

PBL PROMOTES TEAM WORK AMONG STUDENTS: EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS FROM SECTION ONE OF THE ISLAMIC FAMILY LAW

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INTRODUCTION

PBL is a learning approach that challenges students to “learn to learn,” working cooperatively in groups to seek solutions to real world problems (George Watson, 2003). PBL emphasizes on students working together as a team in solving real life problems. This is in line with today’s world that the ability to work as a member of a team is essential (Lynda and Megan, 2002).

The students may be familiar with the idea of team working; they however do not have the opportunity to practice it in the traditional lecture setting. It is also observed that some of the tutorials conducted are not on student-centred; rather, the lecturers explain what they have taught in the preceding lectures. The traditional method of lecture delivering has little room for students to work in a team. This is seen as not encouraging students to develop teamwork.

The purpose of this study is to investigate students’ perception on whether PBL promotes teamwork among them. It is also intended to seek opinions/experiences of students on whether PBL helps build their confidence working in a team. The perception of students towards teamwork involving different genders, that is, male and female students, is to be identified in this study. For this purpose, students from section one of the Islamic Family Law Course were chosen as the population and asked to participate in the form of a survey.

The students were given questionnaires, which were self-structured. The pre-test was conducted to testing the reliability of the questionnaires. The data obtained were analysed by the SPSS for windows software. It is expected that the findings of the study will answer the question as to the effectiveness of PBL in promoting teamwork among students.

PBL IN AHMAD IBRAHIM KULLIYAH OF LAWS

PBL was first introduced to several executive committee members of the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws who attended the 4th Asia-Pacific Conference on PBL in Hadyai, Thailand in late December 2002. On 7 May 2003, Associate Professor Sharifah Suhana from the law Faculty, University of Malaya came to the Kulliyah and gave a comprehensive account of how the staff got to know of PBL and subsequently how it came to be implemented in the university. About a month later, Professor Dr George Watson of the Institute for Transforming Undergraduate Education, University of Delaware conducted 2 days intensive seminar on PBL. Subsequently, pilot project on PBL was carried out in semester 1, 2003/2004 under the encouragement of the Dean of the Kulliyah. The PBL Unit of the Kulliyah was set up with a view to promote teaching using PBL and to assist the lecturers in improving and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning through PBL. Several workshops on PBL were then conducted within the Kulliyah by the PBL Unit to further

improve and strengthen the practice of PBL. As a result, there are encouraging numbers of staff that have implemented PBL so far in their teaching.

PBL IN CLASS

In the last semester i.e., first semester of 2004/2005, I have used PBL method to teach Islamic Family Law at level two of the LLB undergraduate programme at the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws of the International Islamic University Malaysia. The course was delivered over 14 weeks and PBL was conducted for 4 weeks. Contact hour is three hours per week, which consisted of two hours lectures and one-hour tutorial. There were 46 students taking the course of Islamic Family Law. They consisted of 21 males and 25 females. During the first hour of the first PBL week, the students were presented with the problem scenario on the topic ‘Dissolution of Muslim Marriage’. As law students, they have to use their legal knowledge that they have required to help solving actual legal problems given by clients. They were expected to read and understand the facts of the problem before they can proceed to other steps i.e., identifying and locating the sources of materials etc. In class, each PBL group was asked whether all group members have understood the facts of the problem clearly and to identify what might be the main issues that arise from the problem. They were encouraged to speculate as to possible solutions based on their existing knowledge that they have learnt from previous legal studies or some other experience. In the class the students were divided into groups and were expected to work in a team in doing research, gathering the materials, writing and participating in discussions. They were briefed on the importance of team working and cooperative learning, as students will not be working in isolation when they go out in the real world. On this premise, students were not given the freedom to choose their group members. They were grouped by the lecturer based on certain criteria. It was observed that the students gradually worked well together although initially there were resistance to the idea of working in a team. In the group, the students divided the tasks among themselves and they have to present what they have done to the group. Each of the group consisted of 4 to 5 members and they were expected to come up with solutions to the problem within the time given. The details of the activity conducted in the class as shown below.

Pbl activity

WEEK	DATE	ACTIVITY
Introduction	18/08/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Dr Bashiran Begum, the coordinator for PBL unit of the Kulliyah explained to the students about PBL concept, aims and benefits. -Detailed explanation was made on what PBL is and how it was going to be implemented and how marks are computed at the end of the semester. -The students were grouped by the lecturer using certain criteria. -They were told that they are free to see their facilitator should they have any query.
1st hour of the first week	23/08/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The students sat in groups. -Each group consists of five members and group leaders were appointed by consensus of group members. -A copy of the scenario was given to the group leader together with the questions of stage one.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Group discussion took place smoothly with mdm. Noraini Hashim (facilitator) facilitating the process. -The group divided the tasks among the members.
2nd hour of the first week	25/08/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No lecture and tutorial conducted. -Material gathering time-the students had gathered all the materials necessary for the discussion. -Group discussion continued with mdm. Noraini Hashim (PBL facilitator) facilitating.
1st hour of the second week	30/08/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No lecture and tutorial conducted -Discussion continued with Dr Nora Abdul Hak facilitating the discussion. -Students were asked of their progress. -The students responded that they have made some progress and they are still working on the answer.
2nd hour of the second week	1/08/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No lecture and tutorial conducted -Writing time - the facilitator explained how to write the answer -The Reflection Journal Forms were distributed to the students -The students were briefed on how to use the Reflection Journal
1st hour of the third week	6/09/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No lecture and tutorial conducted. -Finalizing the answer, which is to be submitted by the end of the week. -Students' Evaluation Forms were distributed to the students and were briefed as to how to use the forms. -Questions on the second stage were then distributed to the group leaders. -Working on the second stage started by dividing the tasks among themselves.
2nd hour of the third week	8/09/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No lecture and tutorial conducted. -Submission of stage one's answer and the lecturer will respond to the students' answer by the following week. -Meanwhile students continued discussing questions of stage two as this stage was relatively more challenging than the first stage. -Locating and gathering of the materials.
1st hour of the fourth week	13/09/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Writing time. -The students were encouraged to use the Reflection Journal to communicate or to reflect the process of PBL to the facilitator. -The discussion continued with Dr Nora facilitating.
2nd hour of the fourth week	15/09/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The students were informed that they have to submit the written answer by the end of the week. -The Evaluation Forms would be collected from the students in the next class. -The discussion continued with the students finalizing their work. -The end of PBL for semester 1 session 2004-2005.

Assessment

The course is assessed in three ways:

1. Mid semester test (15% of the weighting)
2. PBL, consisting of two written submissions and peer assessment score (25% of the weighting)
3. Final examination (60% of the weighting)

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. to know the perception of students on using PBL as a tool in learning law
2. to investigate whether PBL promotes team work among students

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This phase describes the procedure and the method of conducting the study. The purpose of the study is to measure students' perception on using PBL and its effect on teamwork. The study is quantitative in nature and the survey method is used to obtain relevant data from the population of the PBL group i.e., section one of the Islamic Family Law.

Population and sample size

The population of this study consisted of all students of section one of the Islamic Family Law Course for semester 1, 2004/05. There were 46 students consisting of 21 males and 25 females. A sample could not be drawn from the population, as the number is small. According to Babbie "as the sample size increases the standard error decreases" (Babbie, 2001). In the light of this, the whole population becomes the sample by distributing the questionnaires to all the students who were then grouped into ten groups.

Table 1. 1: Respondents' Profile

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Sample</i>
Male	21
Female	25

Instrumentation

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The First part consists of 3 items on demographic data designed for the purpose of gathering information about the respondents. The second consists of items on the assessment of students' perception toward problem-based learning (PBL) and team working. The instrument used for this research was "self-constructed" which consists of 23 items and divided into two sections. Section 1 consists of 11 items which was administered as a questionnaire in order to measure students' comment and perception on using PBL in teaching and learning the law. Section 2 which consists of 9 Items was also administered as a questionnaire as to know students' opinion on whether PBL promotes team working among students.

Pre-testing

Pre-testing was conducted in order to know the reliability of the instrument. To conduct the pre-test, five students were selected from the groups of PBL and the data obtained from them

were used to test the reliability of the instrument. The Coefficients for PBL items had obtained the alpha level of (.8533) which was considered as a high alpha level for any instrument.

Data Analyses

Statistical analysis was conducted to answer the research questions. Descriptive statistics of the Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) were used in organizing, summarizing and presenting the data collected.

Table1. Respondents' Profile

<i>Demographic Variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	21	45.7	45.7
Female	25	54.3	100
Total	46	100.0	
<u>Students' CGPA</u>			
Below 3.00	27	58.7	58.7
Above 3.00	19	41.3	100
Total	46	100.0	
<u>Students' Academic Years</u>			
Second years' students	45	97.8	97.8
Third years' student	1	2.2	100
Total	46	100.0	

Descriptively, Table 1 shows the demographic variables. In term of gender, 54.3% of the respondents were female students while 45.7% were male students. Regarding to students' CGPA, 58.7% of the respondents had CGPA of 3.00 or less while 41.3% had 3.00 of CGPA and above. For students' academic year, 97.8% of the respondents were second year students while only 2.2% were third year students. This means that the majority of the students were second year students.

Students' perception on using PBL as a tool in learning law

Table 1: Item (1) "I believe that PBL helps student to learn more productively."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Disagree	4	8.7
No comment	9	19.6
Agree	33	71.7
Total	46	100.0

Notice: Mean = 2.63, SD = .644, Sum= 121.01, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 1 shows that 71.1% (n=33) of the respondents agreed that PBL helps students to learn more productively, while 8.7% (n=4) of the respondents disagreed with the statement and only 19.7% (n=9) of the students chose not to comment on the statement.

Table 2: Item (2) "PBL method allows student to communicate with each other effectively."

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	4.3
No comment	6	13.0
Agree	38	82.6
Total	46	100

Notice: Mean = 2.80, SD = .453, Sum= 129, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 2 shows that 82.6% (n=38) of the respondents agreed that PBL method allows students to communicate with each other effectively, while only 4.3% (n=2) believed that PBL does not provide the students a room for communication with each other and 13% (n=6) of the respondents preferred no comment as their answer.

Table 3: Item (3) "PBL motivates students among themselves to face the challenges of their study."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	1	2.2	2.2
No comment	7	15.2	17.4
Agree	38	82.6	100.0
Total	46	100.0	2.2

Notice: Mean = 2.84, SD = .419, Sum= 131, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 3 shows that 82.6% (n=38) of the respondents perceived that PBL motivates students to face the challenges of their study, whereas only 2.2% (n=1) of the respondents were of the opinion that PBL does not motivate students. About 15.2% (n=7) of the respondents decided not to comment on the statement.

Table 4: Item (4) "PBL assists me as a student in solving actual legal problems of the clients."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	4	8.7	8.7
No comment	6	13.0	21.7
Agree	36	78.3	100
Total	46	100	

Notice: Mean = 2.69, SD = .627, Sum= 124, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 4 shows that 78.3% (n=36) of the respondents that have participated in the survey perceived that PBL has assisted them as a student in solving actual legal problems of the clients. The table also shows that only 8.7% (n=4) thought that PBL did not help them in solving clients' legal problem and 13% (n=6) of the respondent did not comment on the statement.

Table 5: Item (5) "I believe that PBL is the best technique to use in solving life's problem."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	3	6.5	6.5
No comment	12	26.1	32.6
Agree	31	67.4	100.0

Total	46	100.0
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Notice: Mean = 2.60, SD = .613, Sum= 120, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 5 shows that 67.4% (n=31) of the respondents agreed that PBL is the best technique to use in solving life's problem. Only 6.5% (n=3) of the respondent did not agree with that statement and 26.1% (n=12) of them gave no comment on the statement.

Table 6: Item (6) "I believe that PBL method does not give a chance for student to prove their individual abilities."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	33	71.7	71.7
No comment	7	15.2	87.0
Agree	6	13.0	100
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 1.41, SD = .717, Sum= 65, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 6 shows that 71.7% (n=33) of the respondents believed that PBL method does give a chance for student to prove their individual abilities, whereas only 13% (n=6) of the respondents agreed to the statement. There were about 15.2% (n=7) of the students did not comment on the statement.

Table 7: Item (7) "I believe that PBL method does not give a chance for student to prove their potentiality."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	37	80.4	80.4
No comment	7	15.2	95.7
Agree	2	4.3	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 1.23, SD = .524, Sum= 58, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 7 shows that 80.4% (n=37) of the respondents disagreed on the statement that PBL method does not give a chance for student to prove their potentiality. Only 4.3% (n=6) of the respondents said that PBL method does not give a chance for them to prove their potentiality and 15.2% (n=7) preferred no comment in their response.

Table 8: Item (8) "PBL does not assist students in solving their learning problems."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	31	67.4	67.4
No comment	8	17.4	84.8
Agree	7	15.2	100.0
Total	46	100.0	67.4

Notice: Mean = 1.47, SD = .752, Sum= 68, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 8 shows that 67.4% (n=37) of the respondents disagreed on the statement that PBL does not assist students in solving their learning problems, while around 15.2% (n=7) of the respondents decided to agree with the statement.

Table 9: Item (9) "PBL is a complicated method."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	18	39.1	39.1
No comment	15	32.6	71.7
Agree	13	28.3	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 1.89, SD = .822, Sum=87, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 9 shows that there was significant clustering in responding to this statement in which 39.1% (n=18) of the respondents did not agree that PBL is a complicated method. On the same statement, about 28.3% (n=13) of the students perceived that PBL is a complicated method and 32.6% (n=15) preferred no comment as the answer.

Table 10: Item (10) "PBL decreases student's capacity."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	32	69.6	69.6
No comment	7	15.2	84.8
Agree	7	15.2	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 1.45, SD = .751, Sum= 67, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 10 shows that 69.6% (n=32) of the respondents disagreed on the statement that PBL decreases student's capacity. Only 15.2% (n=7) of the respondents agreed on the statement and 15.2% (n=7) did not make any comment.

Table 11: Item (11) "I believe that PBL should be used in every section in the Islamic Family Law course."

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (n)	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	7	15.2	15.2
No comment	9	19.6	34.8
Agree	30	65.2	100.0
Total	46	100.0	15.2

Notice: Mean = 2.5, SD = .752, Sum= 115, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 11 shows that 65.2% (n=30) of the respondents were of the opinion that PBL should be used in every section of the Islamic Family Law course. However there are about 15.2% (n=7) did not have the same opinion and 19.6% (n=9) of the students did not comment on the statement.

Students' perceptions on PBL in promoting teamwork

Table 1: Item (1) "I believe that PBL allows student to work cooperatively."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Disagree	2	4.3	4.3
No comment	6	13.0	17.4
Agree	38	82.6	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 2.7, SD = .512, Sum= 128, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 1 shows that 82.6% (n=38) of the respondents agreed that PBL allows student to work cooperatively. There are only about 4.3% (n=2) of the students did not share the same opinion and 13% (n=6) of them did not comment on the statement.

Table 2: Item (2) "I believe that students easily solve the problems faced by them in their learning by working together as a team."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Disagree	2	4.3	4.3
No comment	7	15.2	19.6
Agree	37	80.4	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 2.78, SD = .524, Sum= 127, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 2 shows that 80.4% (n=37) of the respondents believed that students easily solved the problems faced them in their learning by working together as a team. On the other hand only 4.3% (n=2) of the respondents have different opinion about this and there are 15.2% (n=7) responded that they have no comment on the statement.

Table 3: Item (3) "PBL develops students' ability to manage group dynamic."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Disagree	1	2.2	2.2
No comment	8	17.4	19.6
Agree	37	80.4	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 2.78, SD = .467, Sum= 128, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 3 shows that 80.4% (n=37) of the respondents agreed that PBL develops students' ability to manage group dynamics. Only 2.2% (n=1) of the respondents disagreed and 17.4% (n=8) did not comment on the statement.

Table 4: Item (4) "PBL helps me as a student to build my confidence in a team."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Disagree	2	4.3	4.3
No comment	3	6.5	10.9
Agree	41	89.1	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 2.84, SD = .469, Sum= 131, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 4 shows that 89.1% (n=41) of the respondents agreed that PBL helps them as a student to build their confidence in a team. 4.3% (n=2) disagreed and 6.5% (n=3) did not comment on the statement.

Table 5: Item (5) "PBL provides better cooperation between male and female students

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Disagree	3	6.5	6.5
No comment	3	6.5	6.5
Agree	40	40	87.0
Total	46	46	100.0

Notice: Mean = 2.80, SD = .542, Sum= 129, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 5 shows that majority of the respondents that is 87% (n=40) agreed that PBL provides better cooperation between male and female students. While others i.e., 6.5% (n=3) said that PBL does not provide that cooperation and 6.5% (n=3) of the respondents did not comment on the statement.

Table 6: Item (6) "I believe that team work is better than individual work."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Disagree	2	4.3	4.3
No comment	5	10.9	15.2
Agree	39	84.8	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 2.80, SD = .499, Sum= 129, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 6 shows that 84.8% (n=39) of the respondents agreed that teamwork is better than individual work. On the same statement only 4.3% (n=2) of the students perceived that individual work is better and about 10.9% (n=5) of them did not comment on the statement.

Table 7: Item (7) "I believe that team work is the proper tool to use in promoting learning among students."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Disagree	3	6.5	6.5
No comment	6	13.0	19.6
Agree	37	80.4	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 2.80, SD = .499, Sum= 129, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 7 shows that 80.4% (n=37) of the respondents were of the opinion that teamwork is the proper tool to use in promoting learning among students. Only 13% (n=6) of the respondents decided to disagree with the statement and 6.5% (n=3) of them did not comment on the statement.

Table 8: Item (8) "PBL project increases my carry marks rather than an individual project."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
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Disagree	3	6.5	6.5
No comment	7	15.2	21.7
Agree	36	78.3	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 2.73, SD = .574, Sum= 126, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 8 shows that 78.3% (n=36) of the respondents agreed that PBL project has increased their marks as compared to individual project. It also shows that 15.2% (n=7) did not agree with the statement and about 6.5% (n=3) did not comment on the statement.

Table 9: Item (9) "I enjoy working as a group instead of working as an individual."

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Disagree	5	10.9	10.9
No comment	4	8.7	19.6
Agree	37	80.4	100.0
Total	46	100.0	

Notice: Mean = 2.71, SD = .583 Sum= 125, N= 46, Mini= 1, Mix=3

Table 9 shows that 80.4% (n=37) of the respondents said that they enjoy working as a group instead of working as an individual. About 8.7% (n=4) enjoyed working as an individual and about 10.9% (n=5) of the students decided to choose not comment as their answer.

COMMENT

Taking the first objective of students' perception on using PBL as a tool in learning the scores on the items were variable; with Item 3 i.e., "PBL motivates students among themselves to face the challenges of their study" scoring the highest with 87% agreeing and significantly at least for this moment, Item 9 i.e., "PBL is a complicated method" scoring the lowest with a significant 28.3% agreeing, and only 39.1% disagreeing. However, it is safe to infer that the overall perception is positive and encouraging. As to the second objective of PBL promoting teamwork, the result are more positive and in consonance being above 80.0%. Even the lowest score i.e., for Item 9 relating to carry marks is 78.3% in the positive.

CONCLUSION

In summary, as shown from the result of the survey that has been conducted, students among others believed that PBL has developed their ability to manage group dynamics, helped them in building their confidence working in a team and provided better cooperation between male and female students. Students also perceived that teamwork is better than individual work by motivating them to face the challenges of their study. The study provides a clear answer to the issue of teamwork among students, i.e., positively. Table 4, as shown above indicates that majority of the respondents agreed that PBL does promote teamwork among them. It is therefore, proposed that PBL should be used as a tool in promoting teamwork among students and in producing self-directed learning law students.

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