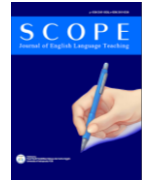




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Reasearch Article

## Unveiling Student Experiences with Project Based Learning (PjBL): Insights from Jambi University

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### KEYWORDS

Perception;  
 Project Based Learning;  
 Students

### A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this research is to find out the perceptions of students towards Project Based Learning (PjBL)-based learning at one of study program in Jambi University which has been implemented for approximately 2 years. This research used a type of qualitative research with a case study. Data collection techniques used by researchers consist of observation, interview and documentation techniques. There are six themes emerged in this research: Learning experiences, Long-term Memory Retention, Student Creativity Enhancement, Time Intensiveness, Leadership Development and Responsibility, Flexibility in Learning. It is suggested that further research and exploration be conducted to address the challenges and preferences identified by students and lecturers regarding PjBL.

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## INTRODUCTION

The significance of education as a cornerstone for national development and progress is universally acknowledged. In Indonesia, the disparity in educational quality and access remains a pressing concern. The traditional pedagogical approaches, characterized by rote learning and a lack of emphasis on practical application, have been increasingly scrutinized for their effectiveness in preparing students for the complexities of the modern world. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture's strategic plan for 2020-2024 underlines a commitment to revolutionizing higher education by enhancing the quality of learning, faculty, and governance. Against this backdrop, Project Based Learning (PjBL) emerges as a transformative pedagogical model, aiming to foster critical and creative

thinking, collaborative learning, and practical skills development.

While the implementation of PjBL in Indonesian at Universitas Jambi, has shown promising outcomes, there exists a gap in understanding its full impact and optimization. The existing literature and practice indicate a burgeoning acceptance of PjBL, yet detailed insights into its effectiveness, challenges, integration with traditional curricula, and alignment with the Ministry's Indikator Kinerja Utama (IKU) remain sparse. There's a particular scarcity of comprehensive studies assessing the longitudinal impact of PjBL on student outcomes, faculty adaptation, and institutional governance.

Current advancements in educational methodologies emphasize the importance of active learning models like PjBL. These models are recognized for their potential to

bridge theoretical knowledge and practical application, thereby making education more relevant and engaging for students.

The purpose of the research is to investigate and understand the experiences of students with Project Based Learning (PjBL) at Jambi University. This includes exploring how students perceive PjBL, examining the impact of PjBL on their learning experiences, and identifying any challenges or benefits associated with this educational approach. The research aims to provide insights that can inform the improvement and optimization of PjBL implementation at Jambi University, as well as contribute to the broader understanding of student-centered learning methodologies in higher education.

Previous research on PjBL has predominantly focused on its theoretical underpinnings, short-term impacts on student engagement, and isolated case studies within specific disciplines or institutions. Studies like those conducted by Usman and Ratnasari (2019) have begun to shed light on the practical applications and benefits of PjBL in enhancing critical thinking and collaborative skills. However, there is a dearth of comprehensive studies that examine the long-term effects of PjBL across diverse educational settings, disciplines, and cultural contexts. Additionally, research assessing the alignment of PjBL with national educational performance indicators and its role in addressing educational disparities is notably lacking.

By addressing these elements, this research will contribute valuable insights to the ongoing evolution of educational practices in Indonesia and beyond, offering a nuanced understanding of the potential of Project Based Learning to transform higher education landscapes.

Based on the previous research presented, several conclusions can be drawn, indicating gaps for further investigation in the context of this research:

Firstly, the research from Sahrizal Vahlepi, Helty, Friscilla Wulan Tersta (2021) entitles Implementation of a Learning Model based on Case Method and Project Based Learning in order to accommodate students' Higher Order Thinking Skills in the Arabic Language Educational Psychology Course during the Pandemic demonstrated positive outcomes in enhancing creativity, higher-order thinking skills, and students' perceptions of learning. Previous studies provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of PjBL, but there is still a need for more in-depth research on its implementation in the context of higher education in Indonesia specifically. This includes researching the long-term impact of PjBL on learning outcomes, adapting PjBL to the unique needs and challenges in Indonesia, and strategies for optimizing PjBL implementation within existing curricula.

Secondly, the research from Sari and Angreni (2018) with the title "*Penerapan model pembelajaran Project Based Learning (PjBL) upaya peningkatan kreativitas Mahasiswa.*" From this research, the application of PjBL has proven effective in enhancing students' creativity and providing a more authentic and actively engaged learning experience. However, there remains a need to delve deeper into the factors influencing the success of PjBL, including institutional support, faculty training, and the availability of necessary resources. Additionally, further research is needed to explore how PjBL can be better integrated into existing curricula and how this can enhance overall learning quality.

Thirdly, "*Persepsi Mahasiswa Terhadap Pembelajaran Yang Mengembangkan Keterampilan Berpikir Kreatif Yang Diintegrasikan Dengan Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek*" by Usman and Ratnasari (2019). This research found that student perceptions of learning that fosters creative thinking and is integrated with PjBL are generally positive, with a majority feeling capable of using imagination and producing something different from usual. However, further research is needed to gain a deeper understanding of how students' perceptions of PjBL relate to concrete learning outcomes, such as the ability to apply knowledge in real-world situations, adapt to change, and prepare for the job market.

Considering these conclusions, the research gaps that emerge emphasize the need for further exploration into the implementation of PjBL in the context of higher education in Indonesia, as well as its impact on learning outcomes and student preparation for the future.

Building on the state of the art, the purpose of this research is to critically analyze the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) within Indonesian higher education institutions from students' perspectives. This study seeks to understand the perceptions and experiences of students with Project Based Learning (PjBL) at Jambi University. Specifically, it aims to explore how students perceive PjBL, investigate the impact of PjBL on their learning experiences, and identify any challenges or benefits associated with this educational approach. By gaining insights into students' perspectives, attitudes, and experiences with PjBL, the study aims to inform the development and enhancement of PjBL practices at Jambi University and contribute to the broader discourse on student-centered learning methodologies in higher education.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method with a case study approach because the researchers want to get the depth understanding and enables a rich understanding of the complexities, contexts, and nuances involved. These

are aligned with what Creswell (2014) said that a case study is a type of qualitative approach that examines a particular "case" in a contemporary real-life context or setting. This research was conducted in the Faculty of

Teacher Training and Education majoring in language and literature education at Universitas Jambi with a total of 11 informants (9 Females and 2 Males) in table 1.

**Tabel 1.** Information about Partipant

No	Name of Partipant (Pseudonym)	Notes
1	Riri (Female)	Riri is one of the students of the Jambi University majoring in language and literature education, class of 2019. Currently Riri is taking the 7th semester of college.
2	Lea (Female)	Lea is one of the students of the 2019 class of Jambi University majoring in language and literature education. Currently She is taking the 7th semester of college.
3	Ara (Female)	Ara is one of the students of Jambi University majoring in language and literature education, class of 2021. Currently She is taking semester 3 of college.
4	Neri (Female)	Neri is one of the students of the Jambi University majoring in language and literature education, class of 2021. Currently She is taking semester 3 of college.
5	Tiwi(Female)	Tiwi is one of the students of Jambi University majoring in language and literature education class of 2019. Currently She is taking semester 7 of college.
6	Zuu (Female)	Zuu is one of the students of the Jambi University majoring in language and literature education of 2019. Currently the She is taking the 7th semester of college.
7	Via (Female)	Via is one of the students of the Jambi University majoring in language and literature education, class of 2019. Currently She is taking the 7th semester of college.
8	Adam (Male)	Adam is one of the students in the Jambi University majoring in language and literature education, class of 2019. Currently, He is taking the 7th semester of college.
9	Pratama Male)	Pratama is a Jambi University majoring in language and literature education i Class of 2019. Currently He is studying in the 7th semester of college.
10	Sora (Female)	Sora is a female Jambi University majoring in language and literature education Class of 2020. Currently She is studying in the 5th semester of college.
11	Fitri (Female)	Fitri is a female Jambi University majoring in language and literature education Class of 2022. Currently She is taking semester 1st of college.

Furthermore, data collection is done through observation, interviews and documentation. The data was developed by compiling, explaining, describing and analyzing based on the formulation of the problem and the objectives of the research on Project Based Learning (PjBL) based learning in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Universitas Jambi. First, observation activities are carried out during the learning process to find out how students view receiving project-based assignments and to find out what steps the lecturer takes in giving project-based assignments. In addition, researchers make field notes in collecting data in the field.

In order to obtain interview data, the participants were asked to indicate on the demographic background form whether or not they were willing to participate in the interview. Researchers got in touch with people who agreed to be interviewed based on their statements. Just nine women and two men expressed interest in being interviewed. Interviews started to take place in November

2023. In accordance with a project-based learning interview procedure developed by (Handayani, et al, 2023). Semi-structured interviews with two male participants using pseudonyms and nine female participants.

Additionally, the names of participants, locations, and the research site were concealed through the use of pseudonyms in order to uphold ethical standards and safeguard the rights of human subjects. Researchers gave participants an informed permission form, so their decision to participate in the study was completely optional. Each student's semi-structured interview lasted for twenty to thirty minutes. Researchers asked our student to follow PjBL in order to get information on their feelings throughout the interview, among other things. Curriculum materials, RPS, and multiple project drafts from students enrolled in courses that used project-based learning (PjBL) were accessed by researchers.

All of the interview data were audio recorded, verbatim transcribed, meticulously examined, and categorized in order to assess the qualitative data. "Undoubtedly, no consensus exists for the analysis of the forms of qualitative data," according to Marshall and Rossman (1999:150), and "a messy, ambiguous, time consuming, creative, and fascinating process" (Creswell, 1997:140). Researchers started by performing what Miles and Huberman (1994) referred to as "within case analysis." Following the initial interview, we immediately recorded, verbatim transcribed, and then thoroughly examined and arranged the data. In the second step, Researchers individually examined each participant's transcript line by line and noted pertinent passages in the statements. Third, Researchers conducted what Miles and Huberman (1994) referred to as "cross-case analysis" after each of us had gone over each participant's transcript and organized the information into their individual themes and sub-themes. For each general topic, we reanalyzed and compared all transcripts spanning eleven students to determine the frequency of assertions made by participants. Additionally, we performed a "cross-case analysis" in order to eliminate redundant data.

To address the "trustworthiness" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:300 as quoted in Mukminin, 2012a, 2012b) of our study, researchers performed a one-on-one interview lasting approximately 25 to 30 minutes. Researchers performed member checking with co-researchers in addition to the 11 students to verify the accuracy of the data, results, and interpretations (Creswell, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Mukminin & McMahon, 2013). The final report, findings, and transcripts of the interviews were given to each student teacher. This was chosen to ensure that all students gave their consent to the researchers' collection of their data. Each student granted us permission to use their data in our research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research were obtained from observation, interview, and documentation searches carried out by researchers. In the interview technique, the researcher used a purposive sampling technique in determining the sources to be interviewed, where the selection of sources was adjusted to the same conditions and met the criteria according to the topic raised by the researcher. Because the relationship between the researcher's problem formulation and the Purposive Sampling technique is very suitable. In addition, researchers have conducted intense interviews with a total of 11 sources from students.

Data that was not revealed during the interview process was supplemented with data from field notes/checklist observations carried out by the researcher. And to strengthen the substance of the data from observations and

interviews, a search was carried out on documents and archives available to the sources. The data from this research is described through the direct experiences of the informants.

Based on the results obtained from interviews, there are main points or keywords that are appropriate to the problems that are the focus of research regarding the perceptions of lecturers and students at Jambi University. The researchers found various kinds of perceptions from interviewees regarding the Project Based Learning (PjBL) Model. The findings obtained by researchers through interviews regarding the perceptions of lecturers and students towards the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model:

### *Learning experiences*

The first point underscores the wealth of learning experiences students gain through Project Based Learning (PBL). Students get a lot of learning experience. This learning model is a learning model that requires detailed planning so that students gain a lot of experience during the project work process. This pedagogical approach demands meticulous planning to ensure students immerse themselves in a myriad of experiences throughout the project. Expert consensus supports the notion that PjBL effectively orchestrates an individual's learning journey, seamlessly integrating real-world encounters and practical tasks. PjBL's emphasis on authentic challenges propels students to navigate complexities, make informed decisions, and resolve issues, fostering profound learning encounters. Thomas (2000) substantiates this by revealing that participants in PBL exhibit heightened comprehension and motivation compared to conventional teaching methods. Moreover, PBL structures learning around pivotal questions or dilemmas, infusing coherence and significance into students' educational endeavors. This deliberate alignment enables learners to discern interconnections among diverse concepts, thereby enabling them to apply acquired knowledge within pertinent contexts. Blumenfeld et al. (1991) affirm this integrated approach, highlighting PBL's capacity to deepen students' understanding across disciplinary boundaries.

### *Long-term Memory Retention*

The second point underscores the enduring impact of Project Based Learning (PjBL) on students' memory retention. This pedagogical approach, characterized by meticulous planning and prolonged duration, leaves an indelible impression on learners. Unlike conventional classroom instruction, PjBL immerses students in detailed, extended projects that transcend typical learning experiences. Sweller (2010) concurs, noting PjBL's efficacy in facilitating long-term memory storage of acquired information. By engaging in immersive, hands-on

projects, students forge lasting memories that surpass mere classroom instruction.

### ***Student Creativity Enhancement***

The third point emphasizes the enhancement of students' creativity within the Project Based Learning (PjBL) framework. This approach fosters student autonomy in project planning, with instructors serving primarily as facilitators. By placing the onus on students to drive their projects forward, PjBL nurtures and refines their creative faculties over time. This assertion finds support in the works of Sari & Angreni (2018) and Usman (2019), who assert that PjBL cultivates student creativity, underscoring the model's efficacy in fostering innovative thinking.

### ***Time Intensiveness***

The fourth point highlights the time-intensive nature of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model. Unlike conventional learning approaches, PjBL necessitates a prolonged duration to yield optimal outcomes, often spanning weeks rather than days. This distinction underscores PjBL's emphasis on depth and complexity, contrasting with the brevity of traditional methods. Holbrook (2007), as cited in Capraro et al. (2013), underscores the inherent requirement of PjBL for an extended learning process, centered on collaborative problem-solving endeavors. This underscores the need for patience and persistence in implementing PjBL to fully harness its educational benefits.

### ***Leadership Development and Responsibility***

The fifth point underscores the cultivation of leadership qualities and a sense of responsibility among students within the Project Based Learning (PjBL) framework. Collaborative project work not only fosters teamwork and active participation but also nurtures leadership traits that develop over the course of the project. Retnaningsih & Woro (2020) affirm the close association between PjBL and the emergence of student leadership attitudes during project implementation. This highlights PjBL's role not only in fostering academic growth but also in shaping students into effective leaders capable of guiding and influencing their peers.

### ***Flexibility in Learning***

The sixth point underscores the inherent flexibility of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model, both temporally and spatially. Unlike traditional approaches confined to specific times and locations, PjBL offers students the liberty to engage in project work at their convenience, accommodating diverse schedules and environments. This aligns with Bell's (2010) assertion that students wield the autonomy to strategize and execute projects, with instructors primarily overseeing timelines for project completion. Such flexibility empowers students to tailor

their learning experiences to suit individual preferences and optimize productivity.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this study, the aim was to delve into the perceptions of students regarding Project Based Learning (PjBL) at Jambi University. This exploration sought to unravel students' viewpoints on PjBL, examining their attitudes towards this educational methodology, and probing into their beliefs regarding its efficacy and relevance in their educational journey.

The findings of the study revealed a spectrum of responses and perceptions among students concerning PjBL-based learning. Six overarching themes emerged from the analysis, shedding light on various aspects of students' experiences:

1. **Learning experiences:** Students expressed diverse experiences in their engagement with PjBL, highlighting the richness and depth of learning encountered through this approach.
2. **Long-term Memory Retention:** PjBL was noted for its ability to foster lasting memories and deep-seated learning experiences among students, as they engaged in detailed and prolonged project work.
3. **Student Creativity Enhancement:** Participants reported a significant enhancement in their creativity as they navigated through the project work process, attributing this to the autonomy and independence afforded by PjBL.
4. **Time Intensiveness:** The time-intensive nature of PjBL was acknowledged, with students recognizing the prolonged duration required to achieve optimal results compared to conventional learning methods.
5. **Leadership Development and Responsibility:** PjBL was identified as a catalyst for the development of leadership qualities and a sense of responsibility among students, particularly within collaborative project settings.
6. **Flexibility in Learning:** Students appreciated the flexibility inherent in PjBL, which allowed them to engage in learning activities at their own pace and convenience, transcending the constraints of traditional classroom settings.

These themes collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions of PjBL, illuminating the multifaceted impact of this educational approach on their learning experiences and personal development.

Hence, based on those findings, it is suggested that further research and exploration be conducted to address the challenges and preferences identified by students and lecturers regarding PjBL. Additionally, efforts should be made to provide adequate support and training for both students and lecturers to effectively implement and navigate PjBL within the educational context. Additionally, it may be beneficial to conduct comparative studies between PjBL and conventional learning models to better understand the strengths and limitations of each approach.

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