



## REVAMPING MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: THE POWER OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

### MEROMBAK PENDIDIKAN MANAJEMEN: KEKUATAN PEMBELAJARAN BERBASIS PROYEK

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#### Abstract

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) has emerged as an innovative educational approach that bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. This study explores the impact of PjBL on students' learning experiences, particularly in real-world engagement, collaborative teamwork, social interaction, and problem-solving skills. Findings from interviews with multiple informants highlight that PjBL provides students with new experiences beyond the traditional classroom setting, allowing them to engage directly with the school environment. Through collaborative projects, students develop interpersonal skills, enhance communication, and strengthen teamwork. Additionally, PjBL fosters adaptability and problem-solving abilities, equipping students with essential 21st-century competencies. These results align with the theoretical perspectives of Krajcik & Blumenfeld (2006) and Blumenfeld et al. (1991), which emphasize the significance of experiential learning and social interaction in deepening students' understanding. Overall, PjBL offers a transformative learning experience by making education more meaningful, engaging, and relevant to real-world challenges.

**Keywords :** Project-Based Learning, experiential learning, collaborative teamwork, real-world engagement, 21st-century skills.

#### Abstrak

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) telah muncul sebagai pendekatan pendidikan inovatif yang menjembatani kesenjangan antara pengetahuan teoretis dan penerapan praktis. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dampak PjBL terhadap pengalaman belajar siswa, terutama dalam keterlibatan di dunia nyata, kerja sama tim, interaksi sosial, dan keterampilan pemecahan masalah. Temuan dari wawancara dengan beberapa informan menunjukkan bahwa PjBL memberikan pengalaman baru bagi siswa di luar lingkungan kelas tradisional, memungkinkan mereka untuk terlibat langsung dengan lingkungan sekolah. Melalui proyek kolaboratif, siswa mengembangkan keterampilan interpersonal, meningkatkan



komunikasi, dan memperkuat kerja sama tim. Selain itu, PjBL mendorong kemampuan beradaptasi dan pemecahan masalah, membekali siswa dengan kompetensi abad ke-21 yang penting. Hasil ini sejalan dengan perspektif teoretis Krajcik & Blumenfeld (2006) serta Blumenfeld et al. (1991), yang menekankan pentingnya pembelajaran berbasis pengalaman dan interaksi sosial dalam memperdalam pemahaman siswa. Secara keseluruhan, PjBL menawarkan pengalaman belajar transformatif dengan menjadikan pendidikan lebih bermakna, menarik, dan relevan dengan tantangan dunia nyata.

**Kata Kunci :** Project-Based Learning, pembelajaran berbasis pengalaman, kerja tim kolaboratif, keterlibatan dunia nyata, keterampilan abad 21.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Project Based Learning (PBL) has become an increasingly recognized and adopted approach in higher education institutions around the world. This method places students in demanding learning situations, engages them in real-world projects, and allows them to integrate knowledge and skills in practical contexts. The background regarding the urgency of implementing Project-Based Learning in higher education can be explained in several key aspects. First, Relevance to Contemporary Challenges; Universities need to provide education that can address contemporary challenges. According to Desimone and Le Floch (2004), PBL creates a context in which students can face real-world problems, promotes a deeper understanding of concepts, and increases the application of knowledge in practical contexts. Second, Higher Student Engagement; PBL has the potential to increase student involvement in the teaching and learning process. According to Thomas (2000), high involvement can increase students' intrinsic motivation, resulting in more effective and sustainable learning.

Third, Holistic Graduate Skills Development; PBL enables holistic skill development that includes both cognitive and affective aspects. According to Krajcik et al. (1998), PBL can enrich students' learning experiences by integrating knowledge, skills and attitudes in the context of real situations. Fourth, Preparation for the World of Work; Students need to be prepared to face a dynamic and complex world of work. According to Helle et al. (2006), PBL can increase student readiness by providing practical experience that reflects the demands of the world of work. Fifth, Collaboration between Universities and Industry; PBL can facilitate close collaboration between universities and industry. According to Bell, Wilson, and Johnson (2010), industrial projects can provide students with direct insight into industry needs and expectations, creating graduates who are better prepared to face professional challenges. Sixth, Emphasis on Active and Problem-Based Learning; PBL emphasizes active, problem-based learning, which has been shown to improve understanding and retention of concepts. According to Blumenfeld et al. (1991), active learning allows students to become active constructors of their own knowledge. Seventh, Development of Critical and Creative Thinking Skills; PBL can stimulate the development of critical and creative thinking skills. According to Barrows (1996), PBL encourages students to question, analyze, and produce innovative solutions to complex problems. The last, Preparing Students for Change and Innovation; Today's world is constantly changing, and students need to be ready to adapt. According to



Thomas and Brown (2011), PBL can help students develop the adaptability and innovation skills needed to succeed in an ever-changing society.

Project based learning is relatively new being implemented at Jambi University. The implementation of project based learning has been running for more than two years. This revitalization certainly requires an adaptation and renewal process from both the lecturers and students. The learning pattern, which previously used the majority in educational administration using presentations and questions and answers, has now been changed to project-based learning. Project-based learning carried out in student management courses is divided into two sessions. The first session, eight initial learning meetings focused on the material as part of forming students' initial understanding regarding the material. while the next eight meetings focused on the project. The project carried out is placing students as researchers where they will carry out projects at school, meet with school residents, such as; principals, teachers and students. The students will conduct interviews and observations related to the lecture material. In this project, students work in groups and each process has progress and monitoring carried out by the lecturer.

This research is important to investigate to understand how students experience project-based learning. The implications of this research are as an evaluation material for whether project-based learning has run in accordance with the concept of project based learning in education administration course at Jambi University.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses qualitative research and a phenomenological approach. Because this research is intended to describe the use of the Learning Management System (LMS) from the experiences of several students at the Department of Language and Literature Education, Jambi University. More broadly, Creswell (2016) defines phenomenology as the study of describing the general meaning of a number of individuals regarding their various life experiences related to phenomena. Phenomenological researchers focus on describing what participants have in common/common when they experience the phenomenon Creswell (2016). According to Van Manen (2016), the aim of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences of phenomena to a description of the universal essence or essence (an understanding of the distinctive nature of something).

Meaning is one of the important things in this study. Therefore, the main concept in phenomenology is the meaning that arises from the experience and awareness of the subject being studied. In order to obtain data about the subject's experiences naturally, the phenomenological researcher must carry out an "epoche" or confinement, by first abandoning his personal assumptions, so that he can truly obtain the essence of people's experiences. Researchers must ensure that participants' statements are presented clearly when analyzing research data (Creswell, 2016).

This research involved 7 students as research participants at one of the universities in Jambi. The main instrument used is interviews. The selection of interviews is the main research



instrument in phenomenological research (Creswell, 2016). Several additional instruments such as Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and documents containing screen capture documents from i-LMS for students and lecturers who used i-LMS during the pandemic. Interview data and focus group discussions were analyzed using within-case and cross-case displays and analyzes from Miles and Huberman (1994).

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, researchers found 4 main themes that represent participants' feelings when implementing project-based learning. The three main themes are: Real-World Engagement , Building a Collaborative Team Environment, Enhancing Social Interaction and Experiential Learning, Fostering Teamwork, Problem-Solving, and Adaptability.

#### a. Real-World Engagement

According to the findings of many informants' interviews, PjBL gave them new experiences. One definition of this fresh encounter is something they don't acquire in the classroom. When they worked on a project to engage with the school community, they gained this new experience. Students get the chance to observe the school environment up close during projects, which offers fresh and comprehensive experiences. This illustrates how PjBL enables students to make the connection between theory and practical application, enhancing their comprehension through practical experience. This is what the following quotation says:

pengalaman terbaik saya ketika melakukan proyek di sekolah adalah mengetahui banyak **sekali hal-hal yang apa saja terjadi di sekolah yang belum pernah saya temui**, apalagi terkait lingkungannya. Selama melakukan proyek di sekolah sangat lah menyenangkan karena terjadinya kerjasama antar tim maupun perkelompok dan menjalin komunikasi terkaitnya pendekatan sesama kelompok ataupun warga sekolah tersebut.

(My best experience when doing a project at school was finding out that there were lots of things that happened at school that I had never encountered, especially regarding the environment. While carrying out projects at school, it is very enjoyable because there is collaboration between teams and groups and establishing communication regarding approaches between groups or members of the school community.)

The same was stated by another informant, who claimed that students learned new things from their interviews with school residents. Interviews provide them with experience in the form of storytelling from the interview and connecting with senior citizens.

Selama saya melakukan proyek/wawancara di SMPN 7 Muaro Jambi, saya mendapatkan pengalaman baru yaitu mewawancara narasumber disana, dan saya sangat berkesan kepada guru dan peserta didik disana, karna sangat lah ramah dan sopan, sehingga sangat nyaman untuk berada di sekolah tersebut, dan juga kami diizinkan untuk melihat situasi di sekolah nya.

(While I was doing a project/interview at SMPN 7 Muaro Jambi, I got a new experience, namely interviewing resource persons there, and I really impressed the teachers and



students there, because they were very friendly and polite, so it was very comfortable to be at that school, and also we were allowed to see the situation at his school.)

The aforementioned claim is consistent with the notion put forth by Krajcik & Blumenfeld (2006), which holds that students can use their knowledge in a meaningful and practical way by being immersed in real-world contexts and tasks through project-based learning. PjBL enables students to participate in real-world tasks and circumstances, which aids in their application of knowledge in meaningful and practical ways (Krajcik and Blumenfeld; 2006). Student projects in PjBL are frequently focused on issues or difficulties that arise in the actual world. Because they can directly witness the results of their labor, students find the learning process more engaging and meaningful. Additionally, PBL aids in the development of practical skills pertinent to the demands of future life and work by involving students in projects with real-world relevance. Overall, the theory put forth by Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2006) describes how Project-Based Learning (PBL) provides a realistic and meaningful learning context for students. PBL focuses not only on theoretical learning, but also on how students can apply their knowledge in real-world situations, ultimately increasing the relevance, motivation, and effectiveness of learning. Among these skills are critical thinking, problem solving, project management, and communication skills. Students who are involved in projects that are relevant to their lives feel that their learning has clear goals and real applications, which increases their intrinsic motivation to actively participate in the learning process.

#### **b. Building a Collaborative Team Environment**

The second theme that emerged from this research was building a collaborative team environment. In this research, it was found that PJBL had a positive impact on students in social interactions between themselves and their friends. As in the quote below

dengan adanya kegiatan ini, saya jadi sering diskusi bersama rekan dari kelas lain yang awalnya tidak pernah bertegur sapa bahkan tidak kenal sekarang jadi berteman dekat.

With this activity, I have started having discussions with classmates from other sections whom I had never spoken to before, and now we have become close friends.

In the narrative given, project-based learning activities enable intense social interaction between students. Previously, they may not have known each other or even spoken. However, through collaboration on assigned projects, they begin to discuss, share ideas, and see different perspectives. This process not only enriches their learning experience but also builds closer and more meaningful social relationships among fellow students. This is in accordance with the theory that "Social interaction is a critical aspect of project-based learning, as it allows students to share ideas, gain different perspectives, and build social relationships" (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). Social interaction is an important aspect of project-based learning, where through this interaction, students can grow personally and build mutually supportive connections in their learning environment. This is also in line with the response from one of the informants regarding the solidarity that emerged when they carried out a project together.



Menurut saya pengalaman terbaik selama melakukan proyek adalah saat pergi bersama rekan sekelas untuk mengantarkan surat izin observasi walaupun yang masuk hanya perwakilan namun sebagai **bentuk kekompakan dan keadilan** bagi setiap tim maka semua turut pergi mengantarkan perwakilan kelas kesekolah terkait untuk memberi surat izin observasi kepada pihak sekolah. Dan rekan kelas lainnya menunggu diluar sekolah (tepatnya warung) untuk menunggu kepastian dari pengantaran surat izin observasi tersebut.

The best experience I had during the project was when my classmates and I went together to deliver the observation permit letter. Even though only a few representatives were allowed to enter, as a form of unity and fairness among team members, we all accompanied them to the school to submit the letter. Meanwhile, the rest of our classmates waited outside the school (specifically at a small shop) until we received confirmation regarding the submission of the letter.

Pengalaman terbaik yg saya rasakan yaitu saat mendapatkan kesempatan pertama untuk melakukan project ini dan saya sangat menikmati proses untuk menyelesaikan tugas project. Banyak pengalaman yg dapat diambil salah satunya yaitu pengalaman terbaik dengan kebersamaann.

The best experience I felt was having the opportunity to participate in this project for the first time, and I truly enjoyed the process of completing the tasks. There were many valuable experiences to take away, one of which was the strong sense of togetherness.

Dalam melaksanakan proyek di lapangan, saya merasa cukup senang. Karena dalam hal inilah kekompakan kelas terlihat, di mana kami saling memperhatikan satu dengan yang lain, saling berbagi tugas, berbagi peran, dan saling mengingatkan ketika kami bertindak berlebihan di lingkungan baru. Proyek lapangan di sekolah juga memberikan kesan yang menarik bagi saya, di mana saya bisa memperoleh informasi yang menarik, mengingat moment-moment masa SMA, dan sebagainya.

During the field project, I felt genuinely happy because this was when the class's teamwork became evident. We cared for each other, shared responsibilities, divided roles, and reminded one another if we acted inappropriately in the new environment. Conducting a field project at school also left a meaningful impression on me, as I gained interesting insights, recalled moments from high school, and had various memorable experiences.

The excerpt highlights the importance of teamwork, shared experiences, and the value of collaborative learning in project-based activities. The students' reflections emphasize how the project was not just about completing tasks but also about building relationships, fostering a sense of unity, and experiencing a learning process beyond the classroom.

One key aspect of their experience was the act of delivering the observation permit letter together, which symbolized solidarity and fairness among classmates. Even though only a few representatives were required to enter the school, the entire team accompanied them,



demonstrating their collective responsibility and mutual support. This moment reinforced the importance of collaboration and commitment to a shared goal.

Another significant takeaway was the sense of enjoyment and fulfillment in the project process. The students appreciated the opportunity to work together, share roles, and support one another, which strengthened their bonds and made the project experience more meaningful. The project became more than just an academic requirement—it transformed into an opportunity for social interaction, personal development, and nostalgia, as students recalled their past school experiences and engaged in lively discussions.

In essence, the excerpt reflects how project-based learning fosters not only academic growth but also social and emotional development. It reinforces the idea that learning is most effective when it is interactive, collaborative, and experiential, allowing students to build essential life skills such as teamwork, communication, and adaptability. The project became a memorable journey that shaped their perspectives and strengthened their sense of community.

Blumenfeld's theory on social interaction highlights its essential role in education, emphasizing that it allows students to share ideas, gain diverse perspectives, and develop meaningful social relationships (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). This concept closely aligns with the principles of Project-Based Learning (PjBL), which educational researchers advocate as a method that fosters deep engagement and collaborative learning.

According to Thomas and Mergendoller (2000), PjBL immerses students in meaningful and authentic collaborative projects, where they work together to solve real-world problems and challenges. This approach not only enhances academic learning but also cultivates essential skills such as interpersonal communication, critical thinking, and teamwork. Through collaboration, students engage in social interaction by exchanging knowledge, negotiating ideas, and formulating solutions, thereby deepening their understanding while forming strong peer connections (Thomas & Mergendoller, 2000).

Blumenfeld's emphasis on social interaction supports the idea that collaborative tasks in PjBL encourage active engagement in discussions, idea negotiation, and peer support (Blumenfeld et al., 1991; Thomas & Mergendoller, 2000). These interactions not only enhance the learning experience but also contribute to the development of social and emotional competencies essential for academic success and professional growth.

This perspective aligns with the principles of Cooperative Learning and Social Learning Theory, both of which underscore the significance of collaboration and social interaction in education. Cooperative Learning theory, as described by Johnson and Johnson (1999), asserts that structured group activities enable students to work together toward shared learning objectives. "Cooperative learning involves structured activities where students work together in small groups to achieve a common goal" (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Through these structured interactions, students actively learn from one another, exchange ideas, and support each other in completing projects. This process not only enhances their comprehension of academic content but also strengthens their social and interpersonal skills.



Similarly, Social Learning Theory, introduced by Bandura (1977), posits that individuals acquire knowledge and behaviors by observing and interacting with others in their social environment. “People learn through observing others' behavior, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviors” (Bandura, 1977). Within the PjBL context, students experience behavioral and perceptual shifts as they engage in social interactions with their peers. By observing how classmates communicate, collaborate, and problem-solve, students internalize new social norms and interactional strategies, ultimately shaping their own approaches to teamwork and cooperation.

Additionally, Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory reinforces the notion that learning is inherently a social process, where peer collaboration and guided participation play a crucial role in cognitive development. His concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests that students learn best when they undertake tasks slightly beyond their independent capability, with the support of more knowledgeable peers or instructors. This concept highlights the importance of structured group interactions in PjBL and Cooperative Learning, where students scaffold each other's understanding through discussions, feedback, and collaborative problem-solving.

Considering these theoretical perspectives, students' experiences in PjBL can be understood as an integration of the principles of Cooperative Learning, Social Learning Theory, and Sociocultural Theory. In this model, collaboration and social interaction serve as fundamental components of learning, reinforcing both cognitive and social development. Through engagement in meaningful projects, students not only enhance their academic knowledge but also cultivate essential social skills that contribute to lifelong learning and professional success

### c. Enhancing Social Interaction and Experiential Learning

Research findings indicate that social interaction plays a crucial role in shaping students' learning experiences within a Project-Based Learning (PjBL) framework. Through collaborative projects, students actively engage in discussions, share knowledge, and negotiate ideas, which not only enhance their academic understanding but also strengthen their interpersonal relationships. This finding aligns with Blumenfeld et al. (1991), who emphasize that social interaction enables students to develop meaningful relationships while broadening their perspectives.

Bagi saya kegiatan ini sangat seru dan menarik bagi mahasiswa seperti saya yang tidak sama sekali ikut UKM dikampus, yang mana dari awal kuliah saya kekampus hanya kuliah selesai MK lnsung pulang tpi dengan adanya projek ini saya jadi merasa ada kegiatan diluar kampus tidak hanya didalam kelas serta nambah wawasan saya , saya juga lebih bisa mengenal teman<sup>2</sup> kelas saya terutama yang perempuan karna saya tipe laki<sup>2</sup> yang malu jika ikut kumpul<sup>2</sup> dengan perempuan gitu, adanya projek ini mau gamau saya harus ikut kontribusi dengan teman<sup>2</sup> apalagi kelas saya yg ikut terjun kelokasi projek ini mayoritas perempuan jdi saya bisa ikut kumpul gurau<sup>2</sup> bahas<sup>2</sup> projek ini gimna jdi asik lh bisa ngurangin rasa malu saya untuk ngumpul dengn yang perempuan



ternyata lumayan asik jdi seru deh pokoknya yang awalnya kami mau berangkat kejemak hujan dikampus Berjam jam jdi kami cerita<sup>2</sup> gurau<sup>2</sup> yg sebelumnya bahkan saya ga pernah kumpul cerita canda gurau dengan teman kelas saya yg perempuan, dan sebelumnya kn kami menyusun instrumen gabung dengan kelas yang lain nah itu jdi saya dapat kenal dengan beberapa mahasiswa dari kelas R1 dan R3 ,jdi projek ini sangat membantu saya menemukan mendapatkan hal-hal baru yang belum pernah saya dapat dan yg belum pernah saya lakuin sebelumnya dan menjadi pengalaman yang asik dan seru bagi saya.

For me, this activity was really exciting and interesting, especially as a student who has never joined any student organizations on campus. From the beginning of my studies, I would usually go to campus just for classes and go straight home afterward. However, with this project, I finally felt involved in activities outside the classroom, which not only broadened my knowledge but also gave me a new experience beyond just attending lectures.

I also got to know my classmates better, especially the female students, since I tend to be shy when it comes to socializing with them. With this project, I had no choice but to contribute and collaborate with my classmates, most of whom were female. This experience allowed me to engage with them, joke around, and discuss the project together, which helped me overcome my shyness. Surprisingly, it turned out to be quite fun, making the whole experience enjoyable. One memorable moment was when we were supposed to leave but got stuck on campus due to heavy rain for hours. Instead of just waiting in silence, we spent time chatting and laughing together. Before this, I had never really joined in on casual conversations with my female classmates. Additionally, while preparing project instruments, we collaborated with students from other classes, R1 and R3, which allowed me to meet and interact with new people. Overall, this project has helped me discover and experience new things that I had never done before. It turned out to be a fun and exciting experience that I truly enjoyed.

The excerpt describes a student's personal experience and reflections on participating in a project that brought significant changes to their social interactions and campus life. Initially, the student was not actively involved in any student organizations and would only attend classes before heading straight home. However, this project provided an opportunity to engage in activities outside the classroom, expanding their knowledge and social circle.

One of the most impactful aspects of the project was how it helped the student overcome their shyness, particularly in interacting with female classmates. Since the majority of participants in the project were women, the student had no choice but to contribute and collaborate with them. Through shared discussions and teamwork, they gradually became more comfortable, realizing that working together was actually enjoyable.

The project also created memorable moments, such as being stuck on campus due to heavy rain. Instead of it being an inconvenience, the situation became an opportunity for



bonding, with classmates sharing stories and jokes. Additionally, the student had the chance to meet peers from other classes, further expanding their network and social skills.

Overall, the project played a transformative role in the student's personal development. It not only allowed them to gain new experiences but also helped them step out of their comfort zone, interact more confidently, and enjoy the collaborative spirit of working together. This experience became a valuable and enjoyable part of their academic journey. It is also supported by another participant who said,

Salah satu pengalaman terbaik saya selama melakukan projek wawancara disekolah ketika kami diberi tugas untuk mewawancarai seorang guru yng memiliki pengalaman panjang dalam dunia pendidikan. Selain sebagai tugas, ini juga menjadi kesempatan untuk mendalami pemahaman saya tentang Pendidikan.

One of the best experiences I had during the interview project at school was when we were assigned to interview a teacher with extensive experience in the field of education. Besides being a task, it was also an opportunity for me to deepen my understanding of education.

pengalaman terbaik saya selama melakukan projek di sekolah ini saya mendapat pengalaman baru seperti bertemu orang baru ke sekolah yang sama sekali belum pernah saya kunjungin, serta mengerti bagaimana cara melakukan wawancara yang baik dari sebelum turun ke lapangan sampai sesudah.

The best experience I had during this school project was gaining new experiences, such as meeting new people, visiting a school I had never been to before, and learning how to conduct a proper interview from preparation to execution in the field.

Pengalaman terbaik saya yaitu mendapatkan suasana yang berbeda yang tidak monoton seperti di kelas biasanya, dengan wawancara yang sudah kami lakukan sedikit banyaknya juga menjadi pengalaman yang seru bagi saya karena juga dikelilingi teman-teman yang asik dan pada saat di perjalanan pun juga sangat menyenangkan diiringi dengan canda tawa semua.

My best experience was enjoying a different atmosphere that was not as monotonous as a regular classroom setting. The interviews we conducted became an exciting experience for me, as I was surrounded by fun and lively friends. Even the journey itself was enjoyable, filled with laughter and cheerful moments along the way.

The excerpt highlights the enriching and memorable experiences gained through a school interview project. It illustrates how stepping outside the traditional classroom setting provided students with valuable learning opportunities, both academically and socially.

Through this project, students not only had the chance to interview experienced educators but also to develop practical skills such as conducting proper interviews and interacting with new people. The experience of visiting unfamiliar schools exposed them to different educational environments, broadening their perspectives. Beyond the academic benefits, the project fostered a sense of camaraderie among participants, as they shared



enjoyable moments together, from working on the interviews to the lively and laughter-filled journeys.

Overall, the project was more than just a task—it was a meaningful learning journey that enhanced students' understanding of education while also strengthening their teamwork, communication skills, and social confidence.

The findings from the students' experiences during the school interview project highlight several key aspects of experiential learning, social interaction, and collaborative engagement in education. The project not only allowed students to develop academic skills, such as conducting interviews and gathering information, but also facilitated personal growth, teamwork, and an appreciation for diverse learning environments. These observations align with several established educational theories that emphasize learning through experience, collaboration, and contextual engagement.

The students' reflections demonstrate that the interview project provided them with an active and immersive learning experience, as opposed to traditional classroom-based instruction. This aligns with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984), which posits that learning occurs through a cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. By engaging in real-world interviews, students experienced firsthand how to conduct research, interact with professionals, and analyze responses—skills that cannot be fully acquired through passive learning.

Furthermore, the opportunity to visit schools they had never been to before contributed to their situated learning experience, as proposed by Lave & Wenger (1991) in the Situated Learning Theory. According to this theory, learning is most effective when it takes place in an authentic context, where students engage with knowledge in a real-world setting. The school visits allowed them to apply theoretical concepts in a practical manner, making the learning process more meaningful and impactful.

The students emphasized how the project helped them interact with classmates they had never spoken to before and build stronger connections with peers. This aligns with Vygotsky's Social Constructivism (1978), which argues that learning is a social process that occurs through interaction, collaboration, and discussion with others. The students' experiences suggest that the social context of learning played a crucial role in enhancing their understanding of education while also fostering interpersonal relationships.

Additionally, their experiences align with Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which states that individuals learn through observation, imitation, and social interaction. The students learned not only from their own actions but also by observing how their peers conducted interviews, interacted with teachers, and handled various situations. Through this process, they internalized new skills and behaviors, demonstrating how social engagement can enhance cognitive and behavioral development.

Another key theme from the students' reflections is the importance of teamwork and collaboration, which aligns with Johnson & Johnson's Cooperative Learning Theory (1999). Cooperative learning emphasizes structured group activities where students work together



toward a shared goal, fostering interpersonal skills, responsibility, and mutual support. The students' experiences highlight how working in groups encouraged them to take on different roles, support one another, and collectively contribute to the success of the project.

The social aspects of the project, including waiting for their peers, traveling together, and sharing moments of laughter, demonstrate the importance of a positive group dynamic in fostering engagement and motivation. According to Slavin (1995), cooperative learning enhances not only academic achievement but also students' social and emotional skills, as they learn to communicate, negotiate, and build meaningful relationships through shared experiences.

#### **d. Fostering Teamwork, Problem-Solving, and Adaptability**

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is an instructional approach that encourages students to engage in meaningful, real-world tasks that foster deeper learning. Unlike traditional methods that focus on rote memorization, PjBL immerses students in complex projects where they must collaborate, solve problems, and adapt to unpredictable circumstances. These aspects align with essential 21st-century skills, particularly teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability, which are crucial for success in both academic and professional settings.

Pengalaman saya selama proyek disekolah ada kerjasama yang kuat dengan tim, pemecahan masalah bersama dan pencapaian tujuan Bersama

My experience during the school project involved strong teamwork, collective problem-solving, and the achievement of shared goals.

Pengalaman terbaik selama melakukan proyek adalah memberikan saya banyak pelajaran mengenai kesabaran karena pada saat turun kelapangan semua tidak berjalan sesuai dengan yang diharapkan. Sebagaimana ketika kami turun kelapangan awalnya mendapatkan penolakan dari pihak sekolah dan kurangnya partisipasi dari pihak sekolah, dari situ kami dapat belajar bahwa kami tidak bisa memaksa sesuai dengan keinginan kami.

The best experience during the project taught me many lessons about patience because things did not always go as expected in the field. For instance, when we first arrived, we faced rejection from the school and a lack of participation from the school staff. From this, we learned that we cannot force things to go according to our wishes.

The excerpts highlight the valuable lessons gained from participating in a school project, emphasizing teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability in real-world situations. The experience reinforced the importance of collaboration, as students worked together to achieve common goals and navigate challenges collectively. Additionally, the project served as a lesson in patience and resilience. Facing unexpected obstacles, such as school rejection and limited participation, students learned to accept and adapt to circumstances beyond their control. This experience reflects real-life problem-solving, where persistence and flexibility are key to overcoming difficulties. Overall, the project not only enhanced academic and social skills but also instilled essential life values, preparing students for future professional and personal challenges.



Based on the experiences described, it can be concluded that Project-Based Learning (PjBL) provides a learning experience beyond theoretical knowledge in the classroom. This method requires students to collaborate in teams, solve problems collectively, and adapt to various real-world challenges. The challenges faced during the project, such as rejection from the school and lack of participation from stakeholders, became valuable lessons in patience, resilience, and flexibility.

From a theoretical perspective, Vygotsky's Social Constructivism emphasizes that learning occurs through social interactions, where students construct knowledge together (Vygotsky, 1978). This is evident in the project experience, where teamwork played a crucial role in achieving common goals. Additionally, Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle is relevant in this context. Kolb (1984) argues that effective learning occurs through a cycle of concrete experiences, reflection, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. In this project, students encountered real-life situations, analyzed the challenges, and adjusted their strategies to achieve better outcomes.

Moreover, the 21st-Century Skills Framework highlights three key competencies that were strengthened through PjBL (Trilling & Fadel, 2009):

1. Collaboration: Students learn to work in teams, divide roles, and support each other in achieving project goals.
2. Critical Thinking & Problem-Solving: Students must think creatively to overcome obstacles in the field, such as negotiating with school authorities or handling a lack of participation.
3. Adaptability: Students must adjust their strategies when initial plans do not go as expected.

Furthermore, Thomas (2000) defines PjBL as a teaching method that engages students in complex, real-world projects requiring sustained inquiry, collaboration, and problem-solving. The experiences shared align with this definition, demonstrating how students developed essential skills through real-life engagement. Similarly, Barron & Darling-Hammond (2008) argue that PjBL improves student engagement, self-direction, and resilience in overcoming challenges, all of which were reflected in the project outcomes.

Overall, the project experience not only enhances academic understanding but also fosters essential social and emotional skills. PjBL proves that experiential learning is more effective in preparing students for real-world challenges, aligning with the demands of globalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which require individuals who are resilient, innovative, and capable of working collaboratively (World Economic Forum, 2020).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study highlight the impact and significance of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in providing students with meaningful learning experiences that extend beyond traditional classroom instruction.



Firstly, real-world engagement is a key benefit of PjBL, as students gain firsthand experiences by interacting with the school community. This helps them bridge the gap between theory and practice, making learning more relevant and comprehensive.

Secondly, PjBL builds a collaborative team environment, fostering positive social interactions among students. Through teamwork, students develop interpersonal skills and strengthen their ability to work together effectively.

Moreover, social interaction and experiential learning play a crucial role in enhancing students' academic and personal growth. Engaging in discussions, knowledge sharing, and negotiation of ideas not only deepens their understanding but also broadens their perspectives, aligning with the principles of collaborative learning.

Lastly, PjBL promotes teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability, essential 21st-century skills that prepare students for future academic and professional challenges. By working on complex projects, students learn to collaborate, think critically, and adapt to dynamic situations.

Overall, PjBL is a powerful instructional approach that enriches learning by integrating real-world experiences, fostering collaboration, and developing essential life skills.

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