

Implementation of Project-Based Learning Activities Through Storytelling Methods in Realizing Active Learning for Early Childhood at Al Azhar Islamic Kindergarten 29 BSB Semarang

Implementasi Kegiatan Belajar Berbasis Proyek Melalui Metode Bercerita dalam Mewujudkan Pembelajaran Aktif Anak Usia Dini di TK Islam Al Azhar 29 BSB Semarang

<https://doi.org/10.24036/pakar.v23i1.647>

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Abstract

This study examines the implementation of project-based learning (PBL) through storytelling as a strategy to foster active learning in early childhood education at Al Azhar 29 BSB Semarang Islamic Kindergarten. The research highlights the pivotal role of teachers as facilitators in encouraging creativity and engagement, enabling children to explore their interests through project-based activities. Storytelling is emphasized as an effective method to enhance language skills, empathy, social sensitivity, and moral values in young learners. The findings reveal that integrating PBL with storytelling significantly improves children's focus, cognitive abilities, and overall learning experience. This approach creates a stimulating environment that nurtures critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of thematic and well-planned activities to maintain children's interest and participation. The implementation of this method aligns with national educational objectives, equipping children to face future academic and developmental challenges effectively.

Keywords: Project learning, storytelling methods, active learning, early childhood.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji implementasi pembelajaran berbasis proyek (PBL) melalui storytelling sebagai strategi untuk menumbuhkan pembelajaran aktif pada pendidikan anak usia dini di TK Islam Al Azhar 29 BSB Semarang. Penelitian ini menyoroti peran penting guru sebagai fasilitator dalam mendorong kreativitas dan keterlibatan, memungkinkan anak-anak untuk mengeksplorasi minat mereka melalui kegiatan berbasis proyek. Storytelling ditekankan sebagai metode yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa, empati, kepekaan sosial, dan nilai-nilai moral pada anak usia dini. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa mengintegrasikan PBL dengan mendongeng secara signifikan meningkatkan fokus, kemampuan kognitif, dan pengalaman belajar anak secara keseluruhan. Pendekatan ini menciptakan lingkungan yang menstimulasi pemikiran kritis, kolaborasi, dan kreativitas. Selain itu, penelitian ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya kegiatan tematik dan terencana dengan baik untuk menjaga minat dan partisipasi anak-anak. Penerapan metode ini selaras dengan tujuan pendidikan nasional, membekali anak-anak untuk menghadapi tantangan akademis dan perkembangan di masa depan secara efektif.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran proyek, metode bercerita, pembelajaran aktif, anak usia dini.

1. Introduction

In the world of education, learning models often change. Changes in learning models are adjusted to the students and the era. Various kinds of learning models are good and there is nothing wrong. However, at this time, what is increasingly recognized and favored by many people is Project Based Learning. Research has shown that the implementation of project-based learning can stimulate and express children's creative ideas (Rasmani, Wahyuningsih, Winarji, Jumiatmoko, Nurjanah, et al., 2023). Furthermore, project-based learning has been found to play a significant role in strengthening the Pancasila profile, particularly in driving schools at the early childhood level, thus contributing to a more meaningful and effective learning process (Anwar, 2023).

Project Based Learning is learning where students can learn by making something as part of the project they are working on, which will later be realized into a project, building, or something according to their imagination using toys that have been provided by the teacher (educational play tools) such as blocks, puzzles, keep play, stacking toys, kinetic sand, slime, and lego. Project-based learning is not only done in the classroom but can be done outside the classroom or the practice done by children must be explored through outside experiences (Rasmani, Wahyuningsih, Winarji, Jumiatmoko, Zuhro, et al., 2023).

According to (Rasmani, Wahyuningsih, Winarji, Jumiatmoko, Nurjanah, et al., 2023) Project Based Learning is learning that makes students the center of learning and makes work from the results of that learning (interactive) for students because students will get many opportunities to try new things that they imagine and this will have an impact on the development of children's character. Project learning for early childhood also aims to improve the profile of Pancasila learners. Project Learning is a learning that includes student activeness so that learning becomes relevant, interactive, enthusiastic, and fun (Rudiana et al., 2022). His research found that project learning resulted in students' creative thinking skills and improved their eco-literacy attitude (the relationship between humans and nature).

In project learning, children will produce projects according to their creativity, in this case, the teacher only needs to be a facilitator and provide encouragement to children. In this case, the teacher's ability is needed. Teachers must be able to realize the goals of national education. Teachers are required to always be able to design, create, and evaluate children's activities.

By Law No. 14 In the 2005 regulation on teachers and lecturers, it is stated that teachers are responsible for educating, teaching, guiding, training, assessing, and evaluating students. They are recognized as professional educators (Hidayati, 2022).

Being an early childhood teacher is also inseparable from the teacher's ability to tell stories. Children will prefer teachers who are more active and can tell stories, which will increase children's focus. In addition to increasing focus, the teacher's storytelling ability will indirectly affect children's language skills, because children will hear more vocabulary spoken by the teacher. Storytelling provides several benefits, including the development of children's ability to sympathize and empathize with others, enhancing social sensitivity, offering ethical lessons, positively affecting children's psychology, and fostering creativity and imagination (Nurjanah & Anggraini, 2020). Moreover, it has been suggested that the storytelling method can also increase children's motivation, improve their logical and critical understanding of learning, and ultimately lead to achieving optimal learning outcomes (Amin et al., 2024).

In achieving the goal of education, namely educating the nation, adequate learning is needed. This is in line with Ki Hajar Dewantara's opinion about the purpose of education, namely to shape character, improve brain intelligence (mind), and nourish the body (Izza et al., 2020).

Adequate learning, that is, learning that is complementary between teacher and student. Learning that is in line with this is active learning. Active learning is a teaching method in which students can actively participate in learning, either among students or students with teachers (Jf & Azmi, 2022). Active learning is learning where students practice, do, and respond to the teacher during the learning process not just listen (Zainiyati, 2010).

In this case, the author wants to know the Application or Implementation of Project-Based Learning Activities through the Storytelling Method in Realizing Active Learning for Early Childhood at Al Azhar 29 BSB Semarang Islamic Kindergarten.

2. Literature Review

This article describes a literature review where researchers review and examine various literature that has been researched by previous academics sourced from Publish or Perish, Google Scholar, digital reference books Sinta journals, and other academic online media (Susanto et al., 2024) namely project learning, storytelling methods, and active learning.

The article discusses the Application of Project-Based Learning Models in Education: A Literature Review. This article discusses how to implement a *project-based learning* model in an educational context. The result of this research is that the Project-Based Learning model is a powerful intermediary to assist students in achieving their full educational potential (Kamaruddin et al., 2023).

The article entitled "Project Based Learning Model and its Application in Early Childhood at TKIT Al-Farabi." This article discusses the application of project-based methods for children aged 5-6 years at TKIT Al-Farabi. The findings show that Project Based Learning at TKIT Al-Farabi has a positive impact on students' daily problem-solving skills. Applying a variety of interesting teaching methods and instructional variations helps to keep learners interested and prevents them from feeling bored or disengaged during an enjoyable learning experience (Amelia & Aisya, 2021).

Article with the title Implementation of Storytelling Methods and Self Esteem in Improving Early Childhood Speaking Skills. This article discusses the role of storytelling methods using hand puppets and *big books*, as well as the self-esteem of children aged 7-8 years, in improving speaking skills in Sawah Besar District. The results of this study show that using hand puppets and *big books*, as well as self-esteem, can significantly improve children's capacity to learn to speak independently (Anggraeni et al., 2019).

The article titled Developing Early Childhood Linguistic Intelligence Through Storytelling. This article discusses how the *storytelling* method determines children's language development. The research findings show that the storytelling method can improve children's linguistic intelligence, as they acquire a lot of new vocabulary and improve their communication skills (Tanfidiyah & Utama, 2019).

The article entitled "The Effect of Storytelling Methods with Hand Puppets on Early Childhood Cognitive Development". This article discusses how to determine the impact of the puppet storytelling method on children's thinking development. The results of this study show that storytelling using hand puppets helps children to more easily understand learning materials and makes their learning experience more dynamic, creative, and imaginative. This, in turn, has a positive impact on children's cognitive development (Izzati & Yulsyofriend, 2020).

The article with the title "Teacher Strategies in Active Learning Through a Scientific Approach in Realizing 21st Century Learning" discusses the application of teacher strategies in creating active learning through a scientific approach. In this study, it helps students in obtaining knowledge. Learners can observe, question, reason, and integrate. Making students more critical, communicative, collaborative, and creative (Fitrah et al., 2022).

The above findings underline that the potential of project-based learning activities through storytelling methods in realizing active learning in early childhood has not been studied before. Researchers try to research related to the Implementation of Project-Based Learning Activities Through Storytelling Methods in Realizing Active Learning for Early Childhood at Al-Azhar Islamic Kindergarten BSB 29 Semarang. The purpose of writing this article is to expand the teacher's contribution to students in implementing learning activities into active learning with the storytelling method and expanding knowledge for writers and readers, contributing ideas, informing, and analyzing related to the Implementation of Project-Based Learning Activities Through Storytelling Methods in Realizing Active Learning for Early Childhood at Al Azhar BSB Islamic Kindergarten Semarang. Below, detailed answers will be presented in the Results and Discussion section.

3. Methods

This research method uses field research, which is a method of collecting qualitative data about the interaction of people or groups (kindergarten children) and teachers in their natural environment (school) (Fitria, 2024). This field research method is done by going directly to the field (school). This method is used to reveal the implementation of project-based learning activities through the storytelling method in realizing active learning for early childhood at Al Azhar 29 BSB Semarang Islamic Kindergarten. The method used by researchers for data collection is data collection in the field, checking data validity (data triangulation), reduction, data presentation (display), and verification.

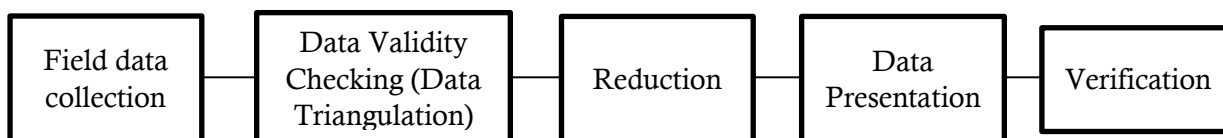


Figure.1. Research Flowchart

The interview method aims to explore information about how the teacher conducts storytelling activities to students, how the teacher shapes project learning, and how to create it into active learning. The observation method is carried out by researchers in the form of direct involvement during the learning process. And researcher documentation in the form of photos, videos, and recordings related to the learning process. The time of this research was conducted in the even-semester academic year. This research took place for 30 (thirty) days from January 08, 2024, to February 10, 2024.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Project-Based Learning and Benefits for Early Childhood

Project Learning is a learning model where students build their imaginary knowledge and are helped to develop by the teacher, which will later be realized into a project, the project can be a building, an object, or even a place. Projects are made using play tools that have been provided

by the teacher (educational play tools) such as blocks, puzzles, keep play, stacking toys, kinetic sand, slime, and lego. Project-based learning is one type of educational method that encourages students to develop their knowledge independently through investigation and learning together to solve problems and achieve predetermined goals (Sari et al., 2017).

In creating effective project learning, there are several things that teachers need to do to support their students' engagement and understanding, including, first: teachers must set the theme and topic. Teachers must be able to determine a broad theme that is relevant and interesting to children, for example, if the theme is "food", the topic can be "fried rice" things that are close and done by children.

Second, the teacher should create essential questions. Questions that are open and can stimulate children's thinking, such as "What is fried rice?", so children will try to explain and describe how fried rice looks and tastes, and they will be actively involved in the discussion. The purpose of the question is to provide meaningful understanding to students (Pramesti et al., 2023).

Third, when the children have made the fried rice project, the teacher tries to ask about the steps taken, and the tools and materials needed by the children in making fried rice, this will make the children feel like they have a real project and increase the children's sense of responsibility.

Fourth, during the process of making projects the teacher is a facilitator and mentor for children. Provide guidance while children are working on projects, and teachers must create a pleasant learning atmosphere and support children's exploration (Amelia & Aisya, 2021). After project learning is complete, children should be asked to tidy up the tools and materials they used and explain the results of their project, this will make children remember and share stories with their friends. Project learning also does not have to be a one-day project, it can last for several days until the child gets bored or has completed it.

There are many benefits of project learning for early childhood, the author will explain there are 4 (four) benefits of project learning according to the author. First, it can increase children's enthusiasm for learning. Project learning allows children to choose their themes and topics, this will make children more enthusiastic and active in completing projects during the learning process (Sulman et al., 2020).

Secondly, project learning can help children broaden their horizons and experiences. In this case, when children create projects, their imagination and curiosity will increase. Teachers will provide stimulus to support students' creative power. According to (Rati et al., 2017) project learning can also increase creativity.

Third, project learning can promote cooperation among students and a sense of responsibility. How could it not? Project making is usually done together, joint activities (children will ask for help, help and ask each other) will increase student socialization (Ernawati et al., n.d.), and can foster the nature of cooperation and cooperation. Project learning provided by the teacher, will give children a sense of responsibility if there is a certain limit to completing a project (Susetyarini et al., 2019).

Fourth, project learning can identify students' talents, interests, and abilities. In project learning, students will make projects according to what is in their mind, heart, or even desire. This can describe the nature, ideals, and expectations of students (Rahmadhani et al., 2022).

Thus, project-based learning is a very effective learning strategy in developing various aspects of early childhood development. In Permendikbud RI Number 137 of 2014 concerning National PAUD Standards, there are 6 aspects of early childhood development namely moral and religious development, cognitive, language, motor skills, social-emotional, and art (Wicaksana & Rachman, 2018).

4.2. Benefits of Storytelling for Early Childhood Development

Storytelling is a specialty of early childhood teachers. Storytelling is the teacher conveying events or information to students with an interesting style, face, and mimic. Storytelling is an Indonesian cultural heritage, parents usually use the storytelling method when their children want to sleep (Panjaitan et al., 2020).

The benefits of storytelling are numerous. First, teachers can instill the values of honesty, courage, loyalty, and love (positive things) in the school, family, or community environment. In addition, telling stories to children also has a good impact on children's morals (Ponglimbong & Talo, 2024) and religious values. According to (Kiromi, 2021) storytelling can instill character values in children, the value of character education includes spiritual, personality, social, and environmental aspects.

Second, storytelling can improve children's focus. When the teacher reads an interesting story and tells it innovatively, it will make children listen and concentrate. If the child has an interest in the characters and plot in the story that makes emotional involvement, it can also increase the child's focus. Even research (Yasmin & Eliza, 2021) and (Manurung & Simatupang, 2019) shows that the storytelling method can improve children's concentration.

Third, storytelling can develop children's cognitive abilities. When the teacher tells an interesting and complex story it will train the child's thinking power, the child will understand the relationship in the story from beginning to end, and it will train the child's analytical skills (Mualifah, 2013).

4.3. How to Create Project Learning with Storytelling Method at Azhar 29 BSB Semarang Islamic Kindergarten

Islamic Kindergarten Al-Azhar 29 BSB Semarang has implemented project-based learning. Project-based learning at Al Azhar 29 Islamic Kindergarten Semarang uses the storytelling method which is considered effective for increasing student engagement and understanding. According to (Silalahi et al., 2024) storytelling method has a positive and significant influence on learning activeness and student ethics.

As a result of the interview with the class teacher conducted by the researcher, the first thing the teacher does is determine the book that will be told to the students. The book chosen is a book published directly by *Parapodia*. The book chosen by the teacher is a book that is relevant and interesting for children, as chosen by Mrs. Anita (class teacher) is a children's storybook entitled "Rumah Ale".

The book "Rumah Ale" tells the story of a boy named Ale who moves to Pariaman City. Pariaman City is located in West Sumatra Province, Indonesia. The story explains that Ale finds many unique events and happenings. Ale sees Rumah Gadang (a traditional Minangkabau house), Sala leak (fried food typical of Pariaman, West Sumatra), and the tablet (bulk) festival, a festival commemorating the month of Ashura (the death of Imam Husain, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad) which is carried out by the Minangkabau people in the beach area.

4.4. Implementation of Project-Based Learning to Foster Active Learning at Al-Azhar 29 BSB Semarang Islamic Kindergarten

After the teacher finds the right book, the book will be told by the teacher to the students. Before the teacher tells the content of the book entitled "Rumah Ale" the teacher agrees with the students that they must listen and focus because later, after the teacher finishes telling the contents

of the book "Rumah Ale", the teacher will recall the story of "Rumah Ale" so that the children remember the contents of the book better.

After recalling together, the teacher will ask the students to mention the points of the content of the story "Rumah Ale" and the teacher will write the points on the board into a mind map. Creating a concept map will make children remember the material in general and in detail and train the brain to see the material as a whole and in detail. According to (Khasanah, 2019) concept maps are a guide to creating meaningful learning for students in thematic learning.

In the learning process, the children of Al-Azhar Islamic Kindergarten managed to mention the points of the story "Rumah Ale" which are Ale, beach, stone, sand, sala lauak (fried food typical of Pariaman, West Sumatra), rumah gadang (Minangkabau traditional house) and tabut (tabuik) festival which is an annual festival to celebrate earth alms.

After mentioning the points of the story "Ale's House", students will be divided into groups to make a project from the points obtained.



Figure.2. Students Nisa and Valerie are making the Palace Project.

Based on the results of the observations and interviews above, students have received well the story brought by Mrs. Anita (class teacher) as evidenced by students named Nisa and Valeri being able to make palace houses using block materials and ape (educational game tools) such as flowers, broken tapes, rubber toys and dolls that are in the classroom. Nisa and Valerie managed to make the castles well and creatively.



Figure.3. A student named Beby is making a rumah gadang.

The second picture shows that a student named Beby has also accepted the story brought by Mrs. Anita (class teacher), from the results of an interview with a student named Beby, he is making a rumah gadang project, a typical house in the city of Pariaman, which is found in the storybook "Rumah Ale". The gadang house described in the story has stairs underneath, so Beby made a gadang house project using APE (educational game tools) Lego. It looks like Beby also decorated the circular part of the field house using grass to make it look beautiful.



Figure.4. A student named Akxa making an art festival project.

The third picture shows a student named Akxa making a project about the ark festival. In the story "Rumah Ale" when Ale is moving house, to his new neighborhood in the city of Pariaman there is an ark festival. In the story, the ark festival is an annual festival for the celebration of the earth's alms. In the picture, Akxa is making a project for the ark festival using APE (educational game tools) tubes, legos, blocks, grasses, and people.



Figure.5. Aric and Ghani create a beach project.

In the fourth picture, students Aric and Ghani are making a beach project. The beach project is depicted using blue and brown flannel cloth spread on the floor. The blue flannel represents the beach water, and the brown flannel represents the sand on the beach. In the project, there are various kinds of fish such as octopus, puffer fish, sharks, crabs, turtles, seaweed, and rocks. In the story "Ale's House", Ale saw that the ark festival was held near the beach, so Aric and Ghani made a beach project.



Figure.6. Students Dova and Levi are making a rumah gadang project.

The fifth picture describes students named Dova and Levi making a rumah gadang project. As above, Beby made a rumah gadang, Dova and Levi also made a rumah gadang project. The field houses made by Dova and Levi look simpler because they only use APE blocks and grass.



Figure.7. Student Al Kindi making a boat project.

The sixth picture shows a student named Al Kindi making a ship project. After interviewing with Al Kindi, why said that he made a ship project because he was inspired by the story "Rumah Ale" There is a beach and Al Kindi wanted to make a ship.

In project learning, the teacher serves as a facilitator and helps the development of children's imagination. When the students want to make a project, the teacher only asks the students, what project they want to make and what materials are suitable to make the project. The teacher will continue to ask, what will the students do next so that their project can be completed, it will help students to continue to think about what materials they will need in order to complete the project.

When the students have completed all their projects, the teacher will ask the students to take turns presenting their projects to their peers. This process will help students practice their speaking skills and become confident individuals.

The book *Philosophy of Child Education* by Fahrudin Faiz (Faiz, 2023) also explains that children are the hope and future of this world. Therefore, children must get the right education. Proper education is the most valuable investment for the sustainability of this world. In the book, there are four figures, namely Maria Montessori, Rabindranath Tagore, Abdullah Nashih 'Ulwan and Ki Hajar Dewantara, who all argue that the proper education for children is education that develops their talents and interests; the four figures carry a humanistic education that focuses on the development and development of children's self, character and talent interests. In addition, values such as integrity, honesty, responsibility and empathy. An educational model that has similar goals is the project-based learning model.

In project learning, the teacher also always writes the students' progress. Al-Azhar Islamic Kindergarten uses 4 (four) developmental assessments, namely checklists, serial photos, anecdotes, and work results. This assessment will be shared by the teacher during the distribution of report cards each semester to the student's guardians.

The results of the interview with Mrs. Anita (class teacher) that project learning with storytelling methods like this can last up to three months but, if students are bored, it can also only be one week, Mrs. Anita explained that when making flexible projects according to the child's *mood* but still the teacher tries to direct the project to be completed. *For the time we manage Mba, but if the children are bored before three months, then we will look for another storybook. We are flexible to adjust the child's mood*, said Mrs. Anita (class teacher).

In this case, active learning has been done. Where all learning centers lead to students. In this study, researchers played an active role in collecting data through interviews and observations to see and join directly in the learning process. Researchers also interact directly to ask teachers and students, for example, researchers make observations to students and ask students what

projects they are making. In Al Azhar 29, BSB Islamic Kindergarten can shape active learning through project learning.

5. Conclusion

Project learning provides many benefits to students. Project learning is a great way to stimulate children's development, instill moral values, get children to work together, and improve problem-solving skills. The result of this research is that project learning in Al-Azhar Islamic Kindergarten can create active learning, which is a learning process where teachers facilitate students' needs and students get more learning opportunities so that they can increase creativity in learning. This research shows that the right storytelling method and creating project learning designed to solve real problems can form active learning. This research, not only provides benefits in child development but also develops a project-based learning model combining the storytelling method to create a new learning model.

Suggestions related to project learning carried out at Al Azhar Islamic Kindergarten include the need for additional educational game tools (APE), even though there are already many game tools in the kindergarten. The addition of APE can improve the quality of early childhood education and 6 aspects of child development can be developed easily.

6. Acknowledgments

Thank you to the PAKAR (Actual Research and Reform Analysis Study) Education Journal for allowing me to accept my manuscript for publication, hopefully, this manuscript can provide benefits to readers or for further research data and become a form of my self-development.

Furthermore, thank you to the school of KB-TK Islam Al Azhar BSB 29 Semarang which has become my research site, thank you to the Principal Mrs. Wiwik Setyowati, S. Psi, S.Pd and Pamong Teacher Mrs. Anita Soraya, S.Pd who have guided during the Field Research process and provided information. And thanks to the Supervisor, Mr. Drs. H. Muslam M.Ag during the work on this article.

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