

Implementing Project-Based Learning to Enhance Students' Social Skills in Social Studies Learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu

by

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Article History Submitted: January 1, 2026 Revised: March 8, 2026 Accepted: July 16, 2026 Keywords: authentic learning; collaborative learning; interpersonal competence; learner participation; social competence	Abstract <i>The development of social skills has become increasingly important as one of the key competencies required in the twenty-first century. However, classroom instruction in many schools continues to rely on teacher-centered approaches that provide limited opportunities for students to interact and collaborate actively. This study investigated the application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Social Studies classes and explored its contribution to the enhancement of students' social skills at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu, Batu Bara Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative descriptive design was adopted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the learning process and participants' experiences. Data were gathered through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with one Social Studies teacher and five students selected purposively, as well as document analysis. The Project-Based Learning activities in this study were implemented through two contextual projects, namely a waste recycling project and an anti-bullying prevention campaign, both of which were designed to connect Social Studies learning with issues directly related to students' social and environmental surroundings. Through the waste recycling project, students were encouraged to identify environmental problems, discuss the importance of collective responsibility, explore possible ways of reusing waste materials, and work collaboratively to produce meaningful project outcomes. Meanwhile, the anti-bullying prevention campaign provided students with opportunities to discuss respectful social interaction, empathy, mutual respect, and the consequences of harmful behavior toward others. Throughout both projects, students were required to communicate their ideas, negotiate different opinions, distribute tasks, solve problems collectively, fulfill individual responsibilities, and present the results of their work. The activities also encouraged students to participate actively in discussions, support their peers when difficulties emerged, and make collective decisions during the completion of each project. These authentic learning experiences created concrete opportunities for students to interact with one another in meaningful social situations, thereby enabling the development of communication, collaboration, responsibility, and self-confidence during the learning process while connecting academic learning with real social and environmental issues.</i> © Copyright by Author(s). This is an open-access article under the CC-BY-SA license. 
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Introduction

Social skills have become one of the essential competencies that students need to develop to meet the demands of twenty-first-century education. In addition to mastering academic knowledge, students are expected to communicate effectively, collaborate with

others, solve problems, and adapt to diverse social environments (Rahmadhea, 2024; Schleicher, 2020). These competencies are particularly important in Social Studies (IPS), which aims not only to develop students' cognitive understanding of social phenomena but also to cultivate social awareness, empathy, cooperation, and responsible citizenship. Therefore, Social Studies learning should provide meaningful opportunities for students to interact, exchange ideas, and address real-life social problems collaboratively so that academic and social competencies can develop simultaneously (Fatonah et al., 2026; Letemulu et al., 2026; Maharani & Husain, 2026).

However, classroom learning in many Indonesian schools remains predominantly teacher-centered, limiting students' opportunities to participate actively in discussions and collaborative learning activities. Such instructional practices may reduce students' confidence in expressing opinions, asking questions, and interacting constructively with their peers (Listiani et al., 2026; Soro et al., 2024). Consequently, students have limited opportunities to develop communication, collaboration, empathy, and responsibility through authentic learning experiences. This situation indicates the need for innovative instructional approaches that place students at the center of the learning process while encouraging active social interaction.

One instructional model that has gained considerable attention is Project-Based Learning (PjBL). This learning model emphasizes the completion of authentic projects that require students to investigate real-world problems, collaborate with peers, communicate ideas, make decisions, and present project outcomes. Through these collaborative learning experiences, students can develop not only academic knowledge but also essential twenty-first-century competencies such as communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. Furthermore, project-based learning provides opportunities for students to practice interpersonal communication, teamwork, and shared responsibility, which are closely related to the development of social skills. Guo et al. (2021), through a systematic literature review, reported that Project-Based Learning promotes active student engagement, collaborative learning, and higher-order thinking through authentic and inquiry-based learning experiences. Similarly, Kokotsaki et al. (2021) emphasized that successful implementation of PjBL enables students to construct knowledge through meaningful collaboration while developing communication, problem-solving, and self-directed learning skills. More recently, Pratiwi et al. (2025) found that the integration of Project-Based Learning into classroom instruction improved students' social skills, particularly cooperation, communication, responsibility, and active participation,

indicating that authentic project experiences can contribute positively to students' interpersonal development.

Previous studies have also demonstrated the potential of Project-Based Learning to improve various educational outcomes. Rohman et al. (2023) found that the implementation of PjBL improved students' collaboration skills in Social Studies learning, while Lestari (2021) reported that PjBL enhanced students' academic achievement through increased active participation during classroom activities. Other studies have similarly indicated that Project-Based Learning can support students' engagement, communication, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities across different educational contexts. These findings suggest that PjBL has considerable potential to create more meaningful and student-centered learning experiences.

Despite these positive findings, previous studies have tended to focus on academic achievement, learning motivation, collaboration, or specific twenty-first-century skills as their primary research outcomes. Comparatively limited attention has been given to the implementation of Project-Based Learning as a means of developing students' broader social skills, particularly in the context of Islamic junior secondary schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah). In addition, the existing studies identified in this research have not specifically examined the implementation of Project-Based Learning in Social Studies learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu. Therefore, there is a need to investigate not only how PjBL is implemented in this specific educational context but also how its implementation contributes to the development of students' social skills and what impacts can be observed through the learning process.

Although previous studies have widely demonstrated the benefits of Project-Based Learning in improving academic achievement, learning motivation, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and other twenty-first-century competencies, the implementation and meaning of PjBL may vary across different educational environments. The novelty of the present study lies in its examination of Project-Based Learning within the specific context of a Madrasah Tsanawiyah, which differs from the implementation of PjBL in general school settings. In a general educational context, PjBL is commonly understood as a student-centered instructional approach that emphasizes inquiry, authentic problem-solving, collaboration, and the completion of meaningful projects. In the context of a madrasah, however, collaborative learning is also situated within an educational environment in which students' daily interactions are closely associated with values such as mutual respect, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, empathy, and concern

for others. Therefore, in this study, Project-Based Learning is not viewed merely as a strategy for completing academic tasks or improving students' participation, but also as a process through which students learn to manage responsibilities, respect different opinions, negotiate disagreements, support their peers, and develop constructive social behavior within the interactional culture of the madrasah. The theoretical contribution of this study is therefore reflected in the connection between the collaborative and authentic principles of PjBL and the value-oriented social environment of Islamic junior secondary education. Furthermore, through the implementation of contextual projects involving waste recycling and an anti-bullying prevention campaign, this study demonstrates how Social Studies learning can provide authentic spaces for students to connect academic concepts with real social and environmental issues while simultaneously practicing essential social skills. In this way, the study contributes a contextually grounded perspective on how PjBL can support not only academic learning but also the development of students' social competence within the distinctive educational culture of a Madrasah Tsanawiyah.

The research context is further supported by preliminary observations and interviews conducted at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu. The findings indicated that students experienced difficulties in cooperating during group activities, expressing their opinions, and asking questions when they did not understand the learning material. The teacher also experienced difficulties in stimulating students to participate actively and had not previously implemented Project-Based Learning in Social Studies instruction. These conditions demonstrate the relevance of investigating the implementation of PjBL as a student-centered instructional model in this particular context.

Project-Based Learning provides students with opportunities to participate directly in planning, completing, and presenting projects through collaborative activities. Such activities create opportunities for students to communicate with their peers, divide responsibilities, exchange ideas, participate in group decision-making, and present their work. Therefore, examining the implementation of PjBL in MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu is important for understanding how the learning model is applied in actual Social Studies classrooms and how students' social skills are demonstrated throughout the learning process. The study may also provide practical insights for teachers seeking to create more interactive, collaborative, and student-centered learning environments.

Based on the background and research gap described above, this study addresses three research questions. First, how is Project-Based Learning implemented in Social Studies learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu? Second, how does Project-Based Learning

contribute to improving students' social skills in Social Studies learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu? Third, what impact does the implementation of Project-Based Learning have on students' social skills in Social Studies learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu? Accordingly, the objectives of this study are to describe the implementation of Project-Based Learning in Social Studies learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu, identify how Project-Based Learning contributes to improving students' social skills, and examine the impact of its implementation on students' social skills. The findings are expected to provide theoretical and practical insights for teachers, schools, and future researchers regarding the implementation of Project-Based Learning to support the development of students' social skills in Social Studies learning.

Method

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in developing students' social skills in Social Studies learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation to describe the implementation of PjBL and students' social skills throughout the project-based learning process.

The study was conducted at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu, located on Jalan Pematang Kocik, Ujung Kubu Village, Nibung H Angus District, Batu Bara Regency, North Sumatra, Indonesia. The participants consisted of 30 students who participated in Social Studies learning using PjBL and the Social Studies teacher as the key informant. The teacher was selected because of his direct involvement in planning, implementing, guiding, monitoring, and evaluating the project-based learning activities. The implementation of PjBL was conducted over eight learning sessions, with each session lasting 40 minutes. The learning process was carried out progressively from project planning to project presentation, evaluation, and reflection. Project planning was conducted in the third session, while project presentation, evaluation, and reflection were conducted in the eighth session. Before the data collection process was conducted, the researcher obtained permission from the school to carry out the study and explained the objectives, procedures, and scope of the research to the participants and relevant school authorities. Participation in the interview process was voluntary, and the participants were informed that the information obtained would be used exclusively for academic and research purposes. To maintain the

confidentiality and privacy of the participants, the identities of the student informants were not disclosed and were represented using initials rather than their full names. The researcher also ensured that the observation and interview processes did not unnecessarily disrupt regular classroom activities. During the research process, participants were given the opportunity to provide information based on their own experiences and perspectives, and the collected data were used only in accordance with the objectives of the study. These ethical procedures were applied to ensure that the research process respected the privacy, voluntary participation, and dignity of all participants.

In addition to the 30 participating students, five students were purposively selected as primary interview informants. The selection criteria included active participation in classroom activities, the ability to collaborate with peers, and confidence in participating in learning activities. The selection also considered students' communication, collaboration, responsibility, and confidence during the project activities. These criteria were applied to obtain more in-depth information about students' experiences during PjBL and their social interactions throughout the learning process. The Social Studies teacher served as the key informant, providing information regarding project planning, implementation and monitoring, as well as the evaluation of the learning process and outcomes. The five student informants provided information about their experiences in participating in the projects, interacting with peers, collaborating, fulfilling responsibilities, and expressing their opinions.

The implementation of PjBL involved students actively in the learning process through collaborative project activities. At the initial stage, the teacher introduced problems related to the Social Studies material and students' social environment. Students were then guided to work in groups and plan the projects. Project planning was conducted in the third session, during which students discussed the project and distributed tasks among group members, while the teacher acted as a facilitator. The projects consisted of a waste recycling project and an anti-bullying prevention campaign. Both projects were conducted collaboratively and involved students in discussion, task distribution, exchange of ideas, problem-solving, and responsibility for group tasks. During the project activities, the teacher guided and monitored students' progress, while students were encouraged to communicate and collaborate with their group members. The final stage was conducted in the eighth session through project presentations, evaluation, and reflection. Each group

presented its completed project, followed by evaluation and reflection involving the teacher and students.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted from the beginning of the PjBL implementation through the presentation and evaluation stages to examine students' activities and participation, particularly their communication, collaboration, responsibility, and confidence. The observations also focused on students' interactions during group work, task distribution, expression of opinions, and involvement in completing the projects. Interviews were conducted with the Social Studies teacher and the five selected student informants. The teacher interview focused on the planning, implementation, guidance, monitoring, and evaluation of PjBL, while the student interviews explored their experiences in collaborating, communicating, fulfilling responsibilities, expressing opinions, and interacting with peers. Documentation, including students' project outcomes and records of learning activities, was used to complement the observation and interview data.

The data were analyzed qualitatively through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation were first selected and organized according to the research focus. The data were then categorized based on the stages of PjBL implementation and the four aspects of students' social skills: communication, collaboration, responsibility, and confidence. The categorized data were subsequently presented descriptively to illustrate the implementation of PjBL and students' social skills during the learning activities. Conclusions were then drawn based on patterns identified across the observation, interview, and documentation data.

The trustworthiness of the data was established through source and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the teacher and students, while technique triangulation was conducted by comparing findings from observations, interviews, and documentation. These procedures were used to ensure the consistency and credibility of information regarding the implementation of PjBL and students' social skills.

Result and Discussion

The findings indicate that the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Social Studies learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu created a more active and collaborative learning environment and provided students with opportunities to develop their social

skills. The findings were obtained through classroom observations, interviews with the Social Studies teacher and five student informants, and documentation. The results are presented in three aspects: the implementation of PjBL, students' interaction and participation during project activities, and the development of students' social skills.

The implementation of PjBL involved several interconnected stages, beginning with the delivery of learning materials and project instructions, group formation, project planning and implementation, teacher monitoring, presentation of project results, and evaluation. The teacher acted primarily as a facilitator by providing instructions, monitoring group activities, assisting students experiencing difficulties, and encouraging students to participate actively. The teacher explained that projects were designed according to the Social Studies material and required students to work collaboratively, discuss ideas, divide tasks, and present their results in front of the class. The teacher stated that students were generally more enthusiastic and active than during conventional learning, including students who were previously reluctant to speak or interact with their classmates.

The implementation of PjBL in this study should also be understood within the specific educational context of the madrasah. While PjBL in general school settings is commonly associated with student-centered learning, inquiry, problem-solving, and collaboration through authentic projects, its implementation at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu took place within an Islamic junior secondary school environment in which students' social interactions were also shaped by values such as mutual respect, responsibility, cooperation, discipline, empathy, and concern for others. In this context, collaborative project activities did not only provide opportunities for students to complete academic tasks, but also encouraged them to manage responsibilities, respect different opinions, and develop constructive relationships with their peers. The waste recycling project and anti-bullying prevention campaign further strengthened this contextual dimension by connecting Social Studies learning with environmental responsibility, respectful interaction, and concern for others. Therefore, the contribution of this study lies not simply in applying PjBL in a different educational setting, but in demonstrating how authentic and collaborative project activities can support the development of students' social skills within the value-oriented interactional culture of a Madrasah Tsanawiyah.

Table 1.
Implementation Stages of Project-Based Learning

No	Stage	Description
1	Planning	The teacher introduced learning objectives, project guidelines, and assessment criteria.
2	Group Organization	Students were divided into collaborative working groups.
3	Project Implementation	Students completed authentic projects related to Social Studies topics.
4	Presentation	Each group presented its project results before the class.
5	Evaluation and Reflection	The teacher and students reflected both the learning process and project outcomes.

Source: Processed from primary research data

Classroom observations provided direct evidence of students' interactions and participation throughout the project activities. During group work, students were observed discussing ideas, exchanging opinions, and dividing responsibilities according to the tasks required for completing their projects. The interaction among group members became particularly visible when students had to determine individual responsibilities and coordinate their contributions. Some students were involved in searching for materials, while others focused on preparing written work or presenting the project results. When group members experienced difficulties, students were also observed helping one another so that the project could continue as planned. These classroom situations demonstrate that the implementation of PjBL created direct opportunities for students to practice communication and collaboration through authentic interaction rather than through individual learning activities alone.

Classroom observations also showed that project activities required students to manage differences of opinion and maintain cooperation throughout the learning process. During group discussions, students had different ideas and working preferences, which required them to listen to one another and discuss possible solutions before continuing their tasks. The teacher monitored these interactions and encouraged students to participate actively and cooperate with their group members. Through the process of discussion, task distribution, mutual assistance, and shared decision-making, students gradually became more involved in completing their responsibilities. The observation findings therefore provide a more direct picture of how students' social skills were demonstrated during the

learning process, particularly in their communication, collaboration, responsibility, and participation in group activities.

The implementation of these stages provided students with repeated opportunities to interact with their peers. During project activities, students discussed ideas, divided responsibilities, exchanged opinions, and helped one another complete their tasks. The interviews showed that group work encouraged students to become more involved in classroom interaction because completing the project required cooperation among group members. N.R. explained that students usually discussed who would be responsible for each task and continued to exchange ideas and help one another when a member had difficulty completing an assigned task.

Students also perceived project-based learning as more engaging than conventional learning. N.J.S. stated that learning through projects allowed students to be more active because they could discuss ideas, work together, and understand the learning material through direct activities. She explained:

“I prefer learning through projects because it makes me more active. Usually, in regular learning, we only sit and take notes. With projects, we can discuss, find ideas, and understand the material better.” (N.J.S., student interview).

This statement demonstrates that project activities encouraged students to move beyond passive classroom participation and become actively involved in discussions and collaborative tasks.

The findings further indicate that interaction during project activities encouraged students to develop their ability to communicate and negotiate with peers. N.H. explained that students discussed the distribution of tasks before starting the project, with some members searching for materials, others writing, and others preparing the presentation. She stated:

“Before starting the project, we discuss with our group members to decide each person’s task. Some look for materials, some write, and some present. In this way, we learn to work together.” (N.H., student interview).

This finding indicates that group projects created a practical context in which students learned to communicate, coordinate responsibilities, and contribute to a shared task.

The students also experienced opportunities to develop responsibility through group work. Because the success of the project depended on the contribution of each member, students became more aware of the consequences of not completing their assigned responsibilities. N.R. explained that failing to complete an assigned task could interfere with the entire group's work:

“If I do not do my task, the group's work will become disorganized. I also feel bad because my friends will be affected.” (N.R., student interview).

Similarly, A.S. explained that working in groups encouraged her to complete her responsibilities because she did not want to create difficulties for her group members:

“The project makes me more responsible. If I have my own part, I try to finish it because I do not want to make things difficult for my friends.” (A.S., student interview).

These statements suggest that responsibility developed not merely because students were instructed by the teacher to complete their tasks, but also because they became aware of their role and contribution to the group.

Another important finding concerns students' confidence in expressing opinions and participating in classroom presentations. Several informants reported that they became more willing to speak after repeatedly participating in group discussions and presentations. A.S. stated:

“Now I feel more confident speaking in class. Although I am still a little shy, I am already brave enough to raise my hand when I want to answer.” (A.S., student interview).

M.A.A. similarly reported:

“Yes, now I am more confident speaking. Because we often discuss with our friends, I am not as shy anymore when I want to give my opinion.” (M.A.A., student interview).

These responses demonstrate that repeated opportunities to discuss, present, and express ideas in front of peers helped students become more comfortable participating in classroom communication.

The development of social skills was also reflected in students' ability to interact with classmates and manage differences of opinion. N.H. explained that group work required students to understand different personalities and opinions. She stated:

“Working in groups teaches us to be patient and understand each other. Everyone is different. Some work quickly and some take longer, so we learn to remind each other and not be selfish so that the project can continue.” (N.H., student interview).

A.S. also described how group activities encouraged students to resolve disagreements through discussion:

“There is usually someone who organizes the work, such as reminding us about the schedule and tasks. But everyone still participates in the discussion. If there is a problem, we talk about it properly so that we do not argue and can remain a good team.” (A.S., student interview).

These findings show that PjBL not only encouraged cooperation in completing academic tasks but also provided students with opportunities to practice patience, mutual understanding, negotiation, and conflict resolution.

Development of Students' Social Skills

Based on the observation and interview data, four main aspects of students' social skills were identified as developing during the implementation of PjBL: communication, collaboration, responsibility, and self-confidence. The teacher also confirmed that students gradually became more willing to speak, cooperate, interact with peers, and participate in discussions. The teacher observed that students became more active in asking questions, discussing ideas, and expressing opinions, while differences of opinion could increasingly be addressed through discussion.

Table 2.
Improvement of Students' Social Skills

No	Social Skill	Research Findings
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1	Communication	Students became more confident in expressing ideas and presenting project outcomes.
2	Collaboration	Students actively shared responsibilities and solved problem collectively.
3	Responsibility	Students demonstrated greater commitment to completing assigned tasks.
4	Self-confidence	Students became more willing to participate in discussions and classroom presentations.

Source: Processed from primary research data

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Project-Based Learning provided students with meaningful opportunities to practice social skills through authentic classroom interaction. Rather than merely receiving learning materials from the teacher, students were required to communicate, collaborate, divide responsibilities, solve problems, and present their work. The teacher also confirmed that PjBL was effective in developing students' social skills, particularly their willingness to speak, ability to cooperate, and concern for their peers, although some students still required more intensive guidance.

Despite the positive development observed during the implementation of Project-Based Learning, several challenges and negative dynamics also influenced students' participation and social interaction. The collaborative learning process did not automatically ensure equal involvement among all group members. During the project activities, more confident and active students sometimes tended to dominate discussions and influence group decisions, while quieter students were more likely to follow their peers without immediately expressing their own opinions. Differences in students' levels of responsibility and working pace also occasionally affected task distribution and project progress, creating challenges that required teacher attention.

The teacher addressed these challenges through continuous monitoring and facilitation. Students who tended to dominate discussions were encouraged to provide opportunities for other members to express their opinions, while less active students were

given encouragement and specific responsibilities to increase their participation. When differences of opinion or unequal task distribution occurred, students were guided to discuss the problem respectfully and reach collective decisions.

These findings provide a more balanced understanding of PjBL, showing that the development of students' social skills did not occur without difficulties. Differences in confidence, participation, responsibility, and communication became part of the authentic learning process. Through repeated interaction, teacher facilitation, and opportunities to manage group challenges, students were gradually encouraged to develop more constructive communication, collaboration, and shared responsibility.

These findings are consistent with the characteristics of PjBL as a student-centered learning model because students are actively involved in completing meaningful tasks while the teacher functions primarily as a facilitator. The collaborative nature of the projects created a learning environment in which communication, cooperation, responsibility, and self-confidence could be practiced continuously. Thus, the findings suggest that PjBL contributed positively to the development of students' social skills in Social Studies learning at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu.

The findings of this study demonstrate that Project-Based Learning (PjBL) was implemented systematically and consistently according to its essential instructional stages, beginning with project planning and ending with evaluation and reflection. This implementation reflects the student-centered characteristics of Project-Based Learning, in which students actively construct knowledge through authentic learning experiences rather than passively receiving information from the teacher. Throughout the learning process, students were encouraged to investigate problems, collaborate with peers, and present their project outcomes, while the teacher primarily served as a facilitator who guided and monitored learning activities. PjBL is recognized as a student-centered approach that focuses on real problems, helps students see the implications of the concepts they are learning, and fosters high-quality group processes (Krajcik & Shin, 2014). Furthermore, Rehman et al. (2024) confirmed that Project-Based Learning cultivates key competencies among learners, with findings showing that PjBL enhances collaborative skills, strengthens problem-solving abilities, amplifies critical thinking, and increases overall student engagement.

Another important finding of this study is the increased level of students' participation during project implementation. Students became more actively involved in group discussions, negotiated task distribution, exchanged ideas, and resolved differences of opinion through collaborative decision-making. Such learning experiences created authentic opportunities for students to practice interpersonal communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills in a supportive classroom environment. Previous studies have consistently highlighted the positive impact of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) on students' social and collaborative competencies. Mustamin et al. (2023) reported that the implementation of PjBL significantly improves students' collaboration skills, particularly in communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. Likewise, Yang et al. (2023) described PjBL as a student-centered learning approach that encourages collaboration, inquiry, and critical problem-solving through authentic project activities. By involving students in small-group projects based on real-world contexts, this approach promotes the development of interpersonal relationships while strengthening their communication and collaborative abilities. In addition, Avandra et al. (2025) found that the use of PjBL in Social Studies effectively increases students' active participation, nurtures social awareness, and enhances social empathy by engaging learners in contextual projects that address everyday social issues.

The findings further indicate that Project-Based Learning contributed positively to the development of students' social skills, particularly in the areas of communication, collaboration, responsibility, and self-confidence. Frequent opportunities to participate in discussions and present project outcomes gradually reduced students' hesitation to express their opinions and increased their confidence in interacting with both teachers and classmates. Tia and Wangid (2024) emphasized that many students initially hesitated to express opinions or ask questions in class due to a lack of confidence. Project-Based Learning (PjBL) has been shown to overcome this challenge by building student confidence through active involvement in projects. Zuhri and Afriani (2025) added that in a Project-Based Learning (PjBL) setting, students develop confidence and clarity in conveying ideas, with the iterative process of project work playing a key role in building communicative competence over time. Furthermore, collaborative project activities encouraged students to develop empathy, mutual respect, accountability, and a greater sense of shared responsibility while working toward common goals. Juniar et al. (2023) indicated that applying project-centered tasks within collaborative settings encourages mutual reliance among learners, including an understanding of shared success, individual accountability

within a team, and the development of social skills such as communication, discussion, and peer contribution. These findings suggest that Project-Based Learning supports not only students' cognitive development but also their social competence, which is considered an essential component of 21st-century education. Furthermore, according to Avandra et al. (2025), applying project-centered instruction enhances learners' self-perception alongside their sense of civic and social duty, and emphasizes that contextual project activities can support the formation of socially responsible students in modern educational environments.

Overall, the findings of this study reinforce the view that Project-Based Learning has proven to be an effective pedagogical strategy for integrating academic learning with the development of social competencies. Through students' participation in authentic projects involving collaboration, communication, and shared problem-solving activities, Project-Based Learning creates meaningful learning experiences that extend beyond the acquisition of subject knowledge. Zuhri and Afriani (2025) asserted that Project-Based Learning supports mastery of academic content while actively fostering 21st-century skills in a holistic and integrated manner, with a combination of student-centered learning, real-world relevance, and collaborative structures that create a dynamic learning environment. Therefore, the implementation of Project-Based Learning in Social Studies classrooms provides valuable opportunities for students to connect theoretical concepts with real-life social situations while simultaneously strengthening the interpersonal skills needed both inside and outside the classroom. Wirabrata et al. (2024) systematically reviewed that Project-Based Learning significantly improves students' problem-solving abilities, encourages innovative thinking, strengthens teamwork competencies, and enhances effective communication. These findings also highlight the importance of adopting more student-centered learning approaches to prepare learners for the social and collaborative demands of contemporary society. In line with this, research conducted by Chamidah (2024) through bibliometric analysis consistently shows that PjBL, with its emphasis on real-world problems and student-centered learning, is a promising approach for developing essential competencies such as critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in social studies at MTs Teladan Ujung Kubu was carried out systematically through the stages of planning, group organization, project implementation, presentation, evaluation,

and reflection. The findings indicate that this learning model encourages students to participate actively in collaborative learning activities and creates meaningful learning experiences connected to real-life social issues.

The implementation of PjBL contributed positively to the development of students' social skills. Improvements were identified in communication, collaboration, responsibility, and self-confidence. Students became more willing to express ideas, cooperate in completing group projects, respect others' opinions, and take responsibility for shared tasks. These findings indicate that Project-Based Learning not only facilitates students' understanding of social studies content but also promotes the development of essential social competencies required for twenty-first-century learning.

This study is limited to a single madrasah with a relatively small number of participants; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to broader educational contexts. Future research is recommended to involve participants from different schools and educational levels, employ mixed-method or quantitative approaches to examine the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning, and investigate its long-term impact on students' social skills and other twenty-first-century competencies.

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