

Project-Based Learning for Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile in the Merdeka Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation of the Project to Strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile (P5) through the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) approach in the Merdeka Curriculum. The shift in the Indonesian education system necessitates a move toward character-based learning that is holistic and contextual. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method using literature studies from current academic journals. The findings indicate that PjBL significantly improves student engagement, social interaction, and academic outcomes in Pancasila Education. Specifically, the four core principles of P5—holistic, contextual, student-centered, and explorative—are effectively realized through project activities. The study concludes that project-based learning is a vital instrument for internalizing Pancasila values, fostering a generation that is not only intellectually capable but also morally grounded in national identity.



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INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum serves as a strategic response to overcome the existing learning crisis in Indonesia (Sulistiyaningrum & Fathurrahman, 2023). Within this framework, character development has become a mandatory pillar of the national education system (Gianistika, 2022). The Strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile (P5) is designed as a core program to improve educational quality through character building (Purnawanto, 2022). To achieve these goals, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is utilized as a primary pedagogical tool for internalizing national values (Prasasti et al., 2025).

The P5 program encourages a learning environment that is both cross-disciplinary and problem-oriented (Purnawanto, 2022). Through this approach, students are expected to gain competencies that align with the national identity (Sulistiyaningrum & Fathurrahman, 2023). Character strengthening through projects also emphasizes the importance of social awareness and collaborative skills (Gianistika, 2022). Therefore, this research focuses on analyzing how PjBL activities effectively realize the six dimensions of the Pancasila student profile (Prasasti et al., 2025).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach to provide a descriptive overview of the subject (Gianistika, 2022). The primary data collection was conducted through a literature study method (Saraswati et al., 2022). Information was synthesized from academic journals, government regulations, and previous research findings related to the Merdeka Curriculum (Purnawanto, 2022). The analysis followed a systematic procedure of data collection, reduction, and verification to draw accurate conclusions (Sulistiyaningrum & Fathurrahman, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The P5 projects are structured cross-disciplinary activities that allow students to find solutions for local environmental issues (Purnawanto, 2022). These projects are grounded in four fundamental principles: holistic, contextual, student-centered, and explorative (Saraswati et al., 2022). The contextual nature of PjBL ensures that learning experiences are deeply connected to the students' real-life situations (Sulistiyaningrum & Fathurrahman, 2023). By focusing on these principles, the curriculum fosters a sense of responsibility and active participation among learners (Gianistika, 2022).

Empirical data reveals that the use of PjBL leads to a measurable increase in student learning outcomes and academic mastery (Prasasti et al., 2025). Beyond academic scores, the project method facilitates deeper and more meaningful interactions between students and their teachers (Gianistika, 2022). Furthermore, P5 acts as a form of differentiated learning that adapts to the diverse interests of the students (Saraswati et al., 2022). The following table illustrates the common themes used in P5 projects and their intended impacts.

Table

Table 1. Thematic Implementation of P5 in Educational Settings

No	Project Theme	Intended Character Outcome	Impact on Student Development	Reference
1	Local Wisdom	Cultural appreciation.	Preservation of regional identity.	(Sulistiyaningrum & Fathurrahman, 2023)
2.	Sustainability	Ecological awareness.	Active environmental stewardship.	(Purnawanto, 2022)
3.	Social Interaction	Empathy and teamwork.	Diverse and widespread socialization.	(Gianistika, 2022)

4.	Differentiation	Personalized growth.	Flexibility in skill development.	(Saraswati et al., 2022)
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The success of these projects is also supported by a school culture that values openness and collaborative effort (Purnawanto, 2022). By engaging in explorative activities, students are trained to think critically and address global challenges with a nationalistic perspective (Saraswati et al., 2022). This pedagogical shift effectively bridges the gap between conceptual values and practical implementation in the classroom (Prasasti et al., 2025). Ultimately, the PjBL approach within P5 creates a holistic learning experience that prepares students for modern social demands (Sulistiyaningrum & Fathurrahman, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Project-Based Learning is an essential catalyst for the successful actualization of the Pancasila Student Profile within the Merdeka Curriculum. The findings conclude that project activities foster deeper social interaction and significantly enhance learning achievements across different educational levels. P5 transforms national ideology into a dynamic and living school culture, encouraging students to become active citizens. It is recommended that educational institutions maintain an explorative and contextual spirit to ensure the continued relevance of character education in the future.

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