

## Optimizing the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Program (P5) in the Independent Curriculum at Muhammadiyah Special Program Junior High School in Kartasura

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### ABSTRACT

In accordance with the new curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) during Nadiem Makarim's leadership, the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) program was created. The purpose of this study was to assess the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project at Al Kautsar Muhammadiyah Junior High School Special Program Kasrasura. The research method used a descriptive qualitative approach with interviews with the Deputy Principal for Curriculum as the main source of data. The results of the study show that the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) program helps to shape student character and is already in the good category in terms of program indicators, implementing organizations, and target groups. Teacher collaboration, the use of technology, and facilities and infrastructure also support the smooth running of the program, although the main obstacle lies in time management. This study contributes to providing a real picture of the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in private religious-based schools and confirms that the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) is effective in improving the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, although it still needs strengthening in terms of habit formation.

**Keywords:** Pancasila, Independent Curriculum, Muhammadiyah

### Introduction

21st-century education is undergoing a paradigm shift from simply transferring knowledge to developing holistic competencies that include critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills (Akomaning, 2019). This transformation is not only demanded by technological developments and globalization, but also by the need to prepare a generation that is adaptive to social, cultural, and economic changes. In this context, innovative learning

approaches such as Project-Based Learning (PBL) have been widely used in various countries because they have been proven to increase student engagement and hone 21st-century skills (Ismail et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, the urgency of this change has been addressed through the Merdeka Curriculum policy, which emphasizes flexibility, differentiation, and learner-centered learning (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). One important innovation in this curriculum is the strengthening of character education through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). This program is in line with international trends that integrate character values, cultural identity, and social skills into the curriculum through a project-based approach (Chen *et al.*, 2023). Thus, the Merdeka Curriculum and the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) have become national strategies to prepare students to face the dynamics of the 21st century.

The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) is designed to foster Pancasila Student Profiles that are faithful, globally diverse, cooperative, independent, critically thinking, and creative. The hope is that students will not only be academically competent, but also have strong character and social skills that are relevant to the needs of modern society. Empirical evidence shows that integrating PBL into the curriculum can improve students' independence, collaboration skills, and self-confidence (Zulkifli *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) should be a strategic instrument for achieving national education goals while aligning with global education standards.

However, the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in schools still faces challenges, both in terms of planning, availability of time, and consistency in applying character values. Preliminary studies indicate that many schools still integrate the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) with routine school activities to accommodate time and resource constraints (Ismail *et al.*, 2024). This shows that there is a gap between the ideal objectives of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) and the reality of its implementation in the field.

The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) has the potential to be a strategic solution because it is project-based, encouraging active student involvement, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and the integration of character values with local wisdom (Chen *et al.*, 2023). Through this approach, students are expected to not only excel academically, but also have a student profile that is in line with the nation's ideals. Based on this background, this study focuses on how to optimize the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in the Merdeka Curriculum at Muhammadiyah Al Kautsar Special Program Junior High School in Kartasura

## Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, as it examines the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at Al Kautsar Special Program Islamic Junior High School in Kartasura. By using descriptive qualitative research methods, researchers will gain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding through the research subjects regarding the optimization of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah Al Kautsar Special

Program Kartasura. The research was conducted in several stages, starting from field data collection, processing, data analysis, and conclusion drawing as well as result verification. The subject of this research was the deputy principal in charge of the curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah Al Kautsar Special Program Kartasura, with the research location chosen because this school has implemented the Merdeka Curriculum. The data collection technique used in-depth interviews with the vice principal in charge of curriculum as the main source of data for this study.

## Results

Based on an interview with the Deputy Principal for Curriculum, Mrs. Irma Rahmawati, S.Pd., at SMP Muhammadiyah Al Kautsar Special Program Kartasura, various in-depth information was obtained regarding the optimization of the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). The information covers six main aspects, namely: (1) program planning, (2) student involvement, (3) school support, (4) collaboration between teachers and external parties, (5) use of technology, and (6) evaluation and implementation challenges.

### 1. Planning for the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)

The planning stage is an important foundation in the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at the Kartasura Muhammadiyah Special Program Junior High School. Based on the results of interviews, the school curriculum team compiled a Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) planning document at the beginning of the school year, which included determining the project theme for each grade level, the implementation time, time allocation, and activity steps. Students were not directly involved in this planning. The main focus was on synchronizing the themes of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) with the values of the Pancasila Student Profile, such as faith, critical thinking, independence, creativity, mutual cooperation, and global diversity. The school develops plans based on contextual themes such as "Local Wisdom," "Sustainable Lifestyle," and "Engineering and Technology." Each theme is tailored to the grade level so that learning is relevant and applicable to students' daily lives.

### 2. Student Involvement in Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project Activities (P5)

Student involvement at SMP Muhammadiyah Special Program Kartasura is evident in the implementation and evaluation stages of the project. Students are active in group work, field observations, data collection, documentation, product or work development, and presentation of results. In this process, teachers only act as facilitators, while students become active subjects who explore and develop ideas. The projects carried out encourage cross-class and cross-disciplinary collaboration, such as market day activities, environmental projects, and the creation of creative products based on local wisdom.

### 3. School Support for the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)

School support is a dominant factor in the successful implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). Based on the interview results, the support provided includes the provision of learning facilities, information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, time allocation, and managerial policies that integrate Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening

Project (P5) activities into the school's regular agenda. Several school activities, such as field trips, market days, Muhammadiyah Student Association (IPM) leadership activities, Hizbul Wathan camps, and industrial visits, are directed to be in line with the dimensions and values of Pancasila. The principal also provides room for innovation to teachers in the preparation of project modules.

4. Collaboration between Teachers and external parties

The implementation of the Pancasila student profile strengthening project (P5) at Muhammadiyah special program junior high school in Kartasura shows collaboration between teachers across subjects in designing modules and implementing projects. Each project is designed based on cross-disciplinary integration so that students understand the interrelationships between different fields of knowledge. The involvement of external parties such as parents, local communities, and the industrial world is still entrepreneurship activities. This kind of collaboration strengthens the interdisciplinary learning approach promoted by the Merdeka curriculum.

5. Use of Technology in the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)

The use of technology in this school is already quite good. Students use laptops, digital cameras, and the internet for documentation, data search, and report writing activities. Teachers also utilize Google Workspace, Canva, and video editing applications to support project activities. In a project themed "Engineering and Technology," for example, students utilize digital technology to design creative works, such as simple learning media and educational vlogs. This strengthens digital literacy as well as 21st-century skills, namely communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

6. Evaluation and Challenges of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)

Evaluation is carried out through observation of student performance, assessment of project products, and joint reflection between teachers and students. The school strives to use an authentic assessment approach so that the assessment is more objective of the students' actual skills. The main challenges that arise are time management between project activities and academic learning, as well as limited student involvement in the planning stage. In addition, the habit of applying Pancasila values outside of project activities still needs to be strengthened so that character internalization is more comprehensive.

## Discussion

1. Planning the Pancasila student profile strengthening project (P5) and the principles of the independent curriculum

The planning stage is an important foundation in the implementation of the P5 program in school so that the implementation of P5 is clear and focused (Wati & Andari, 2023). The result of the study indicates that good planning is an important stage in the successful implementation of the Pancasila student profile strengthening project (P5). This is in line with Edwards III's (1980) theory in (Mubarok *et al.*, 2020), which emphasizes that planning provides direction and control for the implementation of education policy. According to (Hanifah *et al.*, 2025), the planning of the Pancasila student profile

strengthening project (P5) must be based on the principles of flexibility, relevance, and integration between subjects so that students are able to relate their learning to real life. In the context of the Kartasura Special Program Muhammadiyah Junior High School, flexibility is evident in the variety of themes and implementation times that are tailored to student characteristics. In addition, (Rahardjo, 2024) adds that effective planning for the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) requires an analysis of student needs and school readiness, including teacher competence and supporting facilities. Planning at this school reflects a strategic and participatory internal team-based approach to curriculum management.

## 2. Sosial Student Engagement and Social Constructivism Theory

Active student involvement in project implementation demonstrates the application of the principle of student agency in the Merdeka curriculum, where students act as subjects of learning (Wirastuti *et al.*, 2024). Social constructivism theory explains that meaningful learning occurs through social interaction and collaboration in authentic contexts (Dewi *et al.*, 2025). This is supported by research (Ismail *et al.*, 2024), showing that the Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach can increase student motivation, independence, and critical thinking skills. Thus, student involvement in the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Kartasura is in line with modern learning theories that place students as agents of change. Furthermore, (Supriyadi, 2024) emphasizes that active student participation in social and environmental projects can foster empathy, responsibility, and social leadership, which are three important aspects of the Pancasila Student Profile.

## 3. School support and transformational leadership

Educational change theory emphasizes the importance of organizational support and transformational leadership (Hariyati *et al.*, 2023). The principal acts as a change leader who creates an innovative and collaborative culture. The support at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Kartasura, which includes the provision of facilities, allocation of time, and integration of P5 activities with other school programs, demonstrates the application of the whole school approach principle (Marnayana *et al.*, 2024). This approach emphasizes that character building can only be successful if all components of the school, such as teachers, students, principals, and the community, are involved synergistically. Research (AISYAH *et al.*, 2024) supports this, stating that strong managerial support can increase the sustainability of P5 implementation. Thus, organizational support is not only administrative but also has a strategic impact on the formation of a school culture based on Pancasila values.

## 4. Teacher Collaboration and External Partnership

Collaboration among teachers in planning and implementing P5 demonstrates the application of interdisciplinary learning practices, which are a hallmark of the Merdeka Curriculum (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Professional collaboration among teachers allows for the exchange of pedagogical ideas, enriching learning innovation (Marnayana *et al.*, 2024). However, the interview results indicate that external stakeholder involvement is still limited. Meanwhile, research (Adelia & Rosyid, 2024) confirms that school partnerships with local communities and industry can burden the

social relevance of projects and shape students' spirit of mutual cooperation. According to (Nugraha, 2025), schools that establish cross-sector partnerships with communities, MSMEs, and social institutions have a greater opportunity to instill values of diversity and nationalism because students interact directly with real social contexts.

#### 5. Use of technology and digital literacy

The use of technology in P5 in this school reflects the application of digital literacy, which is important in 21st-century education (Satria et al., 2024). Students not only use technology as a tool, but also as a medium for exploration and creative collaboration. According to (Nopi Krisnawati et al., 2023), digital natives tend to learn more effectively through interactive digital media. In this case, the school has facilitated devices and internet networks to support project activities. Research (Noptario et al., 2024). states that the integration of technology in P5 can develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through blended learning activities. However, (Lestari, R., Nurhadi, & Hasanah, 2023) reminds us of the need for teacher training in digital literacy so that the use of technology is not merely administrative but truly supports learning innovation. Interestingly (Fitriyani, I., & Lestari, 2025) adds that strengthening digital culture must be accompanied by media ethics habits so that technology not only increases efficiency but also strengthens responsible digital character.

#### 6. Evaluation, challenges, and implications of P5 implementation

Evaluation in this school was conducted using an authentic assessment approach that assessed students' actual abilities through products, projects, and performance (Hariadi et al., 2025). This evaluation model is in line with the direction of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes formative and reflective assessment. However, a major obstacle was found in the form of time management between project activities and academic learning. This is in line with the findings (Lestari, R., Nurhadi, & Hasanah, 2023) which explain that time flexibility is a central issue in the implementation of P5 because projects often require a long duration to achieve optimal results. In addition, the habit of applying Pancasila values outside of project activities is still inconsistent. Based on social learning theory, character building requires modeling and habituation from the social environment (Fitriyani Indah Dewi et al., 2024). Therefore, teachers need to be real role models in their daily behavior at school.

The results of this study indicate that the success of P5 is highly dependent on the synergy between components: curriculum planning, teacher collaboration, organizational support, and the use of technology. In religious-based schools such as SMP Muhammadiyah PK Kartasura, Pancasila values can be internalized in line with Islamic values through contextual learning. Research (Chen et al., 2023) also confirms that project-based character education is an effective global trend for building national identity amid the challenges of globalization. Therefore, the implementation of P5 in this school has the potential to become a model of good practice for other schools in integrating Pancasila character and religious values.

### Conclusion

The optimization of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at Muhammadiyah Al Kautsar PK Kartasura Junior High School has been

successful in shaping students' characters in accordance with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. This program is supported by structured curriculum planning, teacher collaboration, technology utilization, and school management support. However, there are still challenges in time management and instilling Pancasila values outside of project activities. Therefore, increasing student participation, teacher training, and collaboration with external parties need to be strengthened so that the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) becomes more optimal and sustainable. Overall, the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) has proven to be effective as a means of character building and contextual learning in the Merdeka Curriculum.

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