IMPLEMENTATION OF P5 PROJECT IN PAUD: CURRICULUM INNOVATION AND ASSESSMENT SYSTEM FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION

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Abstract

The Pancasila Learner Profile Strengthening Project (Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila - P5) is one of the main elements of Merdeka Curriculum that aims to instill Pancasila values from an early age through project-based learning. This study aims to explore the curriculum management and assessment system in the implementation of P5 in several PAUD in Cirebon. A descriptive qualitative approach was used with data collection techniques through key personal interviews (principals, teachers, and parents), observation of project activities, and literature study. Data analysis was conducted using thematic coding to identify key patterns in the implementation of P5. The results show that the management of P5 implementation involves structured planning, implementation, and evaluation stages with close collaboration between principals, teachers, parents, and the community. The chosen project theme is tailored to local needs, such as environmental conservation, which is relevant to the context of children's lives. In terms of the assessment system, competency-based approaches and observation of children's development are used to evaluate aspects of character and social skills, although challenges such as the lack of specific indicators and limited observation time are still a major obstacle. This study concludes that the implementation of P5 requires adaptive curriculum management, comprehensive assessment guidelines, and strong stakeholder involvement to ensure program success. Practical implications include the need for intensive training for teachers, development of an assessment guide based on Pancasila values, and strengthening the role of parents and communities in supporting early childhood learning. The findings make an important contribution to optimizing the implementation of P5 as a character education approach in ECD, while offering insights for the development of education policy and practice in Indonesia.

Keywords: Pancasila Learner Profile, ECD, Merdeka Curriculum, Curriculum Management, Learning Assessment, Character Education

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECED) is a critical phase in the development of character and foundational values in children. During this formative period, children begin to develop their personalities, social skills, and moral values, which are essential for their future development Astini et al. (2023)Ali et al., 2021). The Merdeka Curriculum, introduced as part of educational reforms in Indonesia, aims to create a more flexible and learner-centered environment that supports these developmental needs. A significant innovation within this curriculum is the Pancasila Learner Profile Strengthening Project (P5), which focuses on instilling Pancasila values—such as mutual cooperation (gotong royong), independence, and integrity—through project-based learning that is both conceptual and contextual (Handayani, 2023; Setyowati et al., 2023).

The implementation of project-based learning (PBL) in early childhood settings has been shown to enhance children's cognitive abilities and foster creativity through problem-solving and exploration ("Project Based Learning and Physical Activity for Cognitive Ability Stimulation in Early Childhood Education: Study Literature", 2023; Puspitasari, 2023). PBL allows children to engage in meaningful projects that not only stimulate their intellectual growth but also promote social skills and collaboration among peers (Setyowati et al., 2023). This approach aligns well with the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes the importance of character education and the development of competencies that are relevant to the real world (Irawati, 2023). By integrating Pancasila values into PBL, educators can create learning experiences that are not only educational but also culturally and contextually relevant to Indonesian society (Handayani, 2023; Setyowati et al., 2023).

However, the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and P5 requires that educators are adequately prepared and supported. Research indicates that teacher professionalism plays a vital role in the effectiveness of early childhood education (Sitorus, 2023). Professional development opportunities for educators, particularly in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, are essential for ensuring that they can effectively facilitate project-based learning and instill Pancasila values in their students (Ali et al., 2021; Wang, 2023). Furthermore, the role of academic supervision is crucial in nurturing teacher competence, which directly impacts the quality of the learning process (Sitorus, 2023).

At the early childhood level, the implementation of P5 presents both challenges and opportunities. P5 is not just a character education program, but also a holistic learning approach. Project-based activities in P5 are designed to provide learning experiences that are concrete and relevant to children's daily lives. For example, through simple projects such as designing a small garden with classmates, children learn not only about plants but also the values of cooperation, responsibility and caring for the environment. This approach allows children to directly experience the values being taught, so that the internalization of Pancasila values can be done in a fun and age-appropriate way. However, successful implementation of P5 requires planned and systematic curriculum management.

Curriculum management plays an important role in ensuring the success of P5 in ECD. The curriculum should be designed in a way that integrates project activities into the daily learning structure. A good curriculum not only includes clear learning objectives but also includes guidance on how project-based learning is effectively implemented. This involves the role of the principal in providing strategic direction, teachers in designing and implementing

projects, and parents in supporting the implementation of projects outside the school. In practice, curriculum management for P5 requires adaptation to the unique characteristics of each PAUD, such as differences in resources, children's backgrounds, and teacher skills. The biggest challenge in this regard is how to create alignment between the national education vision and the real conditions on the ground.

In addition to curriculum management, an effective assessment system is also a key component in the implementation of P5. At the ECD level, assessment serves not only to evaluate children's achievements but also as a tool to understand their development holistically. The assessment system for P5 in ECD should be able to accommodate various aspects of child development, ranging from cognitive, social-emotional, to motor skills. Common approaches include direct observation, portfolios of children's work, and documentation of the project process. However, challenges arise when it comes to measuring abstract aspects such as internalizing the value of mutual cooperation or curiosity. Assessment must be done carefully and process-oriented, not solely on the end result of the project. Therefore, the development of specific and relevant assessment rubrics with P5 becomes very important to ensure the success of this approach.

This study aims to answer two main questions. First, how is P5 curriculum management in PAUD in Cirebon implemented? Second, how is the assessment system implemented in P5 in PAUD in Cirebon? These questions stem from the need to understand the real practices in the field related to the implementation of P5, including the challenges and opportunities faced by various PAUD in Cirebon. This research location was chosen because Cirebon has unique characteristics, with a variety of PAUDs that reflect a combination of traditional and modern approaches to education.

The main objective of this study is to identify the curriculum management strategies used in the implementation of P5 in PAUD and to analyze the assessment system applied to evaluate the success of the project. By gathering information from several PAUDs in Cirebon, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of best practices in P5-based curriculum management and assessment. Furthermore, the results of this study are expected to serve as a basis for recommendations for the development of educational policies and practices at the local and national levels.

This research is based on several key theoretical frameworks relevant to analyzing the curriculum management and assessment system of the Pancasila Learner Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at the early childhood education level. These theories include curriculum management, developmental learning evaluation principles, and the concept of Pancasila Learner Profile as a character education goal.

Curriculum management is one of the most important aspects in ensuring the successful implementation of P5. In the theoretical framework of education management, the curriculum is understood not only as a formal document that describes the objectives, content and structure of learning, but also as a dynamic guide that must be strategically managed to adapt to the needs of learners and the local context. The curriculum management process involves four main stages: planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In the planning stage, principals, teachers, and other stakeholders design a curriculum that is able to integrate project activities into the daily learning program. In this context, strategic planning theory becomes relevant

because curriculum planning for P5 must consider available resources, teacher capacity, and student characteristics. Furthermore, the implementation of project-based curriculum requires flexibility and innovation from teachers who act as facilitators, providing meaningful learning experiences for children through activities that are relevant to their lives. Monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum is a critical stage in ensuring that the implementation of P5 goes according to plan and can provide feedback for future curriculum improvements.

In addition to curriculum management, the principle of evaluating learning in developmentally-based ECD is an important foundation in this study. Assessment in ECD has a unique approach that focuses on holistic child development, covering cognitive, social-emotional and motor aspects. Child development theories, such as those proposed by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, are relevant in this context, as they emphasize the importance of understanding individual developmental needs (Piaget, 1952). Observation is the main method of evaluation in ECD, where teachers actively record children's engagement in project activities to understand their achievements in both cognitive and non-cognitive aspects. In addition, portfolios are used to document children's work and learning processes on an ongoing basis, providing a holistic picture of their development. This holistic assessment also places character as one of the important aspects, where the values of the Pancasila Student Profile, such as gotong royong, independence, and curiosity, become part of the success indicators.

The Pancasila Learner Profile, as the philosophical foundation of the Merdeka Curriculum, is the ultimate goal of the learning process. This concept aims to form students who are not only intellectually intelligent but also have a character based on the noble values of Pancasila. At the PAUD level, the dimensions of the Pancasila Learner Profile, such as mutual cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity, are adapted into learning objectives that are in accordance with the developmental stage of early childhood. The process of internalizing these values is done through contextual approaches, such as play, exploration and social interaction. For example, through simple projects such as designing a small garden with friends, children not only learn practical skills but also internalize the values of collaboration and responsibility.

These three theoretical frameworks complement each other in understanding the complexities of implementing P5 in ECD. Curriculum management theory provides strategic guidance in managing a project-based curriculum, developmental-based evaluation principles assist in designing a relevant and holistic assessment system, while the Pancasila Learner Profile provides the philosophical direction upon which educational goals are based. With the integration of these theoretical frameworks, this study seeks to provide comprehensive insights into how curriculum management and assessment systems can support the effective implementation of P5 in PAUD in Cirebon.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore in-depth understanding of the curriculum management and assessment system of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at the PAUD level. This approach was chosen because of its flexibility, allowing for a holistic exploration of phenomena in a specific context. The main focus of the research is to describe the practices, challenges, and innovations in the

implementation of P5, which will help provide a comprehensive picture of the implementation of project-based curriculum in PAUD.

The research sites were several PAUDs in the Cirebon area, chosen for their diverse characteristics and reflecting a combination of traditional and modern approaches in early childhood education. The subject PAUDs include institutions with varying levels of resources, socio-economic backgrounds of learners, and different pedagogical approaches. This variation provides an opportunity to explore the unique dynamics of P5 implementation, including the adaptations made by each school in designing the curriculum and assessment system.

Data collection was conducted through three main methods: interviews, observations and literature review. Interviews were conducted with key personnel, including school principals, ECD teachers, and parents. The school principal provided strategic insights on planning, managing and monitoring the P5-based curriculum. ECD teachers, as direct implementers, shared their experiences on daily practices, challenges and successes in implementing P5. Parents are engaged to provide their perspectives on involvement in supporting project learning at home.

Examples of interview questions for principals include: "How is the P5 curriculum planning process conducted in this PAUD?"; "What are the obstacles you face in integrating P5 into the curriculum?"; "How do you ensure all stakeholders are involved in the implementation of P5?"

For ECD teachers, questions include: "What steps do you take in designing P5 project activities?"; "What assessment methods do you use to evaluate the success of the project?"; "What are the biggest challenges in implementing Pancasila values-based projects?"

For parents, the questions are more participatory, such as: "To what extent are you involved in your child's P5 project activities?"; "Do you see any changes in your child's attitude or behavior after attending P5?"; "What are your expectations of the program?"

In addition to interviews, direct observation was conducted to document the implementation of the P5 curriculum and assessment system in the field. Observations focused on project activities designed to internalize Pancasila values in children's learning. Researchers observed how teachers designed and facilitated the projects, how children interacted during the activities, and how the assessment process was conducted in the classroom. For example, in a farming project, researchers noted how children shared tasks, demonstrated cooperation, and understood the concept of responsibility.

Literature study was also an integral part of the data collection. This included a review of government policy documents, such as the Ministry of Education and Culture's P5 implementation guidelines, academic articles on curriculum management in ECD, as well as literature relevant to the evaluation of developmental learning. This study provided a theoretical context that helped compare the field findings with the results of previous research.

The data obtained were analyzed using thematic coding techniques. This process began with initial coding, where data from interviews, observations and documents were grouped based on relevant themes, such as curriculum management strategies, assessment methods and challenges of P5 implementation. Subsequently, selective coding was conducted to identify relationships between these themes and develop a coherent narrative. For example, data on teachers' involvement in designing projects were compared with the evaluation patterns they

used to assess the success of the projects. This thematic analysis enabled the researcher to generate a structured and in-depth understanding of P5 implementation.

With this approach, the research is expected to provide comprehensive insights into the curriculum management and assessment systems that support the success of P5 in PAUD, as well as offer recommendations that can be implemented at both local and national levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study reveal various important aspects in the implementation of the Pancasila Learner Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in PAUD, including implementation management, assessment systems, and challenges and strategies used to achieve program success. This discussion focuses on analyzing the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of P5, the assessment approaches applied, and the implications of the findings for educational practices in PAUD.

Management of P5 Implementation in PAUD in Cirebon

The results of observations and interviews show that the management of P5 implementation in PAUD in Cirebon begins with a systematic planning stage. Principals play an important role in designing a project-based curriculum that integrates Pancasila values into daily learning activities. Planning begins with the identification of early childhood needs, followed by the determination of relevant project themes, such as "Healthy Environment" or "Cooperation in Daily Life." In this stage, teachers are actively involved to provide input related to the suitability of the project with the child's developmental stage. In addition, the project schedule is flexible, allowing children to explore and learn at their own pace.

At the implementation stage, the teacher acts as a facilitator who encourages children's active involvement in project activities. The learning strategy applied involves a play while learning approach, which is designed to provide concrete and fun experiences. For example, in the "Healthy Environment" project, children are invited to plant plants together, which not only teaches them about nature but also internalizes the value of mutual cooperation and responsibility. Parental involvement is also an important component in the implementation of P5. Parents are invited to participate in project activities, both as logistical support and as motivators for their children. Local communities, such as environmental organizations or small businesses, are also involved to provide contextualized learning experiences.

The P5 evaluation stage is conducted through joint reflection between the teacher and the children, where the outcome of the project is evaluated not only in terms of the final product but also of the learning process that has taken place. Teachers use project documentation, such as photos, diaries, and children's work, to identify their achievements in various dimensions of development.

P5 Assessment System in PAUD

Assessment in the implementation of P5 in PAUD uses a competency-based approach and observation of child development. Teachers utilize assessment rubrics designed to evaluate various aspects, such as social skills, communication ability, creativity, and understanding of Pancasila values. Direct observation is the main method in this assessment, where teachers record children's behavior during project activities, including their interactions with peers and

how they complete tasks. For example, in projects that involve cooperation, teachers observe the extent to which children can share tasks well and show a sense of responsibility towards the group.

However, there are significant challenges in integrating Pancasila values into the evaluation system. Values such as gotong royong or curiosity are often abstract and difficult to measure objectively. Teachers recognize that assessing character aspects requires a more structured approach, such as the development of specific and relevant indicators. In addition, the time needed to conduct in-depth observations is often an obstacle, especially for teachers who have to handle a large number of children in one class.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in this study reveal important dimensions related to the implementation and assessment of the Pancasila Learner Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in early childhood education, particularly in the Cirebon area. The in-depth discussion will explore the linkages between the research results and previous literature (2020-2024), highlighting significant contributions, challenges, and potential practical implications in the implementation of P5. This sub-section will be comprehensively elaborated to provide a more detailed understanding.

1. Relevance of Findings to Previous Literature

This research is consistent with previous findings that emphasize the importance of project-based curriculum management in supporting character education in early childhood education. In the study of Suhardi et al. (2024), good curriculum management was identified as a key factor in the successful implementation of value-based projects, such as P5. The study highlighted that planning involving teachers, principals and the community can increase the relevance of project activities to learners' needs and the local context. This is in line with the findings of this study, where stakeholder engagement in PAUD in Cirebon not only improves the quality of curriculum planning but also strengthens support in its implementation.

Furthermore, Wahyuningtyas' research (2023) highlights that evaluation of character learning, such as in the context of P5, requires flexible yet structured assessment tools and methods. This finding is particularly relevant, given that this study also found that PAUD teachers in Cirebon faced difficulties in measuring the internalization of Pancasila values such as gotong royong, curiosity, and independence. This obstacle is often caused by the lack of specific indicators and limited observation time. Previous research, such as that conducted by Ashab et al. (2022), showed that the development of character-based assessment rubrics is an urgent need to support teachers in measuring children's development more systematically.

2. Stakeholder Engagement in P5 Implementation

Stakeholder engagement was found to be a crucial aspect in the implementation of P5. The results of this study showed that the involvement of parents, teachers, and communities contributed significantly to the success of the project. For example, one PAUD in Cirebon involved local farmers to provide simple training to children related to farming. This activity is not only relevant to the project theme "Green and Healthy Environment," but also provides a contextualized learning experience for children. Research by Ashab et al. (2024) corroborates this finding by stating that collaboration with local communities can increase the relevance of

project-based learning, while strengthening the dimensions of the Pancasila Learner Profile such as gotong royong and critical reasoning.

However, while stakeholder engagement has had a positive impact, the results of this study also show that there are challenges in managing relationships between schools, parents and communities. In some cases, parents were less engaged due to time constraints or lack of understanding of the importance of P5. Effective communication between schools and parents is therefore a priority to ensure continued support.

3. Challenges in Character Assessment

One of the most prominent findings from this study was the challenge of integrating Pancasila values into the assessment system. Teachers in PAUD in Cirebon recognized that character assessment, especially for values such as gotong royong, independence, and integrity, requires a different approach compared to the assessment of cognitive skills. This finding is in line with Wahyuningtyas' study (2023), which states that the abstract nature of character values often makes them difficult to measure objectively. In addition, the limited time teachers have to conduct in-depth observations is also an obstacle, especially if the number of students is quite large.

This study found that some teachers try to overcome this obstacle by using a portfolio-based approach, where children's work during projects is collected and analyzed as part of the evaluation. This approach is considered effective in providing a comprehensive picture of children's learning process, although it still requires extra time and effort from teachers. The study by Hidayat et al. (2022) supports this approach, noting that portfolios can assist teachers in assessing children's development holistically, especially in the context of project-based learning.

4. Implications for Curriculum Management

The findings of this study highlight the importance of adaptive and contextualized curriculum management in supporting the implementation of P5 in ECD. One effective strategy found is flexibility in designing project activities. For example, some PAUD in Cirebon chose project themes relevant to local conditions, such as agriculture or environmental conservation, which allows children to learn in the context of their daily lives. This kind of flexibility not only increases children's engagement but also strengthens the relevance of learning to their needs.

However, this flexibility must be accompanied by clear directions from school principals and local governments to ensure that the main objectives of P5 are still achieved. The study by Suhardi et al. (2024) confirms that effective curriculum planning requires a balance between flexibility and alignment with national education policies. Therefore, a more detailed curriculum guide, including a list of recommended project themes and specific indicators of success, could assist teachers in designing and implementing P5 more effectively.

5. Practical Implications for Assessment Systems

In terms of the assessment system, the study underscores the need to develop a more comprehensive assessment rubric that is relevant to the dimensions of the Pancasila Learner Profile. This rubric should include clear indicators to assess aspects such as cooperation, curiosity and creativity, which are at the core of Pancasila values. The study by Wahyuningtyas

(2023) suggests that the development of assessment rubrics can be done through intensive training for teachers, where they are taught how to identify appropriate indicators and apply them in daily assessments.

In addition, this study found that the use of technology can be a solution to overcome time challenges in conducting observations. For example, some teachers started using recording applications to document children's interactions during project activities, which were then analyzed in more depth outside of teaching hours. The study by Hidayat et al. (2022) supports the use of technology in assessment, noting that digital tools can help teachers to save time and improve accuracy in evaluating children's development.

6. Contribution of Findings to Character Education

This research contributes significantly to the understanding of character education in PAUD. By placing P5 at the center of learning, PAUD in Cirebon successfully demonstrated that Pancasila values can be internalized from an early age through a project-based approach. Learning processes that actively involve children, such as planting or cleaning the environment, give them the opportunity to not only understand the values theoretically but also experience them firsthand. This finding strengthens the argument in the literature that experiential learning is an effective method for character education, as suggested by Ashab et al. (2024).

However, this success requires continued support from all stakeholders. Local governments, in this case, have an important role in providing adequate resources, including teacher training and development of relevant assessment tools. In addition, local communities can contribute by providing supportive learning environments, such as child-friendly playgrounds or community facilities for project activities.

Discussion of these findings suggests that the implementation of P5 in PAUD has great potential to support children's character building in accordance with the values of Pancasila. However, its success is highly dependent on structured curriculum management, relevant assessment systems, and close collaboration between stakeholders. By integrating the results of this study with recent literature, the resulting recommendations can be used to improve educational practices in PAUD, both in Cirebon and in other regions in Indonesia. Going forward, further research is needed to develop more comprehensive assessment tools and explore the use of technology in supporting P5 implementation.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Pancasila Learner Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at the Early Childhood Education (ECE) level in Cirebon provides an overview of how a project-based learning approach can be effectively integrated in the curriculum, with the aim of instilling Pancasila values from an early age. The research reveals that the successful implementation of P5 relies heavily on structured and collaborative management. Principals, teachers, parents and communities play complementary roles in supporting the planning, implementation and evaluation of the project. Planned curriculum management allows project activities to run according to the needs of early childhood, while remaining relevant to the local context, such as themes tailored to agrarian or urban environments in Cirebon.

The assessment system applied in P5 in PAUD in Cirebon shows flexibility in responding to children's developmental needs. Teachers use various methods, such as observation and

portfolios, to evaluate children's engagement in projects, both in terms of process and outcome. However, this study also highlights that character assessments, such as gotong royong, curiosity, and independence, still need more specific and structured guidelines. These challenges, if not addressed, may reduce the effectiveness of evaluation in measuring the success of internalizing Pancasila values in early childhood.

The implementation of the Pancasila Learner Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at the Early Childhood Education (ECE) level in Cirebon demonstrates how a project-based learning approach can be effectively integrated to instill Pancasila values. Successful implementation of P5 relies on structured curriculum management, stakeholder engagement, and an assessment system relevant to early childhood character dimensions. This research not only provides an overview of best practices in PAUD, but also generates a number of implications that are important to consider in the development of educational policies and practices.

Theoretical Implications

This research reinforces curriculum management theory which states that integrated planning, implementation and evaluation are the keys to successful implementation of project-based learning. The findings also confirm the relevance of child development theories, such as Piaget (Piaget, 1952) and Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978), in supporting experiential learning that enables early childhood to internalize abstract values such as mutual cooperation and independence (Piaget, 1952). In addition, this study contributes to the development of character learning evaluation theory, by highlighting the need for specific assessment indicators for social and emotional aspects. Thus, this research adds insight to the character education literature by offering a new view on how Pancasila values can be measured and taught effectively through a project approach in early childhood education.

Practical Implications

In a practical context, this study provides recommendations that can be implemented directly by ECD institutions. First, more targeted and intensive teacher training is a major need to improve their capacity in designing and implementing P5. This training should include project planning techniques, experiential teaching strategies, and development of character assessment tools. Secondly, Pancasila value-based assessment guidelines need to be developed in more detail and easy to implement, with indicators covering the social, emotional and cognitive dimensions of early childhood. This guide will provide clarity for teachers in evaluating the success of the project. Third, parents and communities should be empowered to become active partners in supporting children's learning, both through direct participation in projects and through support at home.

Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, this study emphasizes the importance of the principal's role as a curriculum leader in ensuring the success of P5. Principals must be able to facilitate collaboration between teachers, parents and the community to create a supportive learning environment. In addition, effective resource management is also a key element in the implementation of P5. This study recommends that principals design flexible resource allocation strategies that focus on the needs of project-based learning. Local governments and

ECD providers also need to provide supportive policies, including budget allocations for teacher training, procurement of learning tools, and development of infrastructure that supports project activities.

As an additional implication, this study suggests that the government needs to strengthen regulations that require community involvement in the implementation of P5, especially in a unique local context such as Cirebon. This will not only increase the relevance of learning but also strengthen the synergy between formal education and community life.

This research provides significant theoretical, practical and managerial insights into the implementation of P5 in ECD. By integrating a value-based curriculum approach, holistic evaluation, and close collaboration between stakeholders, P5 can be an effective model of character education in Indonesia. Further research is needed to explore more standardized evaluation tools and evaluate the long-term impact of P5 on early childhood character development.

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