

Implementation of Problem-Based Learning Model in Teaching Proclamation History to Grade XII-AKL Students

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Abstract

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) equips students to analyze primary and secondary historical sources, compare event versions, identify perspective differences, and build evidence-based historical arguments. This approach critical thinking, source evaluation, interpretation skill, and collaboration skills. PBL aligns perfectly with history curricula by integrating real-world contexts, diverse resources, and critical reasoning, making lessons meaningful and relevant to 21st-century competencies like collaboration, digital literacy, problem-solving, and reflective thinking. This study use a descriptive qualitative approach to deeply explore PBL implementation in teaching "Various Important Events Surrounding the Proclamation" to Grade XII-AKL students at SMK Dian Kartika Semarang. Qualitative methods capture social phenomena in natural situations, enabling comprehensive insights into learning processes and student responses. Findings reveal that educators at Dian Kartika Vocational School effectively implement PBL, despite minor discussion-phase challenges.

Keywords: Problem Based Learning, History, Proclamation



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Introduction

History education is an important element in character building, competency development, and instilling historical awareness in the nation's future generations. History education in Indonesia serves as a medium for conveying factual information about past events, but also for fostering historical awareness, strengthening national identity, developing critical thinking skills, and understanding the social and political dynamics of the past and their relevance to current conditions (Mujyati & Sumiyatun, 2016). History education plays an important role in building collective awareness that not only remembers the past but also serves as a foundation for decision-making and wise action in national life (Ofianto, O., & Ningsih, 2021). However, teaching methods are still dominated by teacher-centered approaches such as lectures and memorization (Negara & Irawan, 2024), which hinder critical and analytical thinking skills as well as the study of primary local sources (Sriyanto, 2019).

The PBL (Problem-Based Learning) model is oriented towards a student-centered approach based on real problems as the starting point for learning. Through the application of PBL, students are actively involved in the process of knowledge construction through investigation, discussion, source exploration, and collaborative problem solving (Ofianto, O., & Ningsih, 2021). National and international research shows the positive impact of PBL on the quality of learning, making it relevant for the 21st century with critical literacy and evidence-based problem solving, especially on complex material such as "Various Important Events Surrounding the Proclamation" which requires in-depth analysis, source interpretation, and historical argumentation (Saputrinta et al., 2024).

The implementation of the independent curriculum is in line with modern learning principles that require students not only to understand declarative knowledge but also to be able to apply it in various complex situations. History learning has evolved into a more meaningful and relevant activity, in line with 21st-century competency requirements such as collaboration, digital literacy, problem solving, and reflective thinking skills (Kuwoto et al., 2024). The characteristics of students, learning needs, and competency orientation in vocational schools differ from those in regular high schools, so the success of a learning model cannot be fully generalized without relevant local studies (Loppies, 2024). These obstacles can be minimized if PBL is designed in line with the needs, abilities, and local context of students, including the development of more structured and adaptive learning modules or scenarios (Syam et al., 2025).

Based on this background, this study was designed to formulate three issues regarding the implementation of PBL in the subject “Various Important Events Surrounding the Proclamation” in class XII-AKL at SMK Dian Kartika Semarang, student responses to it, and facilitating and hindering factors. The objectives were to describe the implementation process, determine student responses, and identify these factors. The findings in this study are expected to provide practical contributions to the design of contextual history learning at the vocational high school level, as well as enrich academic studies on the implementation of PBL in the field of history education in Indonesia.

Methods

The research was conducted at SMK Dian Kartika Semarang in the Accounting and Institutional Finance (AKL) program for grade XII, academic year 2025/2026. Based on initial observations, PBL showed potential for research considering the students' habit of working in groups and analyzing sources, thus supporting contextual and critical history studies. The research focuses on the implementation of PBL, including planning, implementation steps, teacher-student interaction, learning outcome evaluation, and student involvement in solving historical problems related to the Proclamation (controversial figures, diplomacy, internal and external factors). In addition, this study examines students' responses to the use of PBL, as well as the impact of learning on students' critical thinking skills and sense of nationalism.

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of PBL in the History subject “Various Important Events Surrounding the Proclamation” in class XII-AKL at SMK Dian Kartika Semarang, as it appropriately represents natural social phenomena and the exploration of the learning process (Moleong, L.J., & Surjaman, 2014). The data sources for this study consisted of informants, learning documents, and field phenomena. Informants were selected using the purposive sampling technique proposed by Sugiyono, which is the selection of informants based on their relevance and competence in providing data in accordance with the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2013).

Results and Discussions

1. Results

a. Implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in History Subjects in the material “Various Important Events Surrounding the Proclamation” at SMK Dian Kartika Semarang

Based on the results of research on the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model, teachers have the characteristics of Problem-Based Learning (PBL), namely that teachers focus on students to be active in learning activities, teachers form discussion groups to solve problems, and teachers encourage students to actively explore information from various available sources. This is in agreement with Barrow and Min Liu in Shoimin (2014:130). The research findings show that the steps for implementing the Problem-Based Learning model for Grade XII-AKL students are as follows:

- 1) Teachers convey the learning objectives to be achieved and then prepare learning tools or media.
- 2) Teachers conduct reflection activities with the aim of recalling material that has been previously delivered so that students remember the material presented in the previous meeting.
- 3) The teacher explains the general overview of the history material to be discussed in the learning activity.
- 4) The teacher forms several small groups of 5-6 students to carry out the learning activity and gives each group a problem from the material to be discussed for them to solve.
- 5) The teacher directs the students to present the results of their discussion to the class so that their friends can listen to them.
- 6) The teacher provides an opportunity to ask questions, answer questions, and refute answers.
- 7) The teacher provides an opportunity for students to express critical opinions.
- 8) After the presentation is complete, the teacher conducts a reflection activity on the discussion and an evaluation of the results of the discussion between students on the issues being discussed.
- 9) The teacher provides clarification of information, conclusions, and a summary of the discussion.

b. Student response to the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model in History lessons at SMK Dian Kartika Semarang

The results of the application of Problem-Based Learning and the response of students in Class XII-AKL at SMA Dian Kartika Semarang are as follows:

- 1) Indonesian History lessons use PBL, which focuses on students solving problems through group discussions and presentations of results. However, male students tend to be reluctant to solve problems, seek answers, remember, and understand the material, so their scores are not optimal.
- 2) Male students tend to be self-absorbed, difficult for teachers to guide, inattentive, and unfocused during the learning process. In contrast, female students are easily guided by teachers, actively ask questions, and challenge answers during discussions.
- 3) Student motivation to learn is not optimal, especially among male students, in contrast to female students who are easy to manage and pay attention. (Djaali, 2023) agrees that learning outcomes are influenced by motivation, individual conditions, mental readiness, and interest without coercion. Several of the above statements are reinforced by the opinion of Aulia Budiarti in her journal entitled "The Application of the Problem-Based Learning Model to Problem-Solving Skills," which explains that the use of the Problem-Based Learning model is expected to make it easier for students to understand the material presented by the teacher and improve their ability to solve problems in thematic learning, thereby increasing learning outcomes.

c. Factors that facilitate and hinder the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in History lessons at SMK Dian Kartika Semarang

The implementation of Problem-Based Learning at SMK Dian Kartika Semarang has given rise to the following supporting and inhibiting factors:

- 1) Supporting factors: Not all students were involved in the discussion, but many female students were active in asking questions and expressing their opinions, encouraging other students to join the discussion during the question and answer session after the presentation.
- 2) Hindering factors: Students lacked enthusiasm because the learning process did not trigger student activity in the discussion. This became an additional obstacle when the learning process was conducted in the afternoon, when students began to feel sleepy. It is necessary to implement ice breaking so that students can be active and not easily bored. In addition, a lack of understanding of the presentation caused confusion when expressing opinions or questions, resulting in passive discussions.

2. Discussions

Based on the results of research on the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model, teachers have the following characteristics of Problem-Based Learning (PBL): teachers focus on students so that they are active in learning activities, teachers form discussion groups to solve problems, and teachers encourage students to actively seek information from various available sources. This is in agreement with Barrow and Min Liu in Shoimin, (2014:130), who explain that the characteristics of the Problem-Based Learning model, which is a teaching and learning activity, must be student-oriented, the problems must be authentic or based on the real world, students must actively seek relevant sources of information, learning must be carried out through discussions in groups or small teams, and teachers must act as facilitators in the learning process.

This is in agreement with (Djaali, 2023), who states that learning outcomes are influenced by several factors, namely motivation, conditions or circumstances within the individual that encourage them to carry out activities to achieve goals, an attitude of mental readiness in various types of actions in appropriate situations, and interest in something without coercion from any party.

The above statements are reinforced by the opinion of Aulia Budiarti in her journal entitled "The Application of the Problem-Based Learning Model on Problem-Solving Skills," which explains that the use of the Problem-Based Learning model is expected to make it easier for students to understand the material presented by the teacher and improve their ability to solve problems in thematic learning, thereby increasing learning outcomes. In its application, the Problem-Based Learning model has a positive effect on student learning outcomes. This model requires students to be more active during the learning process, especially in discussing and solving problems that are the focus of discussion. Teachers also play an important role in managing learning so that the process is effective and can produce optimal learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The implementation of PBL in Indonesian History on the subject of Proclamation for grade XII-AKL at SMK Dian Kartika showed positive and effective results, creating dynamic learning where students actively identify, analyze, and solve problems, thereby developing critical, analytical, and independent thinking. Teachers act as systematic facilitators who design relevant problem scenarios, organize group discussions, presentations, reflections, and evaluations. Meanwhile, students in the PBL process can examine solutions, understand the interrelationships between events, assess sources, and argue through intensive interaction. The impact is an improvement in the quality of HOTS-based collaborative learning, understanding of the material, and overall student learning outcomes.

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