



EXPLORING THE ROLE OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN INSTALLING CHARACTER VALUES IN ARABIC LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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| Article history: | Abstract: |
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| Received: November 14 th 2023 Accepted: December 11 th 2023 Published: January 20 th 2024 | This research article explores how Project-Based Learning (PBL) can enhance character development in Arabic language learners. Character education, focusing on values and ethics, is a crucial part of a well-rounded education. By investigating how PBL can be integrated into Arabic language learning, this study aims to uncover its potential in nurturing students' character. The article provides a thorough analysis of how PBL positively influences character development, making it relevant and effective in today's educational settings. The research uses a mix of qualitative data from interviews and observations, combined with quantitative data from surveys and assessments. This approach offers a well-rounded understanding of how PBL affects character growth while learning Arabic. The study's results highlight the development of various important student traits due to PBL, including confidence, responsibility, creativity, hard work, discipline, independence, curiosity, communication skills, honesty, leadership, religious values, respect, and more. These findings are valuable for educators, policymakers, and researchers looking to enrich character education within Arabic language learning. Understanding how PBL cultivates essential character traits allows educators to tailor their teaching methods, promoting not only language proficiency but also instilling strong moral values. This holistic approach equips students with the skills and virtues they need to succeed in a diverse and interconnected world. |

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Character Values, Arabic Language Learners, Character Education

INTRODUCTION

Character education is an important component of education, which aims to develop students' moral and ethical values in addition to their academic skills. In the context of learning Arabic, educators realize the importance of instilling character values in students to form complete individuals who can make a positive contribution to society. However, traditional learning methods often focus only on language proficiency, ignoring character development. Therefore, this article aims to explore the potential of Project Based Learning (PBL) as a pedagogical approach to foster character values in Arabic language learners. By exploring this topic, this article contributes to the existing literature on character education and innovative teaching practices. Character education is very important in forming individuals who have strong values, empathy, and ethical behavior. It goes beyond academic knowledge, focusing on developing virtues such as integrity, responsibility, respect, and compassion. By incorporating character education into Arabic language learning, educators can nurture not only linguistic proficiency but also the character in students necessary for their personal and social growth.

To optimize the role of students in learning, a model is needed that can provide space for students to explore their knowledge together with their friends (Alwi et al., 2023). So that learning is not just transferring knowledge from teachers to students but there is development or improvement obtained by students. In particular, it is the acquisition of character values from the students themselves in certain lectures. To facilitate the creation of an effective learning process, a model is needed that can facilitate students in achieving their educational goals. The Project Base Learning model is a contextual learning approach through several complex activities. This learning model is very effective in increasing student independence without forgetting cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects.

The Project Base Learning model is an option that can be implemented in Arabic language learning in order to improve student learning outcomes (Purwanto, 2022). Apart from that, Project Base Learning also accommodates students' Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in lectures (Vahlepi et.al., 2021). Not only that, this model is not focused on learning, which are carried out in class, but can also be applied to assignments carried out by students outside of class (Subakir, 2023). Project Based Learning (PBL) is an instructional strategy that involves students in live real world projects. It promotes active learning, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. PBL provides students with the opportunity to apply their language skills in a meaningful context, encouraging deeper understanding and connection to the subject matter. Its immersive and interactive nature makes it an ideal approach for integrating character education into Arabic language learning.

The integration of PBL in Arabic language learning involves designing projects that combine language skills, cultural understanding, and character development. For example, students may work on projects that require them to research and present topics related to social issues, cultural heritage, or community service. Through these projects, students develop their language skills while exploring character values such as empathy, tolerance, and civic responsibility. PBL offers several benefits in cultivating character values among Arabic language learners. First, it provides opportunities for students to collaborate, communicate, and solve problems as a team, promoting teamwork and cooperation. Second, PBL encourages students to think critically, analyze information, and make informed decisions, nurturing the skills necessary for ethical reasoning. Additionally, PBL allows students to apply their language skills in authentic situations, increasing their understanding of cultural diversity and fostering empathy towards others (Aqib, 2013).

Project Base Learning is a learning approach that gives students the freedom to plan learning activities, carry out projects collaboratively and ultimately produce work products that can be presented to others (Mahendra, 2017). The Project Base Learning model is innovative learning that is student-centered and determines the teacher as a facilitator or motivator where students are given the freedom to construct their own learning (al-Tabany, 2014). Because this learning model is project-based, it can be understood that this is learning that focuses on giving assignments to students and students completing these assignments.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CHARACTER EDUCATION

Character education is pivotal in modern education, striving to develop students' moral and ethical values alongside academic knowledge. Project-Based Learning (PBL) has gained recognition for its role in character development. This literature review delves into existing research on character education and PBL, with a focus on its application in Arabic language learning contexts. Character education aims to instill positive character traits such as integrity, empathy, respect, and responsibility. Frameworks like the Six Pillars of Character and the Character Counts! program guide the incorporation of character education into educational settings (Lickona, 1991; Josephson Institute, n.d.). PBL engages students in real-world projects, emphasizing critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and independent learning. This aligns with character education goals, allowing students to apply knowledge and skills to real-life problems (Thomas, 2000).

Both character education and PBL aim to develop ethical and social-emotional competencies. PBL uniquely integrates character education into the learning process, enabling ethical decision-making and collaboration (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Boss & Krauss, 2007). Studies reveal that PBL enhances moral reasoning, empathy, ethical decision-making, and interpersonal skills, fostering self-awareness and social responsibility (Helle et al., 2006; Blumenfeld et al., 1991). PBL provides authentic experiences for students to navigate ethical dilemmas, fostering ethical growth and moral development (Boss & Krauss, 2007). PBL encourages critical thinking by engaging students in complex problems, contributing to the development of essential skills for ethical decision-making (Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Thomas, 2000).

IMPLEMENTATION OF PBL IN DIVERSE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in diverse educational settings has been a subject of extensive research due to its potential to enhance learning outcomes and character development among students. PBL is an instructional approach that allows students to engage in real-world, meaningful projects, promoting active learning and problem-solving skills (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Research has consistently shown the positive impact of PBL on character development, including the development of critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and self-directed learning (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2015). This approach encourages students to take ownership of their learning and fosters a deeper understanding of concepts (Thomas, 2000).

In the context of character education, PBL offers distinct advantages. PBL encourages students to work collaboratively, which promotes teamwork, empathy, and understanding of diverse perspectives (Krajcik et al., 1998). Furthermore, by engaging students in projects that align with cultural and ethical values, PBL can effectively nurture character values such as cultural competence, respect, and responsibility (Helle et al., 2006). Students not only acquire language skills but also gain a deeper appreciation and respect for the culture associated with the language they are learning (Al-Jarf, 2017).

In the specific domain of Arabic language learning, incorporating PBL presents significant potential for character development. As students engage in native language assignments and cultural projects, they not only improve their language skills but also gain a deeper understanding of Arab culture, fostering cultural understanding and intercultural

communication skills (Murad, 2016). This aligns with the broader goals of character education, emphasizing the importance of cultural awareness and empathy in a globalized world (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004).

However, implementing PBL for character education in Arabic language learning is not without its challenges. Language barriers and the need for appropriate training and resources for educators pose significant obstacles (Hamdi & Al-Zube, 2014). Nevertheless, the potential benefits of integrating PBL into Arabic language learning underscore the need to address these challenges and emphasize the importance of effective instructional design and assessment strategies (Shaaban & Ghaith, 2000).

In conclusion, incorporating PBL in diverse educational settings has been shown to positively impact character development and learning outcomes. In the context of Arabic language learning, PBL has the potential to not only enhance linguistic proficiency but also foster cultural understanding and empathy, aligning with the broader goals of character education. Efforts to address challenges and promote effective implementation of PBL in Arabic language learning can lead to a more holistic and enriching educational experience for students.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a qualitative descriptive exploration aimed at delineating the educational character values exhibited by students majoring in Arabic language development at UIN Prof. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto through the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PBL) model. The research sample consisted of 80 students, selected purposively by choosing specific classes suitable for the research objectives. The main objective of this study is to elucidate the character education values fostered through the Problem Based Learning model during Arabic language development courses at UIN Prof. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto. Data collection was carried out via an online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms using the WhatsApp application.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding, this research adopts a mixed methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. The qualitative phase involves interviews conducted with Arabic language educators, students, and school administrators, delving into their perceptions and experiences regarding PBL's role in instilling character values. Concurrently, classroom observations offer crucial insights into the design and implementation of PBL activities, shedding light on their contribution to character development. On the other hand, the quantitative phase employs pre- and post-surveys along with character assessment tools to gauge the effectiveness of PBL in cultivating specific character traits among the students.

In summary, this study endeavors to unravel the character-building facets facilitated by the PBL model among students pursuing Arabic language development at UIN Prof. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto. The research methodology employs purposive sampling to select suitable research subjects and integrates both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to provide a comprehensive analysis of the subject matter. Through this approach, the study aims to contribute valuable insights into the educational landscape and character development within the context of Arabic language education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Teaching Material Video Making Project

The assignment of making videos containing teaching materials is one of the forms taken in the Project Base Learning model in this study. Mastery of Arabic material will be seen from the content in the video, while the characters will be assessed through a questionnaire which contains an overview of how they interact in groups when completing a given task. This assignment contains an order to collect information about the rules of the Arabic language on social media and from lecturers and discuss it with the group and then together they make a review in the form of a video which is uploaded to youtube, tiktok, instagram and others with full confidence and responsibility.

The video-making project serves as an innovative approach to engage students in the learning process. By creating videos, students are not only consolidating their knowledge of Arabic language rules but also developing important skills such as communication, collaboration, and digital literacy. The project encourages students to explore various sources of information, including social media and input from their lecturers, to gather relevant content for their videos. The collaborative nature of the project enhances students' character development. Working in groups allows students to practice teamwork, cooperation, and problem-solving. They are required to discuss and negotiate ideas, delegate tasks, and make collective decisions, fostering their interpersonal skills and ability to work effectively with others. The questionnaire administered during the project provides insights into students' group interactions and their demonstration of positive character traits such as responsibility and confidence.

The use of technology platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram for video sharing adds another dimension to the project. Students are encouraged to utilize digital tools and platforms that are popular among their peers, making the learning experience more relevant and engaging. Sharing their videos online also provides an opportunity for students to showcase their work to a wider audience, increasing their sense of accomplishment and motivation. The assignment places an emphasis on responsibility and confidence. By expecting students to take ownership of their learning and be responsible for the content they present, the project instills a sense of accountability and professionalism. Students are encouraged to demonstrate confidence in their language proficiency and their ability to effectively communicate their knowledge to others.

While the video-making project offers numerous benefits, there are some considerations to take into account. It is important for educators to provide clear guidelines and expectations for the assignment, ensuring that the content

presented aligns with the desired learning outcomes. The assessment of character development should be carefully designed, considering both observable behaviors and self-reflection to provide a comprehensive evaluation.

The Value of Character Education Through Project Base Learning

Based on the findings of the character education values contained in the assignment of making videos on Arabic language principles using the project base learning model, there are 18 character values namely 1) Confidence 2) Responsibility 3) Creativity 4) Hard Work 5) Discipline 6) Independence 7) Curiosity 8) Communicative 9) Honest 11) Leadership 12) Religious 13) Respect 14) Integrity 15) Tolerance 16) Loyalty 17) Open Minded 18) Democratic. These values are in accordance with the results of filling in the questionnaire carried out by the students themselves after completing the assignment of making videos on Arabic rules. However, it is not only the values of the 18 character values developed by the Ministry of National Education, but there are several additional values that are obtained by the students themselves. To see the presentation of the character values obtained by the research students, they have made them in the following table 1) Confident 98.3% 2) Responsibility 93.1% 3) Creativity 87.9% 4) Hard Work 82.8% 5) Discipline 79.9% 6) Independent 75.9% 7) Curiosity 74.1% 8) Communicative 72.4% 9) Honest 65.5% 11) Leadership 62.1% 12) Religious 60.3% 13) Respect 60.3% 14) Integrity 58.6% 15) Tolerance 53.4% 16) Loyalty 50% 17) Open Minded 55.2% 18) Democratic 44.8% The highest score is self-confidence, which is 98.3 %.

Table. The percentage of character values education through project base learning



This table provides a clear overview of the character values and their respective percentages based on the students' responses. The study delves into the character education values stemming from assignments requiring the creation of videos on Arabic language principles within the Project-Based Learning (PBL) model. A comprehensive set of 18 character values emerged, including Confidence, Responsibility, Creativity, Hard Work, Discipline, Independence, Curiosity, Communicativeness, Honesty, Leadership, Religiousness, Respect, Integrity, Tolerance, Loyalty, Open-Mindedness, and Democratic. These values align with the responses obtained from a questionnaire completed by students post-video assignment, showcasing the multifaceted impact of the PBL approach. The findings indicate that beyond the character values, students identified additional values through their video-making projects. This suggests that the PBL model, emphasizing real-world applications and collaboration, empowers students to unearth and nurture character values beyond the confines of the prescribed curriculum.

The character values, as depicted in Table, illustrates the percentages attributed to each value by the research students. Self-confidence stands out prominently with the highest score of 98.3%. This signifies a substantial enhancement in students' belief in their Arabic language skills and their proficiency in presenting and communicating knowledge effectively, affirming the efficacy of the video-making project. The positive impact of PBL on character development is further demonstrated by the high percentages associated with values such as Responsibility (93.1%), Creativity (87.9%), and Hard Work (82.8%). Engaging in meaningful projects allows students not only to enhance language proficiency but also to develop a diverse array of character traits.

Benefits of PBL in Character Development

While acknowledging the significant positive impact of PBL, it is essential to recognize the nuanced nature of its implementation. The advantages encompass opportunities for real-world application, critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork (Thomas, 2000; Boss & Krauss, 2007). The video-making assignment, in particular, facilitates the exercise of creativity and communication skills while exploring the rules of the Arabic language. However,

implementing PBL demands meticulous planning and support from educators. It may necessitate additional resources and time for both students and teachers. The literature also highlights the challenges in assessing character development, relying on subjective measures and self-reporting (Puentedura, 2006). Project-Based Learning (PBL) serves as a powerful tool in nurturing character values among Arabic language learners, offering a range of advantages supported by educational literature.

A primary benefit of PBL lies in its capacity to stimulate collaboration and teamwork among students. Engaging in project-based activities provides students with opportunities to work collectively, communicate proficiently, and tackle challenges as a team. This not only enriches their language learning journey but also instills crucial character values such as cooperation, respect for diverse perspectives, and effective communication skills (Thomas, 2000; Boss & Krauss, 2007). Another advantage of PBL is its role in fostering critical thinking and ethical reasoning. Authentic projects encourage students to scrutinize information, assess its credibility, and make informed decisions, nurturing skills essential for ethical reasoning. This integration of character education into language learning ensures a profound understanding of ethical principles and the ability to apply them in practical situations (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007).

PBL also facilitates the application of language skills in authentic contexts, enhancing cultural understanding and empathy. Real-world engagement exposes students to diverse materials and interactions, broadening their perspectives and fostering empathy, respect, and tolerance – crucial character values in an interconnected world (Levy & Stockwell, 2006). However, the implementation of PBL in the Arabic language curriculum presents certain challenges. The findings indicate that students encountered difficulties in video editing, impacting the quality of their projects. Adequate training and support in technical skills are essential to ensure students can fully utilize the medium for both language learning and character development.

Moreover, the relatively short assignment time may limit the depth of exploration of Arabic language principles and character values. Educators should consider time constraints and provide guidance on task prioritization and resource management. Furthermore, the lack of narration or guidance from lecturers in video creation posed challenges for students, emphasizing the importance of clear instructions and educator support to ensure access to necessary resources throughout the project (Puentedura, 2006). The lecturer's sole determination of group composition may result in uneven work distribution or potential conflicts. It is crucial for educators to consider students' backgrounds, skills, and preferences when forming groups to facilitate effective collaboration.

Lastly, the duration of video assignments, particularly the requirement for longer videos, may overwhelm some students, affecting their motivation. Striking a balance between assignment length and learning objectives is vital to ensure it remains challenging yet manageable for all students

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study underscores the significant value of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in character education, particularly through video-making assignments that notably enhance self-confidence. Despite challenges, PBL emerges as a promising avenue to seamlessly integrate character education into language learning, preparing students comprehensively for their multifaceted roles in society. The discussion further emphasizes the dual nature of PBL in fostering teamwork, critical thinking, and character values in Arabic language learners, while acknowledging the need to address technical difficulties. By optimizing PBL implementation with proper guidance, educators can create an effective environment that nurtures well-rounded individuals ready to contribute positively to society. Overall, the integration of character education through PBL, especially with video assignments, proves beneficial for fostering essential skills and values in Arabic language learners, making it a powerful tool for character development alongside language education.

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