the improved curriculum [17]. Because with the results of the students being known, the ability and success of the students in learning are also known.

The improvement of learning outcomes is inseparable from the application of the PBL (*Problem Based Learning*) model, according to Rosidah (2018:65), there are five main stages in implementing the PBL learning model, namely (1) Orientation of students to problems, (2) Organizing students in learning, (3) Guiding individual and group investigations, (4) Developing and presenting the results of works, (5) Analyzing and evaluating the problem-solving process. [18].

The improvements in cycle II are focused on providing motivation to students, more intensive guidance during group discussions, and providing wider opportunities for each student to express their opinions and present the results of the discussion. These improvements have a positive impact on student learning activities. Most students look more confident, actively discuss, able to work well together, and easier to understand the material being studied. This condition affects the improvement of learning outcomes so that the completeness of learning classically has reached the success indicator of the research [19].

3.2.1. Percentage of Completeness of Social Studies Learning Outcomes

Comparison of learning completeness in the initial condition, cycle I, and cycle II.
Initial Condition, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2

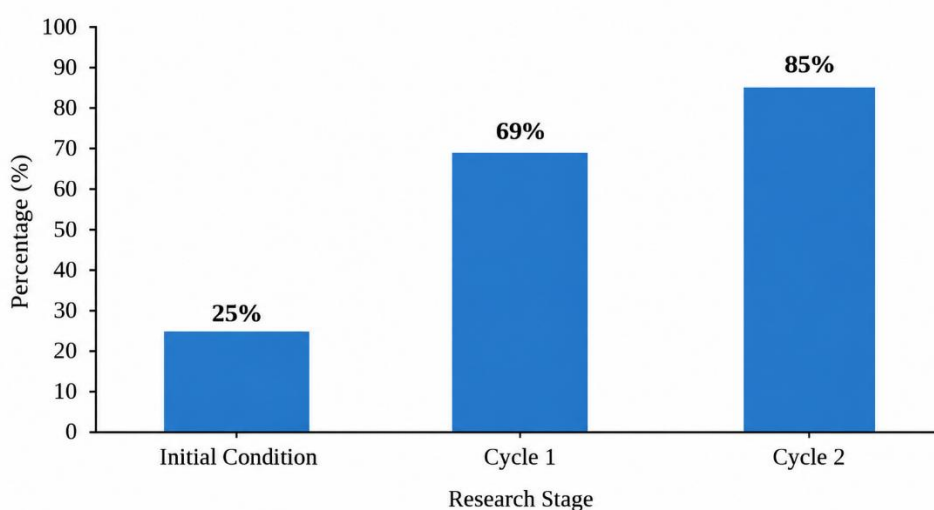


Figure 1. Student Learning Outcome Completion Percentage Chart

Based on Figure 1, the percentage of completeness of social studies learning outcomes of students has increased in each cycle. In the initial condition, learning completeness only reached 25% or 8 out of 32 students who had reached the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM), while 75% of students had not reached KKM. After applying the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model in the first cycle, the percentage of learning completeness increased to 69%. Although there has been an improvement compared to the initial condition, the results have not met the indicators of research success, which is that at least 85% of students obtained a score of ≥ 75 , so reflection and improvement were carried out in cycle II.

After improvements were made in cycle II, the percentage of learning completeness increased again to 85%, so that it exceeded the research success indicator. This improvement shows that the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model is able to improve social studies learning outcomes of students in grade VII D SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan. The results of this study are in line with the research of Mu'aini (2018), Inayatul Aliyah and Ferani Mulianingsih (2019), and Sucipto et al. (2022) which stated that the Problem Based Learning model is effective in increasing student activity and learning outcomes through student-centered learning.

4. Discussion

4.1. Application of the Problem Based Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects

Based on the results of initial observations, it is known that student learning outcomes in Social Sciences (IPS) subjects are still not optimal. This can be seen from the results of the students' daily tests which show that there are still many students who get scores below the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) that have been set by the school, which is 75. Of the 32 students, there are 24 students (75%) who have not reached the KKM, while 8 students (25%) have reached the KKM. The lowest score a student gets is 25, while the highest score is 90. In addition, students' activeness in participating in the learning process is also still not optimal. During

the learning process, there were still some students who did not pay attention to the teacher's explanations, did not dare to express their opinions, and were not active in discussion activities.

Based on the results of interviews with social studies teachers, it is known that the learning process begins with the delivery of material by the teacher, followed by question and answer activities based on package books. Next, students are asked to memorize the material that has been learned, then the teacher appoints students in turn to answer questions about the material that has been taught. Teachers also provide opportunities for students to present their learning results in front of the class [20]. However, the learning process still tends to be teacher-centered, so that student involvement in critical thinking, discussion, and problem-solving is not optimal. As a result, students' understanding of social studies materials is not evenly distributed, so student learning outcomes still need to be improved.

The application of the problem based learning (PBL) learning model to improve social science (IPS) learning outcomes in grade VII D students of SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan is carried out through student-centered learning activities by providing problems related to daily life. By applying the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model, students are invited to actively discuss, work together in groups, find solutions to problems, and present the results of the discussion in front of the class [21].

In the implementation of the first cycle of actions, researchers still experienced several obstacles in conditioning the class. There are still some students who speak on their own, do not pay attention to the teacher's explanations, and are not active in group discussion activities. In addition, some students still feel embarrassed and lack confidence in expressing their opinions or presenting the results of the discussion in front of the class. This happens because students are still not familiar with the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model in social studies learning [22].

In cycle II, the researcher made improvements based on the results of the reflection in cycle I. The researcher motivated students, improved class management, and guided students more optimally in the group discussion process. With the improvement in Cycle II, students seem to be more active in participating in learning, more dare to express their opinions, and are able to work well together in groups. The improvement of student learning outcomes can be seen from the results of observations and student learning outcome tests. In the first cycle, the percentage of student learning outcomes reached 69%, while in the second cycle it increased to 85%.

4.2. Problem Based Learning (PBL) Learning Model Is Able to Improve Social Science (IPS) Learning Outcomes

The learning results in the second cycle by applying the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model show that the social studies learning outcomes of students have improved well. Learning outcomes can be interpreted as the level of success of students in learning subjects at school which can be seen from the scores achieved from the results of the knowledge test of certain subject matter knowledge [23].

Students respond to the learning provided by the researcher by paying more actively attention to the teacher's explanation, participating in group discussions, and completing the assignments given well. In addition, students also began to be active in providing responses and opinions during the discussion process and did not feel embarrassed to ask questions if there was material that was not understood.

One of the interesting things and differentiators in learning according to students is that the learning model used by researchers is not only centered on the teacher's explanation, but also involves students directly in solving problems related to social studies materials. Through the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model, students are trained to think critically, work together in groups, and find solutions to given problems [24]. This makes students more active and not easily bored when the social studies learning process takes place in the classroom.

Students' activeness in group learning also has a big influence on students' thinking and cooperation skills. With group discussion activities, students can exchange ideas, provide ideas, and help group friends in completing the assignments given by the teacher. In addition, students also become more confident in conveying the results of discussions in front of the class [25].

Based on the data obtained from student learning outcomes, it shows an increase from cycle I to cycle II. In the first cycle, the percentage of student learning outcomes reached 69%, while in the second cycle it increased to 85%. Thus, the application of the Problem Based Learning

(PBL) learning model is able to improve the learning outcomes of Social Sciences (IPS) students in grade VII D SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan.

5. Conclusion

The Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model is applied to make students more active, creative, and able to think critically in participating in social studies learning. The researcher instructs students to gather with their groups, then the researcher provides problems related to social studies learning materials to be discussed with their respective groups. After that, each group was given the opportunity to present the results of the discussion in front of the class, while the other group listened and provided responses and questions to the results of the discussion presented. With these discussion and problem-solving activities, the improvement of student learning outcomes can be seen from the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of students in participating in social studies learning through the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model in the classroom.

The application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model can improve student learning outcomes. This can be seen from the results of observations and student learning outcome tests, namely in the first cycle the percentage of student learning outcomes reached 69%, while in the second cycle it increased to 85%. In addition, student activities in learning have also increased, such as students are more active in discussing, dare to express opinions, and are able to work well together in groups. Thus, it can be concluded that the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model is able to improve the learning outcomes of Social Sciences (IPS) students in grade VII D SMP Negeri 1 Pamekasan.

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Informed Consent

All respondents involved in this study have given consent as a form of willingness to participate after obtaining relevant information about the research.

Ethical Approval

All stages of research are carried out with reference to the principles of research ethics, the implementation of research has obtained permission from the school where the research is located.

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